

IMPERIAL REFUGE:  
RESETTLEMENT OF MUSLIMS FROM RUSSIA  
IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 1860-1914

A DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
AND THE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES  
OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

VLADIMIR HAMED-TROYANSKY

JULY 2018

© 2018 by Vladimirs Trojanskis. All Rights Reserved.  
Re-distributed by Stanford University under license with the author.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/us/>

This dissertation is online at: <http://purl.stanford.edu/cy920sj2617>

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that, in my opinion, it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

**Joel Beinin, Primary Adviser**

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that, in my opinion, it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

**Robert Crews**

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that, in my opinion, it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

**Norman Naimark**

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that, in my opinion, it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

**Ali Yaycioglu**

Approved for the Stanford University Committee on Graduate Studies.

**Patricia J. Gumport, Vice Provost for Graduate Education**

*This signature page was generated electronically upon submission of this dissertation in electronic format. An original signed hard copy of the signature page is on file in University Archives.*

## **ABSTRACT**

In the half-century before World War I, about a million Muslims from Russia arrived in the Ottoman domains. Most of them came as refugees fleeing war and persecution. This dissertation examines how Muslim refugees from the North Caucasus region transformed the Ottoman Empire and how the Ottoman government handled refugee migration. This project is the first to investigate the political economy of refugee resettlement in the Ottoman provinces of Danube, Sivas, and Damascus, respectively in the Balkans, Anatolia, and Greater Syria. Ottoman refugee resettlement produced multiple outcomes. It reinvigorated regional economies, shaped local forms of capital accumulation, and created intercommunal tensions over land. This project revisits late Ottoman history through the lens of migration, holding the resettlement of Muslims as critical to the making of the modern Balkans, Turkey, and the Levant.

The ability of refugees to tap into local economies underpinned Ottoman regional and imperial stability. State support, whether in financial aid, legal infrastructure, or transportation, was paramount to the economic success of agricultural refugee settlements. In the northern Balkans, for example, insufficient state subsidies and scarcity of land for refugees contributed to the outbreak of Muslim-Christian clashes and then to the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, which ultimately ejected the Ottomans from much of the Balkans. In central Anatolia, a lack of state investment hindered the development of refugee settlements, which led to economic stagnation of the region. In contrast, in the Levant, Circassian and Chechen refugees took advantage of the state-built Hejaz Railway and land reforms to create booming settlements. Their villages attracted Syrian, Transjordanian, and

Palestinian merchants and local bedouin pastoralists. The refugees founded three of the four largest cities in modern Jordan, including the capital city of Amman.

This bottom-up history of refugee migration and resettlement is based on archival materials from Turkey, Jordan, Bulgaria, Russia, Georgia, and the United Kingdom, including previously unknown private letters and refugee petitions. It traces the mobility and networks of Muslim refugees throughout the Ottoman Empire and across the Russo-Ottoman frontier. North Caucasian refugees sustained their dispersed communities, while reformulating their identities, through a web of kinship ties, villages networks, and diasporic associations. Some of them maintained connections to Russia, engaging in vigorous trans-imperial correspondence and often attempting to reimmigrate, despite Russian and Ottoman objection to their return migration. This dissertation weaves together social, cultural, and economic history to write a new chapter in global refugee migration in the late imperial age.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The following list corresponds to the most common abbreviations in this dissertation:

BOA – Prime Minister Ottoman Archive, Istanbul

CDM – Center of Documents and Manuscripts, Amman

DLS – Department of Land and Survey, Amman

GARF – National Archive of the Russian Federation, Moscow

MnV – Museum of the Bulgarian Renaissance, Varna

NBKM – Cyril and Methodius National Library, Sofia

RGVIA – Russian State Military-Historical Archive, Moscow

SSSA – National Historical Archive of Georgia, Tbilisi

TNA FO – The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Records of the Foreign Office,  
London

TsDA – Central State Archive of Bulgaria, Sofia

TsGA KBR – Central State Archive of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, Nalchik

TsGA RD – Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan, Makhachkala

TsGA RSO-A – Central State Archive of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania,  
Vladikavkaz

## TRANSLITERATION AND CALENDAR

I transliterate Ottoman Turkish using Modern Turkish orthography, without diacritics. For Arabic, I adopt a modified transliteration system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES). I mark *ayn* as [‘] and *hamza* as [’]. Following the IJMES convention, I adopt diacritics when transliterating terms and phrases and omit diacritics when citing literature.

In the transliteration of foreign words, I generally follow IJMES guidelines, notably in not italicizing common terms in Middle Eastern historiography, such as *shaykh*, *madrasa*, and ‘*ulama*. For words of Arabic origin, I adopt spellings that correspond to Arabic transliteration rules, rather than Modern Turkish orthography: for example, *hijra*, *muhajir*, and *hajj*.

For Russian and Bulgarian, I use the Library of Congress transliteration system. For rare transliterations from Adyghe and Kabardin, I use the BGN/PCGN romanization table.

The names of less known geographic localities are transliterated according to the rules outlined for modern Turkish, Arabic, and Russian: respectively, *Reşadiye*, *Na‘ur*, and *Chadakh*. For the names of well-known locations, I use standard English spellings: for example, *Istanbul*, not *İstanbul*; *Amman*, not ‘*Amman*; *Nalchik*, not *Nal’chik*.

In citations of Ottoman sources, I include two dates. The first is the date that appears on the document, either Hijri or Rumi. The second is the corresponding date in the Gregorian calendar. I transliterate the names of months following Modern Turkish orthography (e.g. *rebiülevvel*) for documents written in either Ottoman Turkish or Arabic. When citing Russian imperial sources, I use the original date from the source, in the Julian calendar.

## MEASUREMENTS AND CURRENCY

### Land area

1 *dönüm* = 4 *evlek* = 1,600 *arşın*

1 *dönüm* = 939.9 square meters = 10,117 square feet

4.31 *dönüm* = 1 acre

10.64 *dönüm* = 1 hectare

### Weight

1 *kile* = 20 *okka* = 8,000 *dirhem*

1 *kile* = 25.66 kg

1 *okka* = 1.28 kg

### Currency

1 *kuruş* = 40 *para*

100 *kuruş* = 1 Ottoman lira

The amount of *kuruş* needed to purchase:

Year	British pound	French franc	Russian ruble
1864	128.5	5	17.3
1878	108.9	4.3	11.3
1914	110.1	4.4	11.5

Source: Denzel, *Handbook of World Exchange Rates*, 370, 394-95.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the past seven years, I accrued a number of debts, and this dissertation has grown richer for every one of them.

This dissertation was made possible thanks to support from several institutions. The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) International Dissertation Research Fellowship funded the bulk of my archival research. I further benefited from a Pierre and Patricia Bikai Fellowship at the American Center for Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman; a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship at the American Research Center in Sofia (ARCS) in Bulgaria; and a Bernadotte Schmitt Grant from the American Historical Association. The Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship expedited my writing. I received generous support from Stanford University's Department of History. Stanford's Globalizing Eurasia grant funded my pre-dissertation research in Istanbul and Tbilisi. I was also awarded research grants from Stanford University's Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies, Center for Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies, Europe Center, and Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education.

Joel Beinin has been an incredible mentor and a model scholar. He pushed me to think critically about political economy and the state, and what those meant to women and men in this story. Joel selflessly gave his time and advice, read numerous drafts, and set me on a path to explore and find my voice as a historian. Ali Yaycıoğlu made it that much easier to fall in love with Ottoman history. Our many enthusiastic conversations about this project inspired me to look for new transnational connections, track down unknown sources, and take risks with my writing. Robert Crews helped me to rediscover the Russian Empire, an empire that seemed equally familiar and foreign when looking at its southern

borderlands. I credit Norman Naimark, a generous reader and critic, for teaching me that not every historical explanation has three parts. I will not always follow that sage advice in this dissertation, but I treasure it.

My academic family at Stanford sustained my growth as a scholar, a teacher, and a sociable human being. It has been a privilege to build a community with Kristen Alff, Rebecca Gruskin, Basma Fahoum, Catherine Baylin Duryea, Nicole Martin, Yasemin İpek, Eda Pepi, Fırat Bozçalı, Koji Hirata, Michelle Lynn Kahn, Jacob Daniels, Joshua Meyers, Uğur Zekeriya Peçe, Ali Aydın Karamustafa, Karem Said, Mejgan Massoumi, Madihah Akhter, and others. My language teachers prepared me for this transnational academic endeavor. Burcu Karahan-Richardson and Selim Kuru turned my hesitance about Ottoman Turkish into unbridled enthusiasm, whereas Khalid Obeid helped me to tackle handwritten letters in idiosyncratic Arabic. I am also grateful to Art Palmon, who eliminated all bureaucracy from my graduate experience.

Many scholars provided their feedback, advice, and inspiration at various stages of my research, including Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, Lale Can, Suad Joseph, Akram Khater, Baki Tezcan, Sherene Seikaly, Zachary Lockman, Eugene Rogan, Shahzad Bashir, Paula Findlen, Amir Weiner, Nancy Kollmann, Richard Roberts, Alan Mikhail, Max Weiss, Toby Jones, Marwan Hanania, Aaron Jakes, Ahmad Shokr, Ziad Abu-Rish, Beth Baron, Stacy Fahrenthold, Benjamin White, Laura Robson, James Grehan, Cyrus Schayegh, Sandrine Kott, Adam Mestyan, Eileen Kane, Margaret Litvin, Masha Kirasirova, Chris Gratien, Nir Shafir, Polina Ivanova, Keith Watenpaugh, Michael Reynolds, Ryan Gingeras, Reşat Kasaba, Tolga Esmer, David Gutman, Ronald Grigor Suny, Kemal Karpat, Nora Barakat, Jean-Michel Landry, Hakeem Naim, Sarah Fischer, Murat Yıldız, K. Mehmet

Kentel, Oscar Aguirre-Mandujano, John Colarusso, Timothy Blauvelt, Anton Vacharadze, Julia Elyachar, James Meyer, Flagg Miller, Michael Feener, Burçak Keskin-Kozat, Archana Prakash, Jovana Knežević, Dawn Chatty, Seteney Shami, Ehud Toledano, Ella Fratantuono, Gemma Masson, Mukaram Hhana, Simon Ertz, Amanda Wetsel, Owen Miller, Eli Weaverdyck, and Victor Petrov.

As I crisscrossed the Middle East and eastern Europe in pursuit of imperial reports, refugee petitions, and private letters, I benefited from the hospitality and generosity of many. In Jordan, I would like to thank Merissa Khurma and Yanal Ansouqa for opening the North Caucasian diasporic world to me. Salim Khutat in Amman and Farid Faysal Sultan in al-Zarqa' generously shared with me their families' private letters. I am grateful to Barbara Porter for welcoming me to the ACOR family; to Adnan Bakhit for facilitating my access to CDM; to A.B., A.H., and I.B. for humoring my presence in their offices at DLS; and to Adnan Younes Mazhab for opening his private archive and home to me. My conversations with members of the Khurma, Qursha, Mufti, Janbek, and Asendar families, and Amjad Jaimoukha, Janset Berkok Shami, 'Awn Shawkat al-Khasawneh, Dina Janbek, Raouf Sa'd Abujaber, Muhammad Kheir Mamsir, Hind Abu al-Sha'r, Majida Mufti Hilmi, Muhittin Qandour, Faisal Habtoosh Khot, Jamil Ishaqat, Isam Bino, Kamal Jalouqa, Mohammed Azoka, Myriam Ababsa, and others enriched this work.

In Turkey, I am grateful for the advice and introductions made by Elbruz Aksoy in Istanbul, Bislan Jalouqa in Ankara, and Neslihan Kaplan in Kayseri. I benefited from Hakan Kırımlı's unmatched knowledge on the Ottoman settlement of refugees. Murat Papşu generously shared his village data and insight into North Caucasian ethnography in Turkey. My research was made possible and richer through conversations with Oktay Özel,

Alexandre Toumarkine, Sefer Berzeg, Nihat Berzeg, Sevda Alankuş, Erol Karayel, Ulaş Sunata, Jade Cemre Erciyes, Nazan Çiçek, Eiji Miyazawa, Kuban Kural, and Zeynel Abidin Besleney. I express many thanks to Muhittin Ünal, Tsey Rengin Yurdakul, and Ebubekir Kızılcık for facilitating my research in, respectively, KAFDAV, Kafkas Vakfi, and Şamil Vakfi. In Uzunyayla, Abidin İnci and his family welcomed me to their home. Their story-telling leaves me forever enamored with Anatolia's most beautiful mountain valley.

In Bulgaria, Margarita Dobрева introduced me to Sofia's Ottoman archives and the world of late Ottoman refugees in the Balkans. I thank Stoyanka Kenderova for generous access to the NBKM archive, including its uncataloged collections. Emil Nankov was a brilliant host at ARCS. My conversations with Rossitsa Gradeva, Gergana Georgieva, Grigor Boykov, and Ventsislav Muchinov helped me to hone some of my arguments. Konstantin Karaivanov and his family showed me true Dobrujan hospitality.

In Russia, I am grateful to Vladimir Bobrovnikov for welcoming me at the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow. I enjoyed conversations with Ilya Zaytsev, Yuri Anchabadze, Mikhail Roshchin, Fasikh Baderkhan, Aleksandr Vasil'ev, Anastasiia Ganich, Dzhamal Rakhaev, and others. I thank Olga Borovaya, a dear Stanford friend, for indulging my love for Russian theater-going. While conducting archival research across the North Caucasus, I benefited from the advice of, to name a few, Anzor Kushkhabiev, Adam Gutov, and Murat Tabishev in Nalchik; Georgy Chochiev in Vladikavkaz; and Makhach Musaev, Shamil Shikhaliev, Amir Navruzov, Madina Abdulaeva, Amirkhan Magomeddadaev, and Magomedkhan Magomedkhanov in Makhachkala. I also appreciate my correspondence with Zarema Ibragimova, Zaira Ibragimova, Fatima Ozova, Svetlana Kudaeva, and Madina Pashtova.

I am indebted to many friends, who opened their homes to me during my nomadic graduate years. I would like to particularly thank Kalynda, Laura, and Tiffany in Mountain View; Basma at Stanford; Anna and Jean-Baptiste in London; and Vladimir in Moscow.

My parents, who raised me through the collapse and traumatic remaking of their country, have been my heroes. They would prefer this dissertation to be in another language.

This dissertation would never see the light of day without Ronny, whose love and patience are the greatest gifts.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Migrations from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire .....	33
Chapter 1 .....	54
Refugees in the Dobruja Region, 1860-78: The Political Economy of Resettlement and Conflict	
Interlude .....	113
The Levantine Refugee Crisis of 1878-80	
Chapter 2.....	132
Refugees in the Balqa' Region, 1878-1914: Land, Capital, and the Making of Amman	
Chapter 3.....	198
Refugees in the Uzunyayla Region, 1860-1914: Reconstructing the Caucasus in the Anatolian Heartland	
Chapter 4.....	259
An Empire in Flux: Refugee Resettlement and Violence	
Chapter 5.....	320
North Caucasian Networks and Organizations in the Ottoman Empire	
Chapter 6.....	379
Return Migration to the Russian Empire	
Chapter 7.....	440
Crafting the Russo-Ottoman Muslim World: Communication of North Caucasians Between the Two Empires	
Conclusion .....	486
Appendices.....	490
Bibliography .....	518

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 .....	35
Ethnographic map of the Northwest Caucasus in the late eighteenth century	
Figure 2 .....	51
Map of North Caucasian villages in Anatolia, Greater Syria, and Iraq	
Figure 3 .....	107
Ethnographic map of Dobruja in 1918	
Figure 4 .....	136
Map of Ottoman Transjordan in the early twentieth century	
Figure 5 .....	146
Photograph of late Ottoman Amman	
Figure 6 .....	164
Photograph of Amman in the interwar period	
Figure 7 .....	166
Photograph of Wadi al-Sir in 1905	
Figure 8 .....	171
Aerial photograph of Na'ur in 1918	
Figure 9 .....	179
Court cases involving Circassian muhajirs in the Balqa', 1901-03	
Figure 10 .....	202
Map of Sivas Province in 1890	
Figure 11 .....	214
Map of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla	
Figure 12 .....	215
Road map of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla	
Figure 13 .....	343
Map of the Khutatzades' correspondence, 1890-1905	

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 .....	49
North Caucasian muhajirs by ethnicity, 1860-1914	
Table 2 .....	57
Male population of Danube Province in 1874	
Table 3 .....	115
Circassian arrivals from the Balkans to Greater Syria in 1878	
Table 4 .....	121
Cost of bread in Damascus Province, 1878-80	
Table 5 .....	123
Daily rations for muhajirs in Damascus Province, 1878-80	
Table 6 .....	149
Average purchase price of agricultural land in Amman, <i>kuruş</i> per <i>dönüm</i> , 1891-1912	
Table 7 .....	155
Shops purchased in Amman, 1891-1912	
Table 8 .....	156
Average purchase price of shops in Amman in <i>kuruş</i> , 1891-1912	
Table 9 .....	159
Houses purchased in Amman, 1889-1912	
Table 10 .....	176
Average price of agricultural land in Circassian villages in the Balqa', <i>kuruş</i> per <i>dönüm</i> , 1891-1912	
Table 11 .....	186
Inventory of Hajj Islam's inheritance in 1901	
Table 12 .....	209
North Caucasians who moved to Uzunyayla after being settled elsewhere, 1860-62	
Table 13 .....	217
First muhajir population in Aziziye, Sivas Province in 1861	
Table 14 .....	235
Muhajir arrivals in Sivas Subprovince, 1877-79	



Table 15 .....	243
Attacks on Armenians in Sivas Province, 1895-96	
Table 16 .....	250
Population of Aziziye District in 1907	
Table 17 .....	407
Chechen returnees to Russia, 1867-71	
Table 18 .....	420
Written communal petitions to return to Russia, 1860-79	
Table 19 .....	429
North Caucasian returnees, 1860-1914	

## INTRODUCTION

In 1902, a group of 700 Muslim families, who had left Russia, wrote a petition to the Ottoman Refugee Commission, a governmental agency in Istanbul that was in charge of settling new immigrants in the Ottoman Empire. The petition said:

Nine months ago, we have taken refuge in the land of the compassionate [Ottoman] Sultan to preserve our Muslim faith. We were temporarily settled near Erzurum [in eastern Anatolia, now Turkey], where we have been destitute. The food rations that the Ottoman government gave us as new immigrants were suspended after only four months, and many of our children died of hunger, while others remain sick. For the permanent place of settlement, the provincial governor of Erzurum wishes to send us to Bitlis, whereas the provincial governor of Damascus wishes to settle us among some ruins. We have relatives who had previously emigrated to Syria, and in the name of Islam and justice, we beg you to allow us to move closer to them.<sup>1</sup>

Upon receiving this petition, written in Ottoman Turkish by one Kırım Sultan on behalf of probably over 3,000 Circassian refugees, the Refugee Commission consulted the Office of the Grand Vizier on the matter. The Ottoman government previously hoped to find agricultural land to settle these refugees permanently in the provinces of Van or Bitlis, in eastern Anatolia, or maybe in Bursa, in western Anatolia, where the previous group of immigrants from Russia had gone. But these Circassians resisted being sent to those places and had already dispatched their deputies to scout out prospective land in Syria. The Refugee Commission figured that it had little choice but to rent out steamboats that would deliver immigrants from the Black Sea port of Trabzon, which was near Erzurum, to the Mediterranean port of Beirut (now in Lebanon), as long as refugees would pay their own way.<sup>2</sup> From there, the Circassians would move closer to their relatives, whether those lived

---

<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister Ottoman Archive (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Istanbul, hereafter cited as BOA) A.MKT.MHM 520/8; reprinted in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, ed. Kemal Gurulkan (Istanbul: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2012), vol. 1, 532, 534.

<sup>2</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 520/8; reprinted in *Ibid.*, vol. 1, 532-33, 535.

in refugee villages near Damascus, Hama, or Aleppo (now in Syria) or in the refugee villages of Amman and Jerash (now in Jordan). This refugee petition and the Refugee Commission's deliberations over it highlight the critical issues that the Ottoman government faced in its refugee resettlement policy, namely a lack of funding and difficulties in finding sufficient agricultural land. They also disclose that immigrants often contested the government's orders and negotiated their settlement in their new empire.

The final half-century of Ottoman rule was an era of upheaval in the Middle East and the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire, which had once dominated the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea regions, lost most of its European and North African territories and was nearly bankrupt. Yet at its lowest geopolitical point, the empire became a major immigrant destination. Muslim communities from lost Ottoman territories and neighboring states moved to the Ottoman Empire. Among those immigrants were about a million Muslims from the North Caucasus, part of the Russian Empire. Between 1860 and 1914, Circassian, Chechen, Daghestani, and other refugees settled in nearly every province of the Ottoman Empire. They founded over a thousand new villages. The resettlement of Muslim refugees dramatically transformed the demography of the empire and was a harbinger of population relocations and forced homogenization that befell the Middle East and the Balkans in the twentieth century. This dissertation examines how the Ottoman government handled the resettlement of Muslims from Russia and how those refugees changed the Ottoman Empire.

This dissertation weaves together social, economic, and cultural history. The first part of this dissertation focuses on the political economy of refugee villages in the Ottoman provinces of Danube, Sivas, and Damascus, respectively in the northern Balkans, central

Anatolia, and southern Syria. I argue that refugees' ability to tap into local economies, with support from the state in financial aid and legal infrastructure, was crucial to regional stability. In the northern Balkans, for example, insufficient state subsidies and scarcity of land for refugees contributed to the outbreak of Muslim-Christian clashes in 1876 and the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, which ejected the Ottomans from much of the region. In central Anatolia, a lack of state investment hindered the development of refugee settlements and led to economic stagnation. In contrast, in the southern Levant, North Caucasian refugees took advantage of an Ottoman-built railway, land reforms, and real estate opportunities to create booming villages; they founded three of the four largest cities in modern Jordan, including the capital city of Amman. This part also incorporates histories of two refugee families: one headed by two remarkable women, Sayetkhan and her daughter Gül'azar, whose lives I trace through land registers and court records, and the other led by two brothers, Fuat and Cevat, whose stories I narrate through their personal correspondence.<sup>3</sup>

The second part of this dissertation adopts a bird's eye view on Muslim refugee migration to the Ottoman Empire. It draws on different geographic areas of the Ottoman Empire and investigates change in migration patterns and resettlement policies over the entire 1860-1914 period. Based on surviving documents, many of which were written by refugees themselves, I explore the North Caucasians' networks and mobility. These refugee worlds within the Ottoman Empire were sustained through familial and ethnic kinship networks, ties between refugee villages, and supra-ethnic formal associations. The wide geography of resettlement guided the emergence of new communal identities for Muslim

---

<sup>3</sup> The two families are connected, as Cevat Bey was a legal representative hired by Sayetkhan and Gül'azar's family.

refugees from Russia. North Caucasian Muslims also fostered social networks between the Ottoman and Russian empires. In the late imperial age of evolving notions of citizenship and travel bans, many refugees found ways to communicate with their families in the North Caucasus, to clandestinely travel back, or to reimmigrate permanently.

The narrative of this dissertation begins in 1860, during the final stage of the Caucasus War (1817-64), waged by the Russian Empire for control over the North Caucasus, when tens of thousands of Circassian refugees started disembarking on Ottoman shores. At the time, the Ottoman Empire experienced a series of internal reorganizations, or the Tanzimat era. The resettlement of Muslim refugees-turned-immigrants became a part of the empire's many centralizing reforms. I follow the story of the Ottoman resettlement of refugees until 1914. The outbreak of World War I, which pitted the Ottoman and Russian empires against each other one last time, halted continuing Muslim emigration from the North Caucasus. The war would also change how the Ottoman state, now governed by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), administered Muslim immigration.

This dissertation is a “trans-imperial” history of migration. By focusing on displacement and resettlement, I examine social and political processes in the Ottoman and Russian empires. In the late nineteenth century, these two multiethnic empires, through attrition or expansion, witnessed a dramatic change in their ethno-religious make-up, which had consequences to how imperial administrators would manage diversity and give preference to certain populations. This dissertation demonstrates that the migration of refugees from the North Caucasus was fundamental to the two empires' policies on immigration and emigration, which were linked to the broader notions of sovereignty and

imperial identity. I also regard Muslim refugees as having been trans-imperial subjects. Many refugees were displaced from the Russian Empire, dispersed in refugee villages throughout the Ottoman Empire, and some returned or dreamed of returning to the Caucasus. But it was not their mobility *per se* that makes their border-crossing story trans-imperial. It was their engagement with populations in both empires, their reliance on social networks that spanned the Russo-Ottoman border, and their occasional negotiations with both empires on the terms of their migration.

### *Terminology: Muhajirs as Refugees*

The notion of one's "refugee" identity in the late Ottoman era must be scrutinized. The term "refugee," as a political and legal designation, is a product of the twentieth-century international system constructed around the sovereignty of nation-states.<sup>4</sup> The commonly accepted definition of a refugee, as laid out in the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, is as follows:

[Any person who] owing to well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence ... is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.<sup>5</sup>

In a legal sense, the application of the term "refugee" to any historical events prior to World War II is retroactive. Yet the term has a longer history in western European societies. Contemporaries applied the term to French Huguenots as early as the seventeenth century,

---

<sup>4</sup> See Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5-7.

<sup>5</sup> Article 1(A)(2) of the 1951 Convention. The definition was reiterated in the 1967 Protocol to the Convention, which removed temporal and spatial limitations of the 1951 Convention, which had only applied to persons who became refugees as a result of events occurring in Europe before 1951.

and, in the aftermath of World War I, to Armenian and Russian refugees, but that historical usage emphasized political and humanitarian aspects and not a post-1951 legal aspect of one's refugee status.<sup>6</sup>

The term that the North Caucasians and the Ottoman government used in the 1860-1914 period was *muhajir* (Ar. *muhājir* – pl. *muhājirūn*; Ott. Tur. *muhacir* – pl. *muhacirler*).<sup>7</sup> The term lacks an equivalent in English. It can be translated as “immigrant,” “emigrant,” or “refugee,” each of which captures certain aspects of what being a *muhajir* entailed.

The Arabic term *muhajir* is derived from *hijra*, which denotes a journey of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina) in 622 CE. The Prophet Muhammad's companions who undertook the journey to preserve their nascent religious movement were known as *muhājirūn*. Throughout Islamic history, various Muslim communities and individuals that had left their homeland for reasons of actual, perceived, or anticipated religious persecution adopted the term in emulation of the Prophet's companions. The concept of *hijra* is tightly linked to the notion that a Muslim population should leave *dār al-ḥarb* (Ar. “domain of war”), or a territory under non-Muslim rule, for *dār al-islām* (Ar. “domain of Islam”), or a territory ruled by a Muslim dynasty.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the

---

<sup>6</sup> On the interwar origins of the modern refugee regime and humanitarianism see, respectively, Claudena Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Keith David Watenpaugh, *Bread from Stones: the Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015); idem., “The League of Nations’ Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism (1920-1927),” *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (2010): 1315-39; Laura Robson, *States of Separation: Transfer, Partition, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), 35-64.

<sup>7</sup> The Russian government used the term *pereselenets* (Rus. “someone who relocates”) or, aware of the terminology preferred by North Caucasians, *mukhadzhir*.

<sup>8</sup> On a debate on what constitutes *dār al-ḥarb* and *dār al-islām*, see Khaled Abou El Fadl, “Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries,” *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 2 (1994): 141-87.

migrations of Muslim muhajirs could have been a result of forced displacement, preemptory voluntary emigration, or a combination thereof.<sup>9</sup>

The hijra offers a way of thinking about refugee migration and resettlement that is different from an international refugee regime that coalesced in the second half of the twentieth century. The modern refugee regime, based on the 1951 Convention, derives refugee identity from one's citizenship in a nation-state that can no longer guarantee basic rights. A muhajir identity comes from one's belonging to a religious community. Nineteenth-century muhajirs had to grapple with state borders, citizenship, and travel documents, but they also engaged with the idea of hijra, wherein migration was understood or expressed through the language of faith, not sovereign political entities.

The terms *muhajir* and *hijra* provided the vocabulary for refugee migration even in several post-imperial societies in the twentieth century. Thus, in the 1947 partition in South Asia, Indian Muslims who left for or fled to Pakistan became known as *mohajirs*.<sup>10</sup> After the 1948 Palestine War, some Palestinians spoke of their experiences of displacement and flight as hijra.<sup>11</sup> In recent decades, some Afghan Muslims fleeing the Soviet invasion called themselves muhajirs.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the notion of hijra, as a crucial component of early Islamic history, appeals to revisionist Islamist movements. The terrorist organization

---

<sup>9</sup> On a debate among nineteenth-century Russian Muslims as to whether the Russian Empire constituted *dār al-ḥarb* or *dār al-islām*, see Robert D. Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 3, 86-89.

<sup>10</sup> See Vazira F.-Y. Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> See Ilana Feldman, "Home as a Refrain: Remembering and Living Displacement in Gaza," *History and Memory* 18, no. 2 (2006): 10-47. Interestingly, the Egyptian press had once described Jewish survivors of the Holocaust who had immigrated in Palestine as *muhājirūn*; see Esther Webman, "The War and the Holocaust in the Egyptian Public Discourse, 1945-1947," in *Arab Responses to Fascism and Nazism: Attraction and Repulsion*, ed. Israel Gershoni (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014), 256.

<sup>12</sup> M. Nazif Shahrani, "Afghanistan's Muhajirin (Muslim "Refugee Warriors"): Politics of Mistrust and Distrust of Politics," in *Mistrusting Refugees*, eds. E. Valentine Daniel and John C. Knudsen (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 187-206.



known as the “Islamic state,” or ISIS, reportedly used the term *muhajir* to refer to those who emigrated to its territories.<sup>13</sup> Another jihadist group in the Syrian civil war, which consists primarily of Chechen fighters from the North Caucasus, also utilizes the term in its title, *Jaysh al-muhājirīn wa-l-anṣār* (Ar. “army of muhajirs and helpers”).<sup>14</sup>

A rich religious heritage of the term *hijra* does not mean that nineteenth-century North Caucasian Muslims understood their migration in religious terms. Most of them were expelled from the Caucasus, and others chose to emigrate for economic, social, and religious reasons. *Hijra* was the best term available to North Caucasians to make sense of their journey, and it provided a religious justification for their immigration into the Ottoman domains, which, even if not a primary reason for migration for everyone, became an acceptable and honorable way to frame their exodus at the time. Moreover, one should not dismiss the emotional value that moving to the caliphate and the seat of the holiest Islamic sites may have held for ordinary Muslims, particularly when escaping violence or discrimination. North Caucasian Muslims almost exclusively used the term *muhajir* for self-designation.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government integrated the term *muhacir* into its immigration framework. The 1857 Immigration Law (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin Kanunnamesi*) did not specify that a *muhacir* needed to be a Muslim, effectively using the term for anyone willing to immigrate into the empire and accept Ottoman

---

<sup>13</sup> Rebecca Gould, “Hijra Before ISIS,” *The Montréal Review* (May 2015); Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, “ISIS and the Foreign-Fighter Phenomenon,” *The Atlantic* (8 March 2015).

<sup>14</sup> *Anṣār*, or “helpers,” is a term for residents of Yathrib/Medina who hosted the Prophet Muhammad and *muhājirūn* after their hijra from Mecca. The group was formerly known as *Katibat al-muhājirīn* (Ar. “muhajirs’ battalion”); see “Foreign Jihadis Change Face of Syrian Civil War,” *The Guardian* (25 December 2014).

subjecthood.<sup>15</sup> The Ottomans published the text of the law in European journals, which attracted interest from potential immigrant groups, such as Maltese, Irish, and Bessarabian Germans.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the governmental and popular understanding of the term implied a muhajir's Muslim identity, displacement, and need for refuge. The Ottoman Refugee Commission (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin Komisyonu*) was created in 1860 to resettle Crimean and North Caucasian Muslims. As the nineteenth century progressed, more Muslims arrived from recently lost Ottoman territories: after 1877-78, from Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and the eastern Anatolian territories lost to Russia; and, in 1912-13, from throughout the Balkans. The Porte also accepted small groups of muhajirs from Italian-occupied Libya, French-occupied Tunisia, Austrian-occupied Bosnia, and British-occupied Cyprus.<sup>17</sup> In 1897, the commission was renamed the Islamic Refugee Commission (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin-i İslamiye Komisyonu*).<sup>18</sup> By that time, the term *muhacir*, in addition to its religious legacy, has acquired pro-Ottoman and anti-colonial political sentiments.

The designation of *muhacir* in the Ottoman Empire was a legal and administrative term, conferring immigration privileges and subsidies, and was also a way of categorizing people. Previously, in internal correspondence, court records, and land registers, Ottoman

---

<sup>15</sup> See "Conditions arrêtées par le Gouvernement Impérial au sujet de la colonisation en Turquie" (25 February 1857), in *Législation Ottomane*, ed. Grégoire Aristarchi Bey (Istanbul: Frères Nicolaïdes, 1873-88), 16-19.

<sup>16</sup> Ultimately, few European Christians immigrated in the Ottoman Empire, notably Polish and Hungarian revolutionaries after the 1848 uprisings; Germans, Old Believers, and Cossacks from Russia; and Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians from Russia who had reimmigrated in the Ottoman Empire; see Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 62-65.

<sup>17</sup> See Peter Alford Andrews, "Muhacirler," in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 12 (1996): 515-20; Kemal H. Karpat, "Muslim Migration: A Response to Aldeeb Abu-Sahlieh," *The International Migration Review* 30, no. 1 (1996): 79-89.

<sup>18</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, "The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule: The Eviction and Settlement of the Çerkes," *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 1, no. 2 - 2, no. 1 (1979-80): 7-27; reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays*, ed. Karpat (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 663.

subjects were identified by their residence (e.g. *Arnavutköy ahalisinden*), their religion, especially for non-Muslims (e.g. *Ermeni milletinden*), or their tribal affiliation (e.g. *Afşar aşiretinden*). Being part of a *muhacir* community became a form of collective categorization, further broken down by regional origin (e.g. *Kars*, *Batum*, or *Girit muhacirler*) or ethnicity (e.g. *Çerkes*, *Tatar*, or *Laz muhacirler*). In the empire's final decades, many people had been newly relocated and resettled, including many nomadic communities.<sup>19</sup> Yet only those who were processed through the Ottoman Refugee Commission, almost exclusively Muslims, entered administrative records as *muhacirler*. This designation, embraced by many refugees, mandated by the state, and widely accepted by host communities, became a social identity in its own right. Second- and third-generation immigrants, whether from the North Caucasus, Crimea, or the Balkans, would call themselves and be referred to as *muhacirler* in the late Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey.<sup>20</sup> The evolution of a distinct identity, based on one's history of displacement, can be attributed to the state's enabling of difference from the beginning, through political economy and geographic dispersal of immigrant communities.

In 1913, the CUP-led government clarified the distinction between *muhacir* and newly introduced *mülteci* ("refugee" in modern Turkish), drawing on a procedural disavowal of one's former citizenship.<sup>21</sup> *Muhacirler* were those who immigrated in the

---

<sup>19</sup> See Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle, WA: Washington University Press, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> Likewise, in Pakistan, *mohajir* became a social and political community in its own right; see Julian J. Richards, "Mohajir Subnationalism and the Mohajir Qaumi Movement in Sindh Province, Pakistan," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>21</sup> Articles 2-4, *İskan-ı Muhacirin Nizamnamesi* (13 May 1913). For rich scholarship on late imperial subjecthood/citizenship, see Will Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); special issue in *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016); Eric Lohr, *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to*

Ottoman “protected domains,” with their citizenship cancelled by their former state. All those emigrating from the Russian Empire, for example, were regarded as *muhacirler* because their Russian subjecthood either was revoked or lapsed after a short period. *Mülteciler* were those who could not secure abrogation of their former citizenship, arrived in the Ottoman state as foreign citizens, and then applied for naturalization.<sup>22</sup> In that period, the government also often used the term *göçmen* (“emigrant/immigrant” in modern Turkish). Nevertheless, by the final decades of Ottoman rule, the term *muhacir* became a common administrative term for immigrants. The historical legacy notwithstanding, local officials sometimes applied the term *muhacir* to Jewish immigrants in Palestine, German settlers in Libya, and even internally displaced Greek and Armenian survivors of the genocide.<sup>23</sup>

The present-day translations of the term “refugee” in Turkish, Arabic, and Russian are, respectively, *mülteci*, *lāji*, and *bezhenets*. None of these terms were commonly used or applied to North Caucasians in 1860-1914. The Circassian-language term for Circassians’ displacement and migration was *Istambylakw’ä* (*Истамбылакӡӡӡ*, “exodus to Istanbul”), although, by the early twentieth century, North Caucasian muhajir intellectuals would commonly use *hicret* (the Ottoman Turkish spelling of *hijra*).<sup>24</sup> The contemporary Turkish-based North Caucasian diaspora uses Turkish terms *büyük göç* (“great

---

*Soviet Union* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); special issue in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, no. 2-3 (2006).

<sup>22</sup> Fuat Dündar, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-1918)* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2001), 227-44.

<sup>23</sup> See, respectively, BOA BEO 2/113 (8 *şevval* 1309, 6 May 1892); HR.TO 33/18 (23 June 1887); DH.ŞFR 601/81 (7 *teşrin-i sani* 1334, 20 November 1918).

<sup>24</sup> See Adam M. Gutov et al., eds., *Adygskie pesni vremion Kavkazskoi voiny*, 2nd ed. (Nalchik: Pechatnyi dvor, 2014), 606-10; “Hicret Mi, Hezimet Mi?” *Ğuaze*, no. 2 (10 April 1911), no. 27 (28 December 1911); “Hicret ve Avdet,” *Ğuaze*, no. 5 (4 May 1911), in Elmas Zeynep Arslan, “Circassian Organizations in the Ottoman Empire (1908-1923),” M.A. dissertation (Boğaziçi University, 2008), 100-20.

migration”), *sürgün* (“banishment”), and *soykırım* (“genocide”) to refer to their displacement.

In this dissertation, I prefer to use the term *muhajir*, in its better-known transliteration from Arabic, as an original, multifaceted term preferred by the main actors of the unfolding story. I use the terms “refugee,” “immigrant,” and “emigrant” when discussing relevant stages of muhajirs’ experiences. I prioritize the term “refugee,” which, although an imperfect and partial translation, captures the essence of one’s becoming a muhajir and opens up a possibility to conceptualize a non-western form of a “refugee regime,” based on hijra and the Ottoman resettlement of muhajirs.

The relationship between the late Ottoman muhajir and the post-1951 refugee is complex. On the one hand, North Caucasian muhajirs had an easy path to naturalization, compared to many modern-day refugees, in some ways making them akin to nineteenth-century European immigrants to the United States. Most muhajirs received Ottoman citizenship shortly after their arrival in the empire. On the other hand, the experiences of North Caucasian muhajirs were similar to many modern-day refugees. Most muhajirs were expelled or were prompted to flee during the war, and some muhajirs emigrated later because they were negatively affected by the outcomes of the war. Whatever the circumstances of muhajirs’ departure from the North Caucasus were, most of them could never go back because the Russian authorities formally banned return migration and reimmigration.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>25</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* 39 (2007): 15-32.

*Locating Russo-Ottoman Muslim Migrations within Global Migration History*

My work situates the North Caucasians' displacement and resettlement within Middle Eastern, Eurasian, and global migration history. Muhajirs' migration coincided with, and was part of, what is often called the "first wave of globalization" between 1870 and 1914.<sup>26</sup> Characterized by agricultural expansion and improvements in trans-oceanic transportation, the first wave is best known for voluntary migration from southern and eastern Europe to the Americas.<sup>27</sup> By focusing on refugees, this dissertation investigates the darker side of international migration at the time.

Throughout the 1860-1914 period, migrations from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire were steeped in several global contexts. One of them was demographic engineering, which refers to state-directed removal and resettlement of ethno-religious groups in order to consolidate control over territories by homogenizing their populations or altering their demographic ratios.<sup>28</sup> Mass migration from the North Caucasus began during Russia's war to annex the region and reached its height during the Russian-

---

<sup>26</sup> Nearly ten percent of the world's population participated in long-distance labor migration during the "first wave." See Paul Collier and David Dollar, *Globalization, Growth, and Poverty: Building an Inclusive World Economy* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 24-26.

<sup>27</sup> The other major type of migration in this period, albeit less studied, was from India and China to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, some of it having been forced migration. See Sunil S. Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: the Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> On Ottoman demographic engineering, see Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008); Nesim Şeker, "Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians," *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 3 (2007): 461-74. For a study crossing the Ottoman/republican divide, see Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Seeking Like a Nation-State: Young Turk Social Engineering in Eastern Turkey, 1913-50," *Journal of Genocide Research* 10 (2008): 15-39. The *European Journal of Turkish Studies* dedicated three thematic issues to the study of demographic engineering in the Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey; see issues 7 (2008), 12 (2011), and 16 (2013). On Russian demographic engineering in the Caucasus, see Nicholas B. Breyfogle, *Heretics and Colonizers: Forging Russia's Empire in the South Caucasus* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Dana Sherry, "Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast, 1860-65," *Kritika* 10, no. 1 (2009): 7-30.

perpetrated ethnic cleansing of the Circassian coast in 1863-64, followed by the colonization of the fertile Kuban and Terek regions with Christian settlers. [See next section – “Migrations from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire.”] The refugee migration was also abetted by Ottoman willingness to accept and resettle a large Muslim population.

Lord Curzon, Britain’s post-World War I Foreign Secretary, famously referred to demographic changes in the Balkans in the early twentieth century as the “unmixing of peoples,” a term that later became associated with international negotiations over Middle Eastern demographics in Lausanne in 1923.<sup>29</sup> This dissertation demonstrates that the “unmixing” of communities had begun as early as the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the exodus of North Caucasian Muslims from the Russian Empire and their resettlement in the Ottoman Empire set a precedent for population transfers and displacements in the Middle East and eastern Europe. The idea that a large population could be moved elsewhere for the benefit of the state fit various ideologies and was subsequently deployed in the 1915 Armenian Genocide, the 1923 Greek-Turkish population exchange, and Stalin’s deportations in the 1930s and 1940s.

This dissertation is part of the nascent scholarship on the political economy of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>30</sup> The Ottoman settlement of muhajirs, when conducted without sufficient financial support and planning, also contributed to social instability, including muhajirs’ conflicts with local populations over land and formation of

---

<sup>29</sup> Michael Robert Marrus, *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 41; see also Rogers Brubaker, “Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples: Historical and Comparative Perspectives,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18, no. 2 (1995): 189-218.

<sup>30</sup> See Ellinor Morack, *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945* (Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017), 41-122; Taner Akçam and Ümit Kurt, *The Spirit of the Laws: The Plunder of Wealth in the Armenian Genocide* (New York: Berghahn, 2015).

paramilitary organizations. By the early twentieth century, the Ottomans intentionally settled Muslim immigrants to dilute Christian populations and to achieve a desirable demographic balance in strategic provinces. The settlement of Muslim muhajirs also went in hand with dispossessing Christian minorities, particularly Armenians, Greeks, and Assyrians, in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>31</sup> The Ottoman settlement of Muslim refugees provides a critical context for the rise of sectarianism, which led to the Armenian genocide and the violent break-up of the empire.

Immigration of Muslims from Russia accelerated the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the global economy.<sup>32</sup> In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman government heavily invested in agricultural production in order to increase the export of cereals and cash crops overseas. The shortage of labor emerged as a major obstacle in expanding agricultural production.<sup>33</sup> The arrival of about a million muhajirs was therefore fortuitous for the Ottomans' long-term economic objectives. The government settled muhajirs in the countryside, expecting them to till previously uncultivated land, to produce wheat, to protect railways and telegraph lines, and to eventually pay taxes.<sup>34</sup> In accordance with the 1857 Immigration Law, the Ottoman Refugee Commission granted all muhajirs free plots of agricultural land, an exemption

---

<sup>31</sup> See Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 62-66, 130-34; Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 61-63; Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 128-69.

<sup>32</sup> On late Ottoman economy, see Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993); Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1988); Joel Beinin, *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 44-70.

<sup>33</sup> Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, 68.

<sup>34</sup> See Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 68, 76-77; Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 70-94.



from military service for twenty-five years and from taxes for six years in the Balkans and twelve years in Anatolia, in addition to a one-time grant of cattle, farming tools, and grain and temporary financial aid. These exemptions and benefits were conditional upon muhajirs' staying on and tilling the land. From an economic perspective, the settlement of Muslim muhajirs had conflicting results. It may have bolstered Ottoman rule by contributing to the growth of the Ottoman economy in the late nineteenth century.<sup>35</sup> Refugees were facilitators of expansion of networks of capital that boosted agriculture and spurred urban development in parts of the Middle East and the Balkans.<sup>36</sup> Yet it may have also expedited the Ottoman collapse by increasing Ottoman public debt, as the government kept borrowing money to settle immigrants.

This dissertation contributes to the interdisciplinary scholarship on immigration and resettlement by examining village economies of Muslim refugees, bringing together two phenomena that are usually studied apart. Rural settlement is typically associated with voluntary immigration, whereas forced refugee displacement usually leads to settlement in refugee camps and urban areas. The Ottoman immigration program was not starkly different from those of Russia, the United States, or British dominions at the time – emphasizing agricultural production, frontier expansion, and demographic growth.

The Russian Empire, for example, witnessed a massive transfer of a working population towards its new areas in Siberia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and southern Ukraine. Russia's 1889 Resettlement Law guaranteed free land to all immigrants. It made a distinction, just like the 1857 Ottoman Immigration Law, between the Asian and

---

<sup>35</sup> Karpal, *Ottoman Population*, 76.

<sup>36</sup> See Vladimir Hamed-Troyansky, "Circassian Refugees and the Making of Amman, 1878-1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 4 (2017): 605-23.

European parts of the empire, favoring settlers who moved east of the Ural Mountains. In Russia's European provinces, peasants rented the allotted land for six to twelve years before they received a permanent deed on the land and were exempt from taxation and conscription for two years. In the Asian provinces, settlers received immediate land usufruct rights, were exempted from full tax payments for three years and half payments for three additional years, and were free from army conscription for three years.<sup>37</sup> Similarly to the Ottoman Empire, Russia sought to recruit foreign immigrants. It attracted a number of German, Czech, and Polish farmers from Austria-Hungary and Bulgarian, Armenian, and Greek immigrants from the Ottoman Empire; many of them settled in the Caucasus and Crimea, effectively replacing those Muslims who had become muhajirs.

The United States government passed a series of Homestead Acts, between 1862 and 1930, to encourage the establishment of farming settlements, mostly west of the Mississippi River. Similarly to muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire, American homesteaders needed to demonstrate commitment to their allotted land to secure full rights of land tenure. Thus, the 1862 act granted a deed of title to free public domain, up to 160 acres, to a male or female "head of a family" who resided on the land for at least five years and improved the land through farming.<sup>38</sup>

In the decades prior to World War I, the governments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa passed similar legislative packages to encourage immigration and agriculture. For example, in the mid-nineteenth century, the Australian colonies

---

<sup>37</sup> Aleksandr A. Kaufman, *Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia* (Saint Petersburg: Biblioteka obshchestvennoi pol'zy, 1905), 24-30.

<sup>38</sup> See Thomas Donaldson, *The Public Domain: Its History, with Statistics* (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1884/1970), 332-56; Richard White, "*It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own*": *A New History of the American West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 137-54.

adopted a series of land acts and other legislation in order to open up land ownership to poorer immigrants, to free up land from mass-scale squatting, and to encourage wheat cultivation. Farmers were required to reside on the land for one to three years and make improvements to the land for them to obtain title to the land.<sup>39</sup> In Canada, the 1872 Dominion Lands Act invited immigrants from Europe, the United States, and eastern Canada to develop the prairies. The government offered 160 acres of free land to anyone willing to reside on the land and build a house, within three years.<sup>40</sup> Unlike in the Ottoman Empire, private entities, be they shipping companies or large colonial employers, often played a key role in driving settler colonialism in the British dominions.

The Ottoman settlement of immigrants in rural areas across the Balkans, Anatolia, and Syria was part of the global nineteenth-century story of agricultural expansion and settlement of the frontier. Yet the Ottoman example had two major distinctions from its foreign counterparts. First, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, refugee migration channeled much of rural immigration into the Ottoman Empire. For most Russian Muslims, the act of moving to unfamiliar Ottoman lands and becoming farmers was not voluntary. Second, the Ottoman state exercised a more thorough control over resettlement, choosing settlement locations within the empire, as well as placing explicit prohibitions on muhajirs from moving to urban areas. These circumstances mattered immensely for muhajirs' economic integration.

---

<sup>39</sup> See Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 41-74.

<sup>40</sup> Walter T.K. Nugent, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 144; see also Harper and Constantine, *Migration and Empire*, 11-40.

The migration of Muslims from Russia to the Ottoman Empire is also intertwined with global slavery and abolitionism. Slavery was being phased out in the Russian Caucasus in the 1860s, but slave ownership remained legal in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>41</sup> According to Ottoman estimates, as many as 150,000 Circassians arrived in the empire as slaves in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>42</sup> Slaves from the Caucasus had served in elite urban Ottoman households, including the imperial harem, for centuries.<sup>43</sup> In the 1860s, however, many Circassian families arrived with Circassian slaves who did primarily agricultural work for them. Therefore, Muslim refugee exodus from Russia to the Ottoman Empire had extended the institution of Circassian agricultural slavery for several more generations, while also dramatically increasing the number of slaves in the Ottoman Empire, which hindered abolitionist efforts in the empire. This dissertation investigates a remarkable convergence of refugee and slave histories. The Ottoman government recognized both masters and slaves as muhajirs, conferring the same immigration privileges and citizenship to both, while also affirming Circassian masters' ownership over their slaves.

By the early twentieth century, the hijra of Muslims from Russia to the Ottoman Empire constituted a distinct type of international migration. It incorporated various strands of mobility: forced migration after ethnic cleansing or as a result of slavery; labor migration

---

<sup>41</sup> On late Ottoman slavery, see Ehud R. Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); idem., *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression, 1840-1890* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); Ceyda Karamürsel, "Transplanted Slavery, Contested Freedom and Vernacularization of Rights in the Reform Era Ottoman Empire," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 59, no. 3 (2017): 690-714; idem., "'In the Age of Freedom, in the Name of Justice': Slaves, Slaveholders, and the State in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic, 1857-1933," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Pennsylvania, 2015).

<sup>42</sup> Ehud R. Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 84.

<sup>43</sup> See Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

and agricultural resettlement; and religious migration. This migration drew on older migration patterns in the Middle East and the Islamic world but was also a decidedly modern, late imperial phenomenon linked to European colonial expansion and the shrinking of the Ottoman-Muslim world.

### *Historiography*

The topic of Muslim migrations from the North Caucasus remains relatively unknown within the fields of modern Middle Eastern and Ottoman history, Russian history, and global migration history. This study aims to speak to Ottoman historians, considering the impact of Muslim refugee migrations on the making of the modern Balkans, Turkey, and the Arab world; to Russian historians, not least because displacement from the Caucasus tells us much about the making of the colonial empire; and to global migration scholars because the study of hijra integrates the Ottoman and Islamic world into international migration history of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In general, much of scholarship on North Caucasian muhajirs, or other Muslim refugees from that period, focuses on their arrival in Ottoman ports. This phase was most visible and reported on by Ottoman authorities and foreign consuls. We know relatively little about what happened next, how refugee communities fared in their new settlements, except for instances when they were involved in serious conflicts with local populations.

Until recently, the topic of North Caucasian migration was overlooked in English-language scholarship, owing to the peculiarities of Cold War-era historical research: a separation between the Russian/Soviet and Middle Eastern area studies, with implications

for funding and language training; the low priority of the Caucasus in Russia-centric scholarship; a lack of access to Soviet archives and, until recently, Turkish archives; as well as a relatively low profile of the North Caucasian diaspora in the west, compared to other Middle Eastern minorities.<sup>44</sup>

Several historians laid the groundwork for the study of North Caucasian refugees in the late Ottoman period, having proposed comprehensive frameworks to examine Muslim immigration. Kemal H. Karpat conducted pioneering demographic work on refugee migration and situated Ottoman immigration policies within the broader contexts of Ottoman history. He astutely noted the role of North Caucasian Muslims in the processes of Islamization and Turkification of Anatolia – a feat of Hamidian, Young Turk, and early Republican demographic engineering, considering that most North Caucasians were not particularly devout Muslims and were not Turks.<sup>45</sup> Mark Pinson proposed to view nineteenth-century migrations between the Ottoman and Russian empires as “demographic warfare.”<sup>46</sup> He drew attention to “religious sorting,” whereby Ottoman Christians moved to Russia and Russians Muslims fled to the Ottoman state, but he may have overstated the role that the two empires, especially the Ottomans, played in directing this process in the 1860s. Justin McCarthy situated North Caucasian migration within a series of expulsions of Muslims into the Ottoman Empire and the loss of “Muslim territories” to Russia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and others. His narrative helps to explain the attitudes among

---

<sup>44</sup> On the politics of historical research bridging the Middle East and Russia/eastern Europe, see James H. Meyer, “For the Russianist in Istanbul and the Ottomanist in Russia: A Guide to the Archives of Eurasia,” *Ab Imperio* 4 (2008): 281-85. On scholarly limitations of area studies, see Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 121-29, 236-41.

<sup>45</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, esp. 57-58, 75-77.

<sup>46</sup> Mark Pinson, “Demographic Warfare: An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policy, 1854-1866,” Ph.D. dissertation (Harvard University, 1970).

many Ottoman elites in the empire's final decades, and his demographic count is useful, but those should have never been used to juxtapose the sufferings of one Ottoman community against the other.<sup>47</sup> Norman Lewis positioned Circassian and Chechen settlement in Greater Syria as part of a state-driven sedentarization program, pursued by the late Ottoman state and then the Syrian and Jordanian governments.<sup>48</sup> Reşat Kasaba articulated a similar argument, finding that, in the late Ottoman era, refugees and nomads were two major components of a “moveable empire,” and that the government grew increasingly intolerant of mobility, which it could not control, and therefore sought to settle both groups.<sup>49</sup>

For many decades, in Turkey, Jordan, and Syria, research on North Caucasian migration remained the domain of North Caucasian diasporic writers. Many of these professionally-trained and amateur historians produced seminal works that laid out the timeline of displacements and arrivals, the major challenges faced during migration, and ethnic demographics of resettlement.<sup>50</sup> Such works commonly utilized available sources in Turkish and Arabic and drew on diasporic oral history. In the Middle East, research on muhajirs faced particular ideological limitations and biases. In Turkey, drawing attention to non-Turkishness and non-Anatolian origins of North Caucasians constituted a sensitive issue for many decades.<sup>51</sup> The North Caucasian diaspora in Turkey also suffered a public

---

<sup>47</sup> Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1995).

<sup>48</sup> Norman Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>49</sup> Kasaba, *Moveable Empire*.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, İsmail Berkok, *Tarihte Kafkasya* (Istanbul, 1958); Shauket (Habjoka) Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors in Circassian History* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1972).

<sup>51</sup> For an early work on muhajirs, see Ahmet Cevat Eren, *Türkiye'de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri* (Istanbul: Nurgök Matbaası, 1966).

image problem due to the common perception of Ahmet Anzavur and Çerkes Ethem, two Circassian leaders, as traitors to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's cause.<sup>52</sup> Several works emphasized contributions of muhajir communities to the Turkish National Movement.<sup>53</sup> Likewise, in Syria and Jordan, studies on muhajirs by North Caucasian writers often stressed the commitment of these non-Arab minorities to the Syrian and Jordanian nation-states and popular causes, such as Palestinian liberation.<sup>54</sup> Since the late 1980s, North Caucasian diasporic historians in Turkey and Jordan published important works, often critical of how the Ottoman government handled refugee resettlement.<sup>55</sup>

In the Soviet Union, the topic of North Caucasian migrations to the Ottoman Empire, although not entirely taboo, was not welcomed. The subject matter would have required a sensitive discussion of how Russia annexed the Circassian coast and an acknowledgement of a massive North Caucasian diaspora outside of Soviet borders; it could potentially open up grievances in a region that lived through Stalinist deportations

---

<sup>52</sup> See Bülent Bilmez, "A Nationalist Discourse of Heroism and Treason: The Construction of an 'Official' Image of Çerkes Ethem (1886-1948) in Turkish Historiography, and Recent Challenges," in *Untold Histories of the Middle East: Recovering Voices from the 19th and 20th Centuries*, eds. Amy Singer et al. (London: Routledge, 2011), 106-23; Zeynel Abidin Beslenev, *The Circassian Diaspora in Turkey: A Political History* (London: Routledge, 2014), 60-75.

<sup>53</sup> See Sefer E. Berzeg, ed., *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri* (Istanbul: Nart Yayıncılık, 1990); Muhittin Ünal, *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkeslerin Rolü* (Ankara: TAKAV, 2000).

<sup>54</sup> See Mohammad Kheir Haghandoqa, *The Circassians: Origin, History, Customs, Traditions, Immigration to Jordan* (Amman: Rafidi Print, 1985); Muhammad Kheyr Ismail, *Dalil al-ansab al-sharkasiyya: dirasa fi asl al-sharkas wa tarikhuhum wa ansabuhum wa amakin tajammu'akum fi al-jumhuriyya al-'arabiyya al-suriyya* (Damascus: Dar al-Salam, 1993).

<sup>55</sup> See İzzet Aydemir, *Göç: Kuzey Kafkasya'dan Göç Tarihi* (Ankara: Gelişim Matbaası, 1988); Bedri Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler* (Istanbul: Nart Yayıncılık, 1993); Nedim İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri (1877-1890)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994); Süleyman Erkan, *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1878-1908): Tatarlar, Çerkezler, Abhazlar, Gürcüler, Ahıskalılar, Dağistanlılar, Çeçenler, Diğerleri* (Trabzon: KTÜ, 1996); Abdullah Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri, 1856-1876* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997); Jawdat Hilmi Nashkhu, *Tarikh al-sharkas (al-adighah) wa al-shishan fi liwa'i Hawran wa al-Balqa' (1878-1920)* (Amman: Lajnat Tarikh al-Urdun, 1998); Muhammad Khayr Mamsir Batsaj, *Al-Mawsu'a al-tarikhiyya li-l-umma al-sharkasiyya "al-adigha": min al-alf al-'ashir ma qabla al-milad ila al-alf al-thalith ma b'ada al-milad*, 7 vols. (Amman: Dar al-Wa'il, 2009).



of entire ethnic groups in the 1930s and 1940s. In the early 1980s, Georgii Dzidzariia produced a seminal work on Abkhaz displacements into the Ottoman Empire.<sup>56</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a number of Russian historians turned to research on muhajirs. In the 1990s and 2000s, several monographs came out on the subject of Circassian deportations<sup>57</sup> and the North Caucasian diaspora, especially in the Arabic-speaking world.<sup>58</sup> Scholars, based in North Caucasian autonomous republics, often produced studies focused on migrations of specific ethnic groups: Circassians,<sup>59</sup> Karachays and Balkars,<sup>60</sup> Ossetians,<sup>61</sup> Chechens,<sup>62</sup> and Daghestanis.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Georgii A. Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo i problemy istorii Abkhazii XIX stoletii* (Sukhumi: Alashara, 1982).

<sup>57</sup> See Svetlana G. Kudaeva, *Ognem i zhelezom: vynuzhdennoe pereselenie adygov v Osmanskuiu imperiiu (20-70 gg. XIX v.)* (Maikop: AGU, 1998); Tamara V. Polovinkina, *Cherkesiia: bol' moia i nadezhda* (Nalchik: Izdatel'stvo M. i V. Kotliarovykh, 2014).

<sup>58</sup> See Anzor V. Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii* (Nalchik: Vozrozhdenie, 1993); idem., *Cherkesskaia diaspora v arabskikh stranakh: XIX-XX vv.* (Nalchik: IIFE KBNTs RAN, 1997); idem., *Ocherki istorii zarubezhnoi cherkesskoi diaspori* (Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2007); Fasikh Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora v Turtsii, Sirii i Iordanii: vtoraiia polovina XIX - pervaiia polovina XX veka* (Moscow: IV RAN, 2001); Anastasiia A. Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii: osobennosti istoricheskogo i etnokul'turnogo razvitiia* (Moscow: ISAA MGU, 2007); Bagavudin R. Aliev, "Severokavkazskaia diaspora v stranakh Blizhnego i Srednego Vostoka: istoriia i sovremennye protsessy (vtoraia polovina XIX - XX v.)," Ph.D. dissertation (IIAE DNTs RAN, 2002).

<sup>59</sup> Tugan Kh. Kumykov, ed., *Vyselenie adygov v Turtsiiu: posledstvie Kavkazskoi voiny* (Nalchik: Elbrus, 1994); Kudaeva, *Ognem i zhelezom*; Barasbi N. Berezgov, "Cherkesskaia diaspora," in *Adygskaia i karachaevo-balkarskaia zarubezhnaia diaspora: istoriia i kul'tura*, ed. Khasan M. Dumanov (Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2000), 11-40.

<sup>60</sup> Zarema B. Kipkeeva, *Karachaevo-balkarskaia diaspora v Turtsii* (Stavropol: SGU, 2000); Fatima A. Borlakova, "Karachaevo-balkarskaia emigratsiia: etapy formirovaniia i etnokul'turnoi evoliutsii (vtoraia polovina XIX – pervaiia polovina XX v.," Ph.D. dissertation (Karachaevo-Cherkessk State University, 2009).

<sup>61</sup> Georgy Chochiev, "Evolution of a North Caucasian Community in Late Ottoman and Republican Turkey: The Case of Anatolian Ossetians," in *Diasporas of the Modern Middle East: Contextualising Community*, eds. Anthony Gorman and Sossie Kasbarian (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2016), 103-37; Mikhail S. Totoev, "K voprosu o pereselenii osetin v Turtsiiu (1859-1865)," *Izvestiia Severo-Osetinskogo NII* 13, no. 1 (1948): 24-46.

<sup>62</sup> Said-Emi S. Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora na Srednem i Blizhnem Vostoke: istoriia i sovremennost'* (Nalchik: Respublikanskii poligrafkombinat im. Revoliutsii 1905 g., 2008); Zarema Kh. Ibragimova, *Emigratsiia chechentsev v Turtsiiu (60-70 gg. XIX v.)* (Moscow: Maks Press, 2000).

<sup>63</sup> Magomedkhan M. Magomedkhanov, *Dagestantsy v Turtsii* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1997); Amirkhan M. Magomedadaev, *Emigratsiia dagestantsev v Osmanskuiu imperiiu: istoriia i sovremennost'*, vol. 2 (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2001); Akhmed M. Murtazaliev, *Literatura dagestanskoi diaspori Turtsii: vtoraiia polovina XIX – XX vek* (Makhachkala: IIALI DNTs RAN, 2006); Madina I. Abdullaeva,

In the past two decades, the study of late Ottoman migration began to attract greater attention in the field of Middle Eastern studies.<sup>64</sup> Some of the most exciting new works on Middle Eastern migration examined mobility between the Ottoman and Russian empires: from pilgrims to intellectuals to prisoners of war.<sup>65</sup> The Ottoman Refugee Commission came under scrutiny for how it handled refugee resettlement.<sup>66</sup> New works appeared on other Muslim muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire,<sup>67</sup> whereas North Caucasian muhajirs were examined within ethnic politics of late Ottoman northwestern Anatolia<sup>68</sup> and twentieth-century Turkey.<sup>69</sup> Seteney Shami introduced anthropologists to the contemporary Circassian diaspora, leading to new comparative scholarship on transnational identities in

---

*Vnutripoliticheskaia situatsiia v Dagestane v 70-90e gg. XIX v. i migratsionnye protsessy* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2014).

<sup>64</sup> See Isa Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Dawn Chatty, *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); idem., “Refugees, Exiles, and Other Forced Migrants in the Late Ottoman Empire,” *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2013): 1-13.

<sup>65</sup> See Andrew Robarts, *Migration and Disease in the Black Sea Region: Ottoman-Russian Relations in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); James H. Meyer, *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Lale Can, “Trans-Imperial Trajectories: Pilgrimage, Pan-Islam, and the Development of Ottoman-Central Asian Relations, 1865-1914,” Ph.D. dissertation (New York University, 2012); Will Smiley, “‘When Peace Is Made, You Will Again Be Free’: Islamic and Treaty Law, Black Sea Conflict, and the Emergence of ‘Prisoners of War’ in the Ottoman Empire, 1739–1830,” Ph.D. dissertation (University of Cambridge, 2012).

<sup>66</sup> David Cameron Cuthell Jr., “The Muhacirin Komisyonu: An Agent in the Transformation of Ottoman Anatolia, 1860-1866,” Ph.D. dissertation (Columbia University, 2005); Ella Fratantuono, “Migration Administration in the Making of the Late Ottoman Empire,” Ph.D. dissertation (Michigan State University, 2016).

<sup>67</sup> See Hakan Kırımlı, *Türkiye’deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay Köy Yerleşimleri* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012); Oktay Özel, “Migration and Power Politics: The Settlement of Georgian Immigrants in Turkey (1878-1908),” *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 4 (2010): 477-96.

<sup>68</sup> Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees: Struggles over Land and Population Movements in North-Western Anatolia, 1877-1914,” Ph.D. dissertation (Birkbeck College, University of London, 2003); Ryan Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); idem., “Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens: North Caucasian Resistance to the Turkish National Movement in Northwestern Anatolia, 1919-23,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 1 (2008): 89-108; idem., “The Sons of Two Fatherlands: Turkey and the North Caucasian Diaspora, 1914-1923,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2011): 2-17.

<sup>69</sup> Ayhan Kaya, *Türkiye’de Çerkesler: Diaspora’da Geleneğin Yeniden İcadı* (Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011); Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*.

the Middle East.<sup>70</sup> Finally, several biographical and autobiographical works of prominent muhajirs and slaves, including women whose voices had so often been omitted from the historical narrative, appeared in recent years, providing yet another perspective of North Caucasian-cum-Ottoman identities in the late Ottoman era.<sup>71</sup>

### *Archival Materials*

This dissertation is primarily based on archival research in Turkey, Jordan, Bulgaria, Georgia, the United Kingdom, and the Russian Federation, including the autonomous republics of Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia-Alania, and Daghestan. I also use several documents that I accessed in archives in Romania and Azerbaijan. To construct a narrative that features perspectives of as many historical actors as possible, I use different types of archival sources: Ottoman and Russian imperial records, writings by external observers, and documents produced by muhajirs themselves.

The state-produced evidence includes, on the Ottoman side, correspondence between the Ottoman government and provincial (*vilayet*), subprovincial (*sancak*), and

---

<sup>70</sup> See Seteney Shami, "Ethnicity and Leadership: The Circassians in Jordan," Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Berkeley, 1982); idem., "Disjuncture in Ethnicity: Negotiating Circassian Identity in Jordan, Turkey and the Caucasus," *New Perspectives* 12 (1995): 70-95; idem., "Circassian Encounters: The Self as Other and the Production of the Homeland in the North Caucasus," *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998): 617-46; Eiji Miyazawa, "Memory Politics: Circassians of Uzunyayla, Turkey," Ph.D. dissertation (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2004); Kari S. Neely, "Diasporic Representations: A Study of Circassian and Armenian Identities in Greater Syria," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Michigan, 2008).

<sup>71</sup> See, for example, Benjamin C. Fortna, *The Circassian: The Life of Eşref Bey, Late Ottoman Insurgent and Special Agent* (London: Hurst & Co., 2016); Leyla Açıba, *Bir Çerkes Prensesinin Harem Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Timaş, 2010); Douglas Scott Brookes, *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher: Voices from the Ottoman Harem* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2010); Aydın Osman Erkan, *Turn My Head to the Caucasus: The Biography of Osman Ferid Pasha* (Istanbul: Çitlembik Publications, 2009). For a bibliography of North Caucasian memoirs, see Sefer E. Berzeg, *Kafkasya ve Diaspora Yayın Hayatından* (Ankara: Kuban Matbaacılık, 2008), 160-175.

district (*kaza*) authorities, and, on the Russian side, between the administration of the Caucasus Viceroy in Tiflis, and North Caucasian provincial (*oblast'*) and district (*okrug*) authorities. I utilize different types of Ottoman administrative registers that record the population (*nüfus defteri*), tax payments (*öşür defteri*), allowances (*tayinat/iane defteri*), and land allotments (*arazi defteri*) of muhajir communities. In Sofia, I sorted through boxes of yet uncataloged population and tax records from the late Ottoman Balkans. In Amman, I received rare access to the land records of late Ottoman Transjordan, collecting a dataset of all property transactions conducted in Amman and surrounding villages between 1889 and 1913. My other sources for Transjordan include an extensive collection of Arabic-language court records. In the Russian imperial archives, I examined local police protocols preserved in Tbilisi and secret police files held in Moscow.

Writings by external observers include travel accounts of European and American visitors to the Ottoman Empire. I use newspapers published in the Ottoman Empire, in Ottoman Turkish and Bulgarian, and in the Caucasus in Russian. I also draw on British and Russian consular reports from different Ottoman provinces that constitute a precious source of information about muhajirs' settlements and relations with other communities. Foreign consuls typically collected their intelligence from local Ottoman populations.

Documents written by muhajirs themselves remain rare evidence in Middle Eastern migration and refugee studies. In Istanbul, I accessed many communal petitions that muhajirs sent to the government, including the Ottoman Refugee Commission whose documents only recently became available.<sup>72</sup> In Sofia, I found many individual petitions that muhajirs settled in the Balkans sent to district, subprovincial, and provincial

---

<sup>72</sup> On Ottoman petitions, see Yuval Ben-Bassat, *Petitioning the Sultan: Protests and Justice in Late Ottoman Palestine* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

authorities, which contain more immediate requests and complaints. In Tbilisi and Nalchik, I gathered petitions to the Russian authorities from both Caucasus-based Muslims asking for emigration and Ottoman-based muhajirs requesting repatriation. Muhajirs' voices are also found in complaints that refugees sent to North Caucasian diasporic periodicals established in Cairo, Istanbul, Paris, and the Caucasus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Through outreach to diasporic organizations and networks in the Middle East, I also located a number of private letters that were exchanged within muhajir families. One such collection of 58 letters has been preserved by a muhajir family in Amman. Between 1890 and 1915, members of this upper-class Circassian family exchanged letters from their locations in western, central, southern, and eastern Anatolia, Transjordan, and the North Caucasus. I also found a small collection of letters received by Chechen muhajirs in al-Zarqa' from their families in Daghestan between 1910 and 1912, and dozens of muhajirs' letters that were apprehended by tsarist authorities at the Russo-Ottoman border and are now preserved in archives in Tbilisi, Nalchik, and Makhachkala. In addition to examining petitions and letters, I conducted several dozen interviews with descendants of muhajirs in Jordan and Turkey.

This project originated in my ambition to write a history "from below," exploring how refugees negotiated with their host empire and participated in regional labor markets. Because Ottoman scholarship, due to our sources, remains very archive-oriented and therefore state-centered, I aspired to give utmost attention to "refugee voices." That proved a challenging act, even as I tapped into previously unknown or unstudied documents, such as refugee petitions and private letters. Petitions were written by the most educated

members of refugee communities, often the ‘ulama [Muslim religious leaders], posing the question to what extent they represented the interests of the entire community. In many cases, they were written by state-appointed scribes, who described immigrants’ concerns in a language that the state sanctioned and deemed appropriate. Private letters, on the other hand, were typically the product of notables, whose interests did not always align with lesser-status immigrants. Nevertheless, in many ways, this dissertation constitutes a study of migration and resettlement “from the bottom up.” By investigating both the political economy of refugee villages and refugees’ networks, I examine how resettlement and settling-in had proceeded in practice.

### *Summary of the Chapters*

The first part of this dissertation examines the political economy of North Caucasian resettlement by focusing on three case studies in the Ottoman Balkans, Anatolia, and Levant. Chapter 1 surveys refugee resettlement in the Dobruja region, home to one of the largest Muslim refugee populations in the Ottoman Balkans, between 1860 and 1878. I argue that refugee resettlement in the northern Balkans was largely an economic failure because of insufficient and delayed distribution of land and financial aid, although that was not apparent until the mid-1870s, when economic hardship and inequality resulted in high levels of muhajir-perpetrated crime. Refugee communities experienced internal conflicts, primarily over land distribution and relations between Circassian slave owners and their slaves. During the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, muhajir populations of Dobruja

evacuated to Anatolia and the Levant and, after the war, were barred from returning to Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania.

In a short interlude, I focus on the 1877-80 Levantine refugee crisis, provoked by the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman war, and particularly on refugee pressure and economic inflation in Levantine port cities in modern-day Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. Tens of thousands of North Caucasian muhajirs became “double refugees,” having been displaced from their homes in the Balkans to interior regions of Syria.

Chapter 2 examines North Caucasian villages in the Balqa’ region in Ottoman Transjordan. Between 1878 and 1914, North Caucasian muhajirs founded seven villages in the Balqa’. Based on Ottoman land and court registers, I reconstruct the economic rise of Amman and regard muhajirs as facilitators of the expansion of Ottoman networks of capital. Amman flourished because muhajirs took advantage of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code and Ottoman railway infrastructure, succeeded in attracting Syrian, Palestinian, and Transjordanian capital, and forged ties with bedouin communities. I also examine the development of smaller muhajir villages of Wadi al-Sir, al-Rusayfa, and Na’ur.

Chapter 3 focuses on muhajir settlements in the Uzunyayla region in central Anatolia between 1860 and 1914. One of the largest resettlement areas, the Uzunyayla plateau hosted over 70 North Caucasian villages. Muhajirs in Uzunyayla lived in proximity to Armenians and Turkic-speaking Afşar nomads; the latter came into a conflict with muhajirs over rights to the land in the plateau, leading to a state military intervention. The geographic isolation of the region and lack of state investment led to the eventual economic stagnation of Uzunyayla.

Chapter 4 revisits the history of Muslim refugees in the broader political and social contexts of the late Ottoman Empire. I argue that many conflicts in which muhajirs were involved originated in intercommunal competition over land and contested interpretations of land tenure and ownership. Over the 1860-1914 period, Ottoman strategies in resettling refugees evolved, reflecting the empire's shifting demographic, military, and economic priorities. Since the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the Ottoman government recruited and militarized muhajir militias, which contributed to new rounds of displacement, ethnic cleansing, and genocide in the 1910s.

The second part of this dissertation explores the mobility of North Caucasian muhajir communities both within the Ottoman Empire and between the Ottoman and Russian states. Chapter 5 examines social affiliations of muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire through family ties, village networks, and formal muhajir associations. North Caucasian notables often utilized their connections to both high- and lower-status muhajirs to recreate hierarchies that were in place before their migration from the Caucasus. Village networks allowed for the creation of new pan-ethnic and pan-Caucasian identities, whereas the formal associations, founded in Cairo and Istanbul, promoted their particularist visions of the "Circassian" or "North Caucasian" identity, while stressing muhajirs' loyalty to Ottoman society and global Muslim community.

Chapter 6 focuses on return migration of muhajirs from the Ottoman Empire to the Russian Caucasus, which challenged the policies laid out by the two imperial governments. By reviewing little-known "returnee refugee" crises on the Russo-Ottoman border, involving Chechens in 1867-71 and Abkhaz in 1878-81, I trace the evolution of Russia's policy on Muslim reimmigration. Muhajirs employed different methods to regain access to



their homeland, with unsanctioned reimmigration being the most daring and often most successful strategy.

Chapter 7 articulates the notion of the North Caucasian world as part of the broader Russo-Ottoman Muslim world, which was sustained by the communication of Muslims across the Russo-Ottoman frontier through private correspondence, public debates over hijra, and a culture of rumors. This chapter challenges an artificial distinction imposed on the studies of southern Russian and eastern Ottoman territories and problematizes the North Caucasian hijra, which was shaped by Russian colonial and Ottoman immigration policies but also drew heavily on regional and trans-Eurasian legacies of Muslim migration.

## Migrations from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire

The Caucasus Mountains, stretching between the Black and Caspian seas, are among Eurasia's most formidable natural barriers. This mountain chain, and the geography and environment it commanded, allowed the Caucasus to become, first, home to dozens of isolated ethno-linguistic communities and, second, a frontier zone for the Russian, Ottoman, and Iranian empires between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>1</sup> Today, the North Caucasus is fully within the Russian Federation and is separated into seven autonomous republics, whereas the South Caucasus is shared between the republics of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.<sup>2</sup> The central part of the Caucasus consists primarily of mountains and plateaus, whereas its western and eastern parts feature mountain slopes and coastal areas – critical passages between the Eurasian steppe and the broader Middle East. In the early modern period, the western Caucasus territories on the Black Sea coast had been under the influence of the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate. The territories in present-day Daghestan and Azerbaijan, lying in the eastern Caucasus and on the Caspian Sea coast, had greater connections to Iran.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Several scholars examined the North Caucasus as an imperial “frontier”; see Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002); Thomas Barrett, *At the Edge of the Empire: The Terek Cossacks and the North Caucasus Frontier, 1700-1860* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); idem., “Lines of Uncertainty: The Frontiers of the North Caucasus,” *Slavic Review* 54, no. 3 (1995): 578-601; Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500-1800* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> On modern history of the Caucasus, see Charles King, *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ronald Grigor Suny, *Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993); idem., *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007); Dmitrii Iu. Arapov, Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, and Irina L. Babich, *Severnyi Kavkaz v sostave Rossiiskoi imperii* (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> On early modern history of the Caucasus, see Michael Khodarkovsky, “Of Christianity, Enlightenment, and Colonialism: Russia in the North Caucasus, 1550-1800,” *The Journal of Modern History* 71, no. 2 (1999): 394-430;

## *Muslims of the North Caucasus*

The Caucasus region accommodates remarkable ethno-linguistic diversity. The tenth-century Arab historian al-Mas‘udi called the region the “mountain of tongues.”<sup>4</sup> Three language families are endemic to the Caucasus: Northwest Caucasian, Northeast Caucasian, and Kartvelian. The region also hosts populations speaking Turkic, Indo-European, and Semitic languages.

In the South Caucasus, the dominant ethnic groups are Georgians (speaking a Kartvelian language), Armenians (speaking an Indo-European language), and Azeris (speaking a Turkic language). Smaller communities, living south of the Caucasus Mountains, include Caucasus Greeks, Assyrians, Sunni and Yazidi Kurds, and Georgian Jews.

The western coast of the North Caucasus is home to Circassians, Abazins, and Abkhaz, speaking closely related but mutually unintelligible languages of the Northwest Caucasian language family.<sup>5</sup> All three languages have a number of dialects, reflecting intra-ethnic divisions within their communities, and none of them had an established literary tradition by the mid-nineteenth century. Circassians, or the Adyghe in their native language, consist of about twelve historical communities or “tribes”: Abzakh, Bzhedugh,

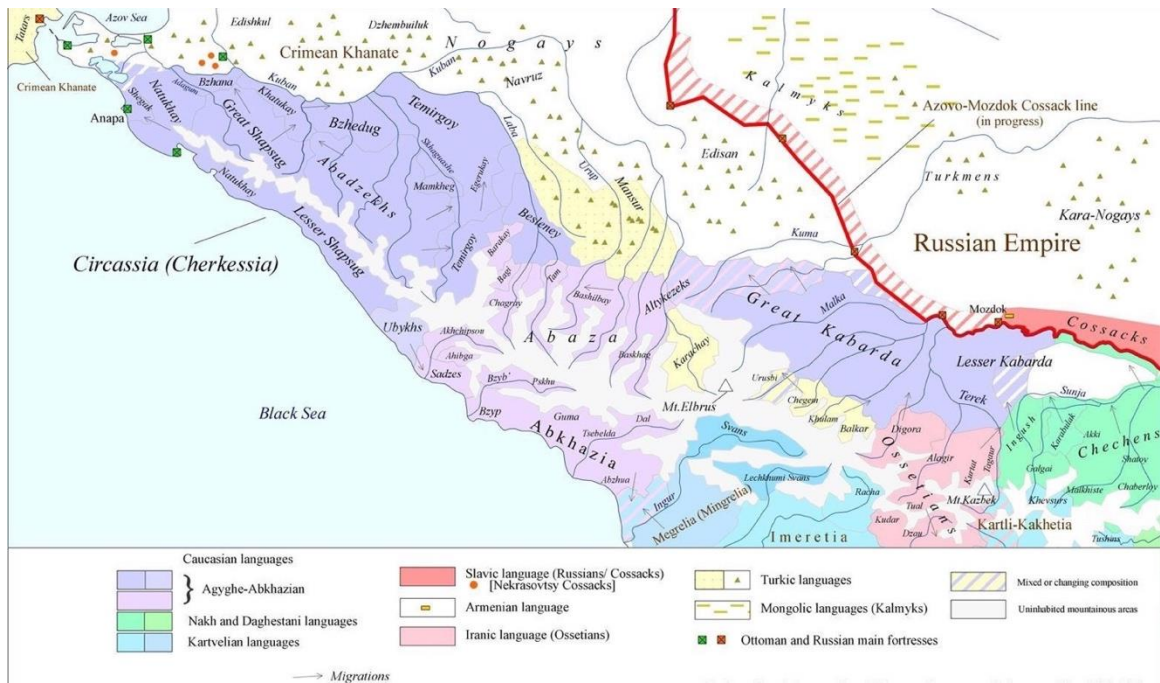
---

David Marshall Lang, *The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy, 1658-1832* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957).

<sup>4</sup> See John C. Catford, “Mountain of Tongues: The Languages of the Caucasus,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 6 (1977): 283-314.

<sup>5</sup> For contemporary accounts of Circassia before Russian conquest, see Edouard Taitbout de Marigny, *Three Voyages in the Black Sea to the Coast of Circassia* (London: John Murray, 1837); Frédéric DuBois de Montperreux, *Voyage autour du Caucase chez les Tcherkesses et les Abkhases*, 6 vols. (Paris: Librairie de Gide, 1839–43); John A. Longworth, *A Year Among the Circassians*, 2 vols. (London: Colburn, 1840); James Stanislaus Bell, *Journal of a Residence in Circassia*, 2 vols. (London: Moxon, 1840).

Figure 1: Ethnographic map of the Northwest Caucasus in the late eighteenth century



This map depicts ethnic groups and language families in the Northwest Caucasus in 1774-80. Most western Circassians and many Kabardins, Abazins, and Abkhaz would be expelled into or emigrate to the Ottoman Empire in the 1860s. Source: <[abkhazworld.com/aw/images/img/north-west-caucasus-language.jpg](http://abkhazworld.com/aw/images/img/north-west-caucasus-language.jpg)> (accessed on 18 March 2018).

Hatuqwai, Mamkhlegh, Natukhai, Temirgoi, Yegeruqwai, Zhaney, Shapsugh, Ubykh,<sup>6</sup> Beslenev, and Kabardin.<sup>7</sup> The exact composition and terminology are disputed both in the Caucasus and in diaspora. In this dissertation, I collectively refer to the first ten communities, mostly living on the Black Sea coast, as “western Circassians” and to Beslenev and Kabardins on interior plateaus as “eastern Circassians,” according to their

<sup>6</sup> The Ubykh, although often counted as a subdivision of Circassians, are sometimes considered a separate people. Ubykhs were one of the groups that were expelled/displaced from the Caucasus in their entirety in 1863-64. The Ubykh language made international headlines in 1992, when its last native speaker, Tevfik Esenç, passed away in Turkey; see Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine, *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World Languages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> For an overview of different Circassian communities, see Walter Richmond, *The Northwest Caucasus: Past, Present, Future* (London and New York: Routledge 2011), 20-25.

nineteenth-century geography within the North Caucasus. Wherever possible, I identify specific subgroups of Circassian muhajirs. To the south of Circassians, down the Black Sea coast, lived Abazins and Abkhaz, or Abkhazians. The Ottomans generally referred to both communities as “Abaza.”

The Northcentral Caucasus, around the Terek River, is home to three large communities: Ossetians, speaking an Iranian (Indo-European) language, and Ingush and Chechens, two closely related Vainakh people speaking languages of the Northeast Caucasian language family. Daghestan, in the Northeast Caucasus, is one of the world’s most culturally heterogeneous regions.<sup>8</sup> Whereas Circassian, Chechen, and Ossetian constitute ethnic designations, “Daghestani” always denoted a collective regional designation. Over forty ethnic groups inhabit Daghestan’s mountains, steppes, and coastal plains. Most of them speak mutually unintelligible Northeast Caucasian languages, such as Avar, Dargin, Lezgin, Lak, and Tabasaran. Chechens and Azeris live in Daghestan as well. In addition to the aforementioned ethno-linguistic groups, four Turkic-speaking communities live in the Northcentral and Northeast Caucasus: Balkars, Karachays, Kumyks, and Nogai Tatars.

A traveler in the nineteenth-century North Caucasus would also encounter Mountain Jews, transplanted Armenian and Georgian communities, and resident Persian and Ottoman subjects. Finally, from the late eighteenth century, Russian and Ukrainian Cossacks and peasants settled on the northern rim of the region, and schismatic Orthodox

---

<sup>8</sup> See Moshe Gammer, ed., *Written Culture in Daghestan* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2015); idem., ed., *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2009); idem. and David J. Wasserstein, eds., *Daghestan and the World of Islam* (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2006).

communities made their way to the South Caucasus.<sup>9</sup> Russian colonization would accelerate in the 1860s, particularly along the Kuban and Terek rivers.<sup>10</sup>

The ethno-linguistic diversity in the Caucasus often befuddled the nearby empires. In late Imperial Russia, North Caucasian Muslims were collectively referred to as “mountaineers” (Rus. *gortsy*), an identity that was Orientalized and romanticized in nineteenth-century Russian literature.<sup>11</sup> In the late Ottoman Empire, Circassians (Ott. Tur. *Çerkesler*), as the largest incoming group, often served as an umbrella designation for all muhajirs from the North Caucasus.<sup>12</sup>

By the second half of the nineteenth century, the Caucasus region constituted a patchwork of religious identities and traditions. In the South Caucasus, Armenians and Georgians were mostly Christians (their medieval states were, respectively, first and second to adopt Christianity as a state religion), whereas Azeris were predominantly Twelver Shi‘a, with a Sunni minority. Small Jewish populations lived on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains. In the North Caucasus, Ossetia and Abkhazia were near-equally split between Muslims and Christians prior to the Russian conquest and Muslim migrations to the Ottoman Empire. Kabarda also had a small Christian population, and southern Daghestan had a Twelver Shi‘a population. The rest, and the overwhelming majority, of the population of the North Caucasus was Sunni Muslim. Sunni Islam was, by no means, homogeneous in the region. Some Muslim communities traced their origins to the Arab

---

<sup>9</sup> See Khodarkovsky, “Of Christianity, Enlightenment, and Colonialism”; Breyfogle, *Heretics and Colonizers*.

<sup>10</sup> See Sherry, “Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast”; Zarema Kh. Ibragimova, *Chechenskaia istoriia: politika, ekonomika, kul'tura. Vtoraia polovina XIX veka* (Moscow: Evraziia +, 2002), 59-73.

<sup>11</sup> See Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> On the usage of “Circassians” as a supra-ethnic designation, see Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 20-22, 54.

conquest of Derbent in the mid-seventh century. Other North Caucasian populations embraced Islam gradually under the influence of different powers: the Abbasid Caliphate, the Golden Horde, the Crimean Khanate, and the Ottoman, Safavid, and Qajar empires. Anti-Russian resistance and the spread of Sufi tariqas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries accelerated the conversion of many North Caucasian communities to Islam.<sup>13</sup> In the western Caucasus, Circassians, Abkhaz, and Turkic communities followed the Hanafi madhhab, similarly to most Ottoman Muslim subjects in Anatolia and the Balkans and most Russian Muslim subjects in Central Asia and the Volga region.<sup>14</sup> In the Northeast Caucasus, Ingush, Chechens, and some Daghestanis belonged to the Shafi'i madhhab, similarly to Ottoman and Qajar populations in Kurdistan. Well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, local pre-Islamic and pre-Christian traditions continued to play an important role in the social life of many North Caucasian communities.<sup>15</sup>

The harsh terrain and poor accessibility of many Caucasus territories ensured the political autonomy of its many communities well into the early modern period. Russia reached the North Caucasus with the conquests of the neighboring khanates of Kazan (1552) and Astrakhan (1556). Since then, several groups had accepted Russian subjecthood

---

<sup>13</sup> On a rich debate on the origins and impact of Sufi movements in the North Caucasus, see Michael Kemper, "The North Caucasian Khalidiyya and 'Muridism': Historiographical Problems," *Journal of the History of Sufism* 1-2, no. 5 (2007): 151-67; Alexander Knysh, "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm: The Issue of the Motivations of Sufi Resistance Movements in Western and Russian Scholarship," *Die Welt des Islams* 42, no. 2 (2002): 139-73; Anna Zelkina, *In Quest for God and Freedom: The Sufi Response to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus* (London: Hurst & Co, 2000); Moshe Gammer, "The Beginnings of the Naqshbandiyya in Daghestan and the Russian Conquest of the Caucasus," *Die Welt des Islams* 34 (1994): 204-17.

<sup>14</sup> For late Imperial Russia's engagement with her Muslim populations, see a seminal study by Robert D. Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*; see also idem., "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (2003): 50-83; James H. Meyer, "Speaking Sharia to the State: Muslim Protesters, Tsarist Officials, and the Islamic Discourses of Late Imperial Russia," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14, no. 3 (2013): 485-505.

<sup>15</sup> See Austin Jersild, "Faith, Custom, and Ritual in the Borderlands: Orthodoxy, Islam, and the 'Small Peoples' of the Middle Volga and the North Caucasus," *The Russian Review* 59, no. 4 (2000): 512-29.

or claimed tsarist protection.<sup>16</sup> The defining moment in the history of the region was the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774), following the 1768-74 Russo-Ottoman War, a major military and diplomatic defeat for the Ottoman Empire. The treaty affirmed Russia's sovereignty over Kabarda, in the Northcentral Caucasus, which held a strategic mountain pass into the South Caucasus and had become a platform for Russia's subsequent conquests in the region. The Ottomans also ended their protectorate over the Crimean Khanate, an influential actor in North Caucasian politics in its own right, leading to Russia's eventual annexation of Crimea in 1783.<sup>17</sup>

Much of the South Caucasus, since the sixteenth century, had been part of the Iranian realm, but the Ottoman Empire had contested the region. The Ottomans emerged victorious in the 1578-90 war, and the Safavids reconquered their lost territories in the 1603-18 war. The disintegration of the Safavid state in the first half of the eighteenth century allowed the Ottomans to reestablish political control over the region before the Qajars reclaimed much of the South Caucasus and Daghestan. In 1801, Russia incorporated the eastern Georgian kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti, and, ten years later, the western Georgian kingdom of Imereti. Qajar Iran relinquished all its South Caucasian territories to Russia in the treaties of Gulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828).<sup>18</sup>

After having gained the entire South Caucasus by 1828, Russia focused on solidifying its presence in the North Caucasus. Between 1817 and 1864, Russia fought a

---

<sup>16</sup> See Sean Pollock, "Empire by Invitation? Russian Empire-Building in the Caucasus in the Reign of Catherine II," Ph.D. dissertation (Harvard University, 2006); Chantal Lemerrier-Quellejey, "Cooptation of the Elites in Kabarda and Daghestan in the Sixteenth Century," in *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World*, ed. Marie Bennigsen Broxup (London: Hurst, 1996), 18-44.

<sup>17</sup> See Alan W. Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772-1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970); Hakan Kırımlı, *National Movements and National Identity Among the Crimean Tatars, 1905-1916* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), 1-31.

<sup>18</sup> See Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 49-60, 63-95.



series of conflicts, collectively known as the Caucasus War.<sup>19</sup> Its primary opponent was the Caucasus Imamate (1828-59), which united territories in northern Daghestan and Chechnya and inspired other groups in the region to fight the Russian state.<sup>20</sup> The establishment of the imamate in 1828 was a political milestone. For centuries, territories on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains formed khanates, princely states, and tribal confederations, grounding their legitimacy in dynastic genealogy and often seeking patronage of nearby empires. The imamate was a centralized state, which rooted its ideology in anti-colonialism, with Islam as a unifying factor; the notion of *jihād* [struggle] against Russia and the adoption of shari‘a [Islamic law] were critical in the history of the imamate.<sup>21</sup> In 1859, its third and final imam, Shamil, surrendered to Russia.<sup>22</sup>

In the final years of the Caucasus War, the Russian military focused on coastal Circassia, the last remaining autonomous territories in the Caucasus. To resist occupation, western Circassian communities united to proclaim independence, established a parliament, and even sought recognition of their statehood in Istanbul and London.<sup>23</sup> The

---

<sup>19</sup> On periodization and historiography of the Caucasus War, see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 112-35. See also W.E.D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border, 1828-1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953).

<sup>20</sup> See Michael Khodarkovsky, *Bitter Choices: Loyalty and Betrayal in the Russian Conquest of the North Caucasus* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Moshe Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan* (London: Frank Cass, 1992).

<sup>21</sup> See Georgi Derluguian, “The Forgotten Complexities of the North Caucasus Jihad,” in *Caucasus Paradigms: Anthropologies, Histories, and the Making of a World Area*, eds. Bruce Grant and Lale Yalçın-Heckmann (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2007), 75-92; Anna Zelkina, “*Jihād* in the Name of God: Shaykh Shamil as the Religious Leader of the Caucasus,” *Central Asian Survey* 21, no. 3 (2002): 249-64; Michael Kemper, “Khalidiyya Networks in Daghestan and the Question of Jihad,” *Die Welt des Islams* 42, no. 1 (2002): 41-71.

<sup>22</sup> On Georgian, Chechen, and Daghestani experiences of colonialism and anti-colonial resistance, see Rebecca Gould, *Writers and Rebels: The Literature of Insurgency in the Caucasus* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017).

<sup>23</sup> See Paul Manning, “Just Like England: On the Liberal Institutions of the Circassians,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 3 (2009): 590-618; Charles King, “Imagining Circassia: David Urquhart and the Making of North Caucasus Nationalism,” *The Russian Review* 66, no. 2 (2007): 238-55.

Circassian coast was a strategic territory that the Russian military held crucial for its control over the northern part of the Black Sea and over the North and South Caucasus. The fertile Circassian territories also held considerable economic potential. Several tsarist military and civil factions long advocated Slavic colonization of the Circassian coast.<sup>24</sup> By 1864, Russian troops established physical control over the entire Northwest Caucasus, while directing or abetting mass-scale displacement of Muslim populations into the Ottoman Empire.<sup>25</sup>

### *Migrations from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire*

This dissertation explores several types of migration from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to muhajirs who hailed from the north of the Caucasus Mountains, it includes Muslim groups from two South Caucasus regions, Abkhazia [now, de jure part of Georgia, de facto independent] and Zakatala [in Azerbaijan], that, ethnolinguistically and in terms of migration patterns, represented the “extension” of the North Caucasus. Viewing “North Caucasians” as a category of Ottoman-era muhajirs is a choice in itself because various ethnic and sub-ethnic groups from the North Caucasus experienced different types of displacement, ranging from brutal expulsions to migration under little duress. I contend, however, that investigating the settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs from different communities over five decades provides a more complex analysis

---

<sup>24</sup> See Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 157-62.

<sup>25</sup> Paul B. Henze, “Fire and Sword in the Caucasus: The 19th Century Resistance of the North Caucasian Mountaineers,” *Central Asian Survey* 2, no. 1 (1983): 5-44.; idem., “Circassian Resistance to Russia,” in *The North Caucasus Barrier*, ed. Marie Bennigsen Broxup, 62-111; Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 85-124.

of the Ottoman resettlement program and of Muslim mobility between the Russian and Ottoman empires. The first part of my dissertation, focusing on the provinces of Danube, Sivas, and Damascus, features primarily western Circassians, Abkhaz, Kabardins, and Chechens; these ethnic groups, in that order, were also the largest North Caucasian communities in the Ottoman Empire. The second part of my dissertation, by examining muhajirs' mobility, looks at historical actors from those same communities, as well as Ossetians, Daghestanis, and Turkic groups.

Although estimates vary widely, about a million Muslims left the North Caucasus in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century.<sup>26</sup> [See Table 1.] I distinguish four periods in the history of Muslim migrations from the Caucasus: from the 1850s until 1862, 1863-64, between 1865 and 1878, and the post-1878 era.<sup>27</sup>

In the 1850s, tens of thousands of Circassians and Nogai Tatars emigrated to the Ottoman Empire amidst the ongoing Caucasus War. Some left in the wake of Russian conquest of their territories, or in anticipation of such, and others to reunite with their families that had already moved to Anatolia.<sup>28</sup> The Ottoman Empire was familiar terrain for many Northwest Caucasians: high-status families commonly studied and did business

---

<sup>26</sup> Kemal Karpat estimates that between 1859 and 1879 up to two million people, mostly Circassians, left the Caucasus for the Ottoman state but only 1,500,000 survived and were resettled. In 1881-1914, a half million more Circassians and Tatars arrived; see *Ottoman Population*, 69-70. Justin McCarthy estimates that 1,200,000 Muslims left the North Caucasus and 800,000 lived to be resettled, including 600,000 in 1856-64 and 200,000 after 1864; see *Death and Exile*, 36, 53n45. The lowest count is the Russian military's count of 493,194 muhajirs in 1858-1865; Adol'f P. Berzhe "Vyselenie gortsev s Kavkaza," *Russkaia starina* 33 and 36 (1882), reprinted as *Vyselenie gortsev s Kavkaza* (Nalchik: Izdatel'stvo M. i V. Kotliarovykh, 2010), 4. The largest estimate belongs to the Circassian historian Sultan Devlet-Giray, who claimed that 3,097,949 North Caucasian Muslims left for the Ottoman Empire in 1816-1910, including around 2,750,000 Circassians who were present in the empire by 1910; see Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 420. For different estimates, see Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire*, 25-27, 171-72n102; Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 70-73; Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 31-34.

<sup>27</sup> For a break-down into six periods and a nuanced discussion of different reasons for Muslim emigration, see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 155-83. See also Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 74-84.

<sup>28</sup> On Nogai Tatar muhajirs, see Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 149-55.

there, and many Muslims traversed the Ottoman domains as hajjis every year.<sup>29</sup> The Ottoman state had also hosted generations of Muslims escaping Russian rule, from Kazan Tatars in prior centuries to Crimean Tatars who had been steadily emigrating since the late eighteenth century.<sup>30</sup> In 1860, Mikhail Loris-Melikov, a Russian general, later appointed as Governor of Terek Province, traveled to Istanbul to negotiate the emigration of the Circassians. The Porte agreed to accept 40,000-50,000 immigrants over a period of several years.<sup>31</sup> Refugee numbers exceeded this figure over the next several years, but the two empires did not renegotiate that deal. In this period, anywhere between 50,000 and 150,000 North Caucasian muhajirs had emigrated.<sup>32</sup>

Much of the overall migration from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire happened in the short span of 1863-64, as part of mass expulsions of Circassians in the final years of the Caucasus War. During the war, the Russian military burnt dozens of

---

<sup>29</sup> See Kane, *Russian Hajj*.

<sup>30</sup> On Kazan muhajirs, see Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 139-142. On Crimean muhajirs, see Hakan Kırımlı, *Türkiye'deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay Köy Yerleşimleri*; idem., "Emigrations from the Crimea to the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 5 (2008): 751-77; Mara Kozelsky, "Casualties of Conflict: Crimean Tatars during the Crimean War," *Slavic Review* 67, no. 4 (2008): 866-91; Brian Glyn Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden: Brill, 2001); idem., "Hijra and Forced Migration from Nineteenth-Century Russia to the Ottoman Empire. A Critical Analysis of the Great Crimean Tatar Emigration of 1860-1861," *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 41, no. 1 (2000): 79-108; Mark Pinson, "Russian Policy and the Emigration of the Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire (1854-1862)," *Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1 (1972): 37-55; 2-3 (1974): 101-14; idem., "Demographic Warfare," 22-84; Alan W. Fisher, "Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire in the Years after the Crimean War," *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 35 (1987): 356-71; Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 142-49.

<sup>31</sup> See Karpat, "The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule," reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 653n6, based on Ottoman evidence. For an interpretation of the agreement, based on Russian sources, see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 172.

<sup>32</sup> According to Karpat, 46,000-50,000 Nogai Tatars emigrated between the 1853-56 Crimean War and 1860; *Ottoman Population*, 66. Kумыков cites that 30,000 Nogai Tatars emigrated in 1858-59 and 10,000 Kabardins in 1860-61; *Vyselenie adygov*, 94, 11. 400 Ossetian households emigrated to Kars Subprovince at the same time; Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 91. Habiçoğlu, based on Ottoman documents, estimates that 150,000 muhajirs, mostly Nogai Tatars and Circassians, had entered the empire by May 1861; *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 75.

Circassian villages, killing or expelling their populations, and destroying the crops.<sup>33</sup> Many Circassian communities were evicted from their mountainous villages, and the only alternative offered to them by the Russian military was relocating to new settlements that were either in coastal malarial swamps and flooded lands or in near-coastal plateaus where they would be interspersed among Cossack settlements.<sup>34</sup> The violence, employed by the army, and popular expectations of future atrocities provoked mass flight of Circassians towards the Black Sea coast, where they waited for boats to take them to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>35</sup> Over a half million western Circassians fled to the Ottoman Empire by 1864. [See Table 1.]

The 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis was among the largest humanitarian disasters in the history of both the Russian and the Ottoman empires. The tsarist government, willing to get rid of the population that it considered hostile, contracted and paid private shipping companies to take muhajirs to the Ottoman port cities of Trabzon, Ordu, Samsun, Istanbul, Köstence, and Varna.<sup>36</sup> As hundreds of thousands of Circassians waited on the Circassian coast for the boats to arrive, a harsh winter, famine, and an outbreak of typhus claimed tens of thousands of lives. Many more died onboard the boats and then in the Ottoman port

---

<sup>33</sup> See Irma Kreiten, "A Colonial Experiment in Cleansing: the Russian Conquest of Western Caucasus, 1856-65." *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 2-3 (2009): 213-41; Willis Brooks, "The Politics of the Conquest of the Caucasus, 1855-1864," *Nationalities Papers* 24, no. 4 (1996): 649-60.

<sup>34</sup> Kумыков, *Vyselenie adygov*, 12-14, 47-87.

<sup>35</sup> For a classic study on "anticipatory" refugee movement, see Egon F. Kunz, "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement," *The International Migration Review* 7, no. 2 (1973): 125-46.

<sup>36</sup> See Kумыков, *Vyselenie adygov*, 21-47, 98-109. For published primary sources from Russian archives detailing gradual Circassian displacement, through a combination of expulsions and dispossession, see Rashad Kh. Gugov et al., eds., *Tragicheskie posledstviia Kavkazskoi voiny dlia adygov: vtoraiia polovina XIX - nachalo XX veka* (Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2000); Tugan Kh. Kумыков, ed., *Problemy Kavkazskoi voiny i vyselenie cherkesov v predely Osmanskoi imperii, 20-70e gg. XIX v.: sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov* (Nalchik: Elbrus, 2001-03); idem., *Vyselenie adygov*; Grigorii A. Dzagurov, ed., *Pereselenie gortsev v Turtsiiu: materialy po istorii gorskikh narodov* (Rostov-Don: Sevkvavkniga, 1925).

cities, which were unprepared for such a massive refugee influx.<sup>37</sup> In the course of two years, anywhere between 80 and 90 percent of the western Circassian population had left Russia, and up to a quarter of the refugees died before reaching their new homes in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>38</sup>

The violent displacement of Circassians in the 1860s remains a highly contentious issue in Russia and in the Circassian diaspora. The government of the Russian Federation adopted a stance similar to those of its Imperial and Soviet predecessors, stressing the voluntary nature of Circassian emigration and refusing to acknowledge its responsibility. Since the 1990s, a growing number of political actors have called for the recognition of the Circassian genocide.<sup>39</sup> The issue generated international news headlines during the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, which coincided with the 150th anniversary of Circassian

---

<sup>37</sup> For foreign accounts of the 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis, see House of Commons, *Papers Respecting the Settlement of Circassian Emigrants in Turkey* (London: Harrison and Son, 1864); Édouard Dulaurier, “La Russie dans le Caucase, fin de la guerre de Circassie et dispersion des tribus tcherkesses. L’exode des Circassiens et la colonisation russe,” *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1865-66); British, French, and Italian documents in Fabio L. Grassi, *Una Nuova Patria: L’esodo dei Circassi verso l’Impero Ottomano* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2014). See also Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 125-48; Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 191-213; Nazan Çiçek, “‘Talihsiz Çerkesleri İngiliz Peksimeti’: İngiliz Arşiv Belgelerinde Büyük Çerkes Göçü (Şubat 1864 - Mayıs 1865),” *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 64, no. 1 (2009): 57-88; Sarah A.S. Isla Rosser-Owen, “The First ‘Circassian Exodus’ to the Ottoman Empire (1858-1867), and the Ottoman Response, Based on the Accounts of Contemporary British Observers,” M.A. dissertation (School of Oriental and African Studies, 2007); Musa Şaşmaz, “Immigration and Settlement of Circassians in the Ottoman Empire on British Documents, 1857-1864,” *OTAM* 9 (1999): 331-66.

<sup>38</sup> See Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 20; Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 69-70

<sup>39</sup> The parliaments of the autonomous republics of Kabardino-Balkaria and Adygea, within the Russian Federation, recognized the Circassian genocide (Circ./Kab. *адыгэм я лъэпкъгъэжгъуэд*) in, respectively, 1992 and 1996. In 2011, Georgia became the first sovereign state to recognize the Circassian genocide. For the case that Circassian displacements and ethnic cleansing constituted a genocide, see Walter Richmond, *The Circassian Genocide* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013); Aliy Kasumov and Hasan Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı: Çerkeslerin XIX. Yüzyıl Kurtuluş Savaşı Tarihi* (Ankara: TAKAV, 1995). See also Robert Geraci, “Genocidal Impulses and Fantasies in Imperial Russia,” in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 343-71; Peter Holquist, “To Count, to Extract, to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia,” in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, eds. Terry Martin and Ronald Grigor Suny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 111-44.

expulsions from that very region and prompted worldwide North Caucasian diasporic protests.<sup>40</sup>

The mass displacement redrew the demography of the Northwest Caucasus. Several Circassian tribes – Ubykh, Hatuqwai, and Natukhai – were expelled from the Caucasus in their entirety. Western Circassians were not allowed to return from the Ottoman Empire, and their lands were repopulated by Russian and Ukrainian peasants.<sup>41</sup> Later, Soviet demographic engineering resulted in the fracturing of the Circassians who had remained in the Caucasus into four census-approved “nationalities” – Adyghe, Kabardin, Cherkess, and Shapsugh – three of which received their autonomous republics: Adygea, with a Russian majority; and Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachay-Cherkessia, each shared with a Turkic-speaking “titular nation.” The Soviet government sanctioned the development of two literary languages: Adyghe, or western Circassian, and Kabardino-Cherkess, or eastern Circassian.<sup>42</sup>

The third stage of migration from the North Caucasus, between 1865 and 1878, took place amidst the entrenchment of Russian civil rule across the Caucasus.<sup>43</sup> The Russian government passed a series of social and economic reforms, most importantly land reform and the abolition of slavery, both of which were implemented in stages across the

---

<sup>40</sup> See Sufian Zhemukhov, “The Birth of Modern Circassian Nationalism,” *Nationalities Papers* 40, no. 4 (2012): 503-24.

<sup>41</sup> See Sherry, “Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast.”

<sup>42</sup> On the early Soviet “nationalities policy,” see Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Yuri Slezkine, “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism,” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414-52.

<sup>43</sup> On the best overview of this period, see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 136-54, 211-28.

North Caucasus in the 1860s.<sup>44</sup> Many Muslim peasants, especially Kabardins, Ossetians, and Chechens in the Northcentral Caucasian highlands, emigrated because, in the course of the land reform, they lost communal pastures or were forced to relocate to new villages. For example, in 1865-67, 93 villages in Greater Kabarda were forcibly reorganized into 33, and 25 villages in Lesser Kabarda into nine.<sup>45</sup> Many notables who owned slaves emigrated because Russian abolitionism, coupled with land reforms, threatened to undermine their socio-economic status, which they hoped they would still be able to maintain in the Ottoman Empire.

In this period, a series of anti-colonial uprisings erupted in the Caucasus. All of them ended in defeat, and the largest – in Chechnya in 1864, in Abkhazia in 1866, and in Abkhazia, Chechnya, and Daghestan in 1877 – resulted in new waves of emigration. Following the 1864 uprising of Kunta Hajji in Chechnya, the Russian and Ottoman governments cooperated in organizing the emigration of at least 23,057 Muslims, primarily Chechens, in 1865.<sup>46</sup> After the 1866 uprising in Abkhazia, 19,342 Muslim Abkhaz emigrated to Anatolia in 1867.<sup>47</sup> Finally, the 1877 revolts across the North Caucasus coincided with the outbreak of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War and resulted in the

---

<sup>44</sup> See Liubov Kurtynova-D'Herlugnan, *The Tsar's Abolitionists: The Slave Trade in the Caucasus and Its Suppression* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Tugan Kh. Kумыков, *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie otnosheniia i otmena krepostnogo prava v Kabarde i Balkarii (1800-1869 gg.)* (Nalchik: Kabardino-Balkarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1959).

<sup>45</sup> Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 172.

<sup>46</sup> Although all households were listed as Chechen by Russian officials, there were also Karabulak, Ingush, Ossetian, Kabardin, and Nogai Tatar families. Contemporary historians estimate the number to have been in excess of 40,000 people. National Historical Archive of Georgia (Sakartvelos sakhelmtsipo saistorio arkivi, Tbilisi, hereafter cited as SSSA) f. 545, op. 1, d. 90 (1865), d. 2852, l. 65 (25 May 1871); Ibragimova, *Emigratsiia chechentsev*, 33-43. See Appendix IX.

<sup>47</sup> Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 289. See also Georgy Chochiev, "1867 Abhaz Göçüne Dair Birkaç Rus, Osmanlı ve İngiliz Belgesi," *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 103-58; Bezhan Khorava, *Mukhadzhirstvo abkhazov 1867 goda* (Tbilisi: Artanudzhi, 2013).



departure of about 30,000-50,000 Muslim Abkhaz and small groups of Chechens and Daghestanis.<sup>48</sup>

In the fourth period, after 1878, emigration from the Caucasus had a more voluntary character than before. Many Muslims left for the Ottoman Empire in order to reunite with their families or to seek better economic opportunities. The larger groups of muhajirs in the post-1878 period included: at least 5,000 Karachays and 2,000 Balkars in 1884-87;<sup>49</sup> around 6,000 Kabardins by 1890;<sup>50</sup> over 9,000 western Circassians in 1890-91;<sup>51</sup> 16,000 Kabardins and about 1,500-2,000 Chechens in 1895;<sup>52</sup> up to 4,000 Chechen, Kabardin, and Balkar muhajirs in 1900-02;<sup>53</sup> over 1,000 Ingush muhajirs in 1904;<sup>54</sup> 1,454 Kabardins and 600 Daghestanis, in 1905;<sup>55</sup> about 5,000 Karachays and over 2,000 Balkars in 1905-06;<sup>56</sup> 700 Chechen families in 1905-06;<sup>57</sup> and about 2,000 Ingush and Chechens in 1912.<sup>58</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> On Abkhaz emigration in 1877, see Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 371-73. On the 1877 uprisings in Chechnya and Daghestan, see Timur M. Aitberov et al., eds., *Vosstaniia dagestantsev i chechentsev v posleshamilevskuiu epokhu i imamat 1877 goda: materialy* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2001).

<sup>49</sup> Kipkeeva, *Karachaevo-balkarskaia diaspora*, 29.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>51</sup> BOA DH.MKT 1749/28 (21 *zilhicce* 1307, 8 August 1890). In 1890, the Ottomans agreed to accept up to 24,000 western Circassians, but only the first party of over 9,000 people had been resettled; see a dispatch by the Russian ambassador in Istanbul (18 August 1894), reprinted in *Tragicheskie posledstviia*, eds. Gugov et al., 337-40.

<sup>52</sup> Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora*, 227.

<sup>53</sup> In 1900, separate groups of 152 Chechens and 260 Kabardins arrived in Damascus to be resettled in Amman and Na'ur. In 1901, 823 more Kabardins arrived to be resettled in al-Zarqa'; see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 71, 160. Overall, in 1900-02, 2,601 Kabardins and 781 Balkars left Kabarda; see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 31; Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora*, 227.

<sup>54</sup> Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora*, 221.

<sup>55</sup> According to Russian consular data, up to 3,000 muhajirs waited for resettlement in Aleppo in 1905; Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 72-73, 161. Some muhajirs from that emigrating Kabardin party founded a settlement in al-Raqqa; see Mohammed A.L. Hammad, *The History of the Circassians and the Anzour Dynastic Family: the Adyghes, Chechens, Daghestanis and Ossetes* (Al-Raqqa, Syria, 2001).

<sup>56</sup> Kipkeeva, *Karachaevo-balkarskaia diaspora*, 52.

<sup>57</sup> Zarema Kh. Ibragimova, *Chechenskii narod v Rossiiskoi imperii: adaptatsionnyi period* (Moscow: Probel-2000, 2006), 393.

<sup>58</sup> Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora*, 227.

Table 1: North Caucasian muhajirs by ethnicity, 1860-1914

Ethnic group	Estimates	Reference
Circassians (western)	470,703 – 1,008,000	59
Kabardins	60,000	60
Abkhaz and Abazins	50,000 – 145,000	61
Chechens and Ingush	23,057 – 90,000	62
Ossetians	5,000 – 10,000	63
Daghestanis	20,000 – 25,000	64
Karachays and Balkars	10,000 – 15,756	65
Nogai Tatars	30,000 – 70,000	66
Total:	668,760 – 1,423,756	

<sup>59</sup> Adolf P. Berzhe, a Russian Orientalist scholar and head of the Caucasus Archaeographic Commission, estimated that 470,703 western Circassians had left in the 1858-65 period; *Vyselenie gortsev*, 8-9. Salaheddin Bey, an Ottoman official in charge of counting immigrants, estimated that, by 1867, 1,008,000 Circassians had immigrated, of them 595,000 settled in Rumelia and 413,000 in Anatolia; see Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 27. The European observers Ubcini and Courteille counted 300,000 Circassian muhajirs in 1855-63 and 700,000 muhajirs by 1864, of whom only 595,000 survived; *État Présent de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1876), 37.

<sup>60</sup> Kumykov cites 60,000 Kabardin muhajirs; *Vyselenie adygov*, 17.

<sup>61</sup> Habiçoğlu cites 50,000 Abkhaz and Abazin muhajirs in 1858-79; *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 89. Fisher cites 100,000 Abkhaz muhajirs in 1859-64 and 14,500 Abaza muhajirs in 1861-63; "Emigration of Muslims," 363. Dzidzariia estimates 135,000 Abkhaz and Abazin muhajirs in the 1860s and 1870s; *Makhadzhirstvo*, 373. Aydemir counts over 145,000 Abkhaz muhajirs in 1858-79; *Göç*, 113-14.

<sup>62</sup> The Russian government estimated that 23,057 muhajirs, most of them Chechens, left Terek Province in 1865; see Appendix IX. Arapov et al. cite 40,000 Chechen and Ingush muhajirs; *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 179. Habiçoğlu estimates 45,000 Chechen and Ingush muhajirs between 1863 and 1901; *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 86. Ibragimova estimates that the actual number of 1865 muhajirs could have been as high as 90,000, *Emigratsiia chechentsev*, 43.

<sup>63</sup> Chochiev cites 5,000 Ossetian muhajirs; "The Case of Anatolian Ossetians," 105. Kushkhabiev estimates 10,000 Ossetian muhajirs; *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 31. Arapov et al. cite 8,000-10,000 Ossetian muhajirs; *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 179.

<sup>64</sup> Magomeddadaev estimates that 20,000 Daghestani muhajirs emigrated between the 1820s and the 1920s; *Emigratsiia dagestantsev*, vol. 2, 85; Habiçoğlu cites 20,000 Daghestani muhajirs in 1847-1907; *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 85-86. Arapov et al. cite 20-25,000 Daghestani muhajirs; *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 179.

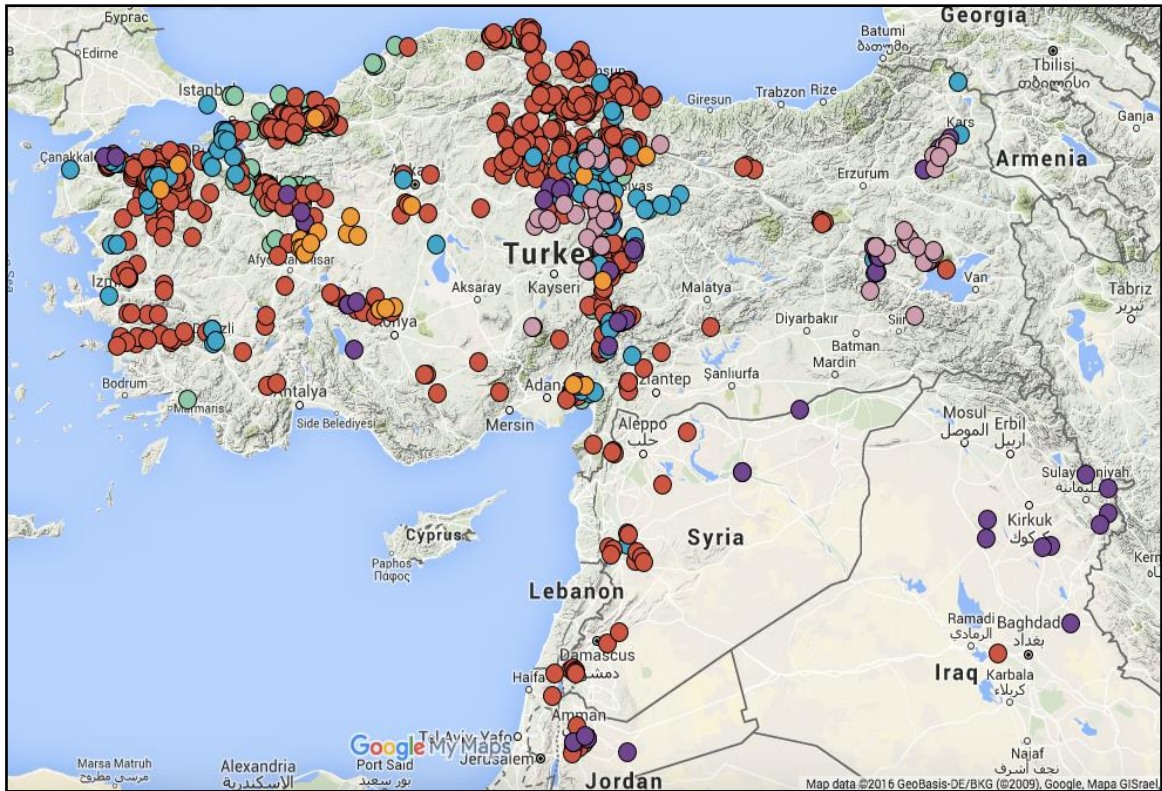
<sup>65</sup> Borlakova estimates 10,000 Karachay and Balkar muhajirs, including 3,000 Karachays and 1,000 Balkars in 1884-93 and 4,000 Karachays and 2,000 Balkars in 1901-07; "Karachaevo-balkarskaia emigratsiia," 16. Kipkeeva cites "at least 12,000 people" and provides a cumulative total of 14,000 Karachay and Balkar muhajirs in 1884-87 and 1905-06 periods; *Karachaevo-balkarskaia diaspora*, 29, 52. Kushkhabiev cites 15,756 Karachay muhajirs in 1887-94 and 1905-06; *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 31-32.

<sup>66</sup> Habiçoğlu estimates 30,000 Kuban Nogai muhajirs in 1858-63; *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 87. Berzhe estimates 30,650 Kuban Nogai muhajirs in 1858-64; *Vyselenie gortsev*, 7. Arapov et al. cite 39,660 Nogai muhajirs, including Kuban Nogais; *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 179. Kipkeeva cites 70,000 Nogai muhajirs in 1858-66; *Severnyi Kavkaz v Rossiiskoi imperii: narody, migratsii, territorii* (Stavropol: SGU, 2008), 357.

The estimates are for first-generation muhajirs who were born in the North Caucasus and were expelled into or emigrated to the Ottoman Empire. The lower numbers, particularly for western Circassians, Chechens, and Ingush, represent Russian military estimates that were temporally limited and should be considered as very conservative. Based on my archival research on specific Ottoman areas of resettlement, I expect the actual numbers of muhajirs to be closer to the higher estimates listed in the table. In this dissertation, I cite a general estimate of a million North Caucasian muhajirs in the 1860-1914 period.

This dissertation, by drawing on different refugee waves from the colonial Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire, problematizes the notions of forced, semi-voluntary, and voluntary migration. The major phase, between 1860 and 1864, witnessed violent displacement; the 1865-78 period combined elements of forced and voluntary migration; and the pre-1860 and post-1878 periods tilted towards voluntary migration. I demonstrate how interconnected different strands of migration were. Many muhajirs, even when forcibly displaced from the Caucasus, in their perception of the Ottoman Empire, drew on older migration narratives, including labor migration, hijra, and religious pilgrimage. Moreover, even the same traveling party could include people relocating for various reasons, for example, voluntarily emigrating notables and their coerced slaves. The term “voluntary migration” itself is problematic in the imperial and colonial context. During the war and after the occupation and imposition of colonial rule, any kind of migration was hardly voluntary, but was the result of a collapse of old social, economic, and political institutions culminating in one’s decision to seek more favorable conditions in another empire.

Figure 2: Map of North Caucasian villages in Anatolia, Greater Syria, and Iraq



In this visualization, each dot represents a muhajir village.<sup>67</sup> All villages, over a thousand in total, were founded between the 1850s and 1914. The map is color coded for ethnic origins of villages' majority inhabitants: red – western and eastern Circassians (704 villages); green – Abkhaz and Abazins (199); blue – Daghestanians (98); purple – Chechens and Ingush (55); pink – Ossetians (43); orange – Karachays and Balkars (22).

Within the Ottoman Empire, the geography of Circassian resettlement reflected different waves of migration from the Caucasus. [See Figure 2.] Most Circassians who had

<sup>67</sup> The visualization is part of my digital database of North Caucasian muhajir villages in the Ottoman Empire, which I assembled during my fieldwork. I use the contemporary political map, from Google Maps, as a base layer. Villages that failed or were abandoned in the late Ottoman period are not shown on the map, which accounts for the notable omission of villages in the Balkans, most of which were evacuated by 1878. The database is based on my archival research as well as the painstaking work of North Caucasian diasporic historians and activists. I credit two main sources: Murat Papşu, who generously shared with me his own digital map of villages and a list of Sivas villages; and İbrahim Sediyanı, “Türkiye’deki Çerkes Köyleri” (6 September 2008), <[www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/arastirma/0500-cherkeskoyleri.htm](http://www.circassiancenter.com/cc-turkiye/arastirma/0500-cherkeskoyleri.htm)> (accessed on 21 June 2017).

been expelled in the 1863-64 period belonged to the Shapsugh, Abzakh, and Natukhai communities from the Black Sea coast. They arrived in the Ottoman Empire by boat and settled throughout the Balkans and northern and western Anatolia. Most Circassians who had emigrated after 1864 were Kabardins from plateaus of the Northcentral Caucasus. They arrived overland and settled primarily in central Anatolia and Greater Syria. Abkhaz and Abazins settled in western Anatolia, with some villages found in central Anatolia. Daghestanis, most of whom arrived in the final decades of the empire, also settled in western and central Anatolia. Chechens and Ingush were scattered throughout the empire, with large areas of resettlement being interior parts of Anatolia, Iraq, and Transjordan. Fewer than a couple dozen of Karachay and Balkar villages were established in western and central Anatolia. Ossetians primarily lived in central and eastern Anatolian provinces.

Resettlement of North Caucasian muhajirs within the Ottoman Empire changed over the 1860-1914 period. The resettlement depended on such factors as financial and logistical capabilities of the Refugee Commission, the availability of land, and the negotiating power of incoming immigrants.<sup>68</sup> I identify three broad models, according to which Ottoman resettlement proceeded. In the first model, as I demonstrate in Chapter 1, following the 1863-64 Circassian deportations, the Ottomans resettled most muhajirs into villages in the Balkans and Anatolia, with little input from refugees as to where they wanted to go. Some villages were newly established, but many were older villages with Muslim or

---

<sup>68</sup> On state policies in resettling muhajirs, see Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," esp. 187-88; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*; Fratantuono, "Migration Administration"; idem., "State Fears and Immigrant Tiers: Historical Analysis as a Method in Evaluating Migration Categories," *Middle East Journal of Refugee Studies* 2 (2017): 97-115; Gülfettin Çelik, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nüfus ve İskan Politikası," *Divan* 1 (1999): 49-110; Başak Kale, "Transforming an Empire: The Ottoman Empire's Immigration and Settlement Policies in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 2 (2014): 252-71.

Christian communities. In the second resettlement model, which was implemented, for example, in the Levant after the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the state directed refugees to certain areas where muhajirs had greater freedom in choosing their places of settlement. They typically joined older North Caucasian villages or established new ones. Chapter 2 examines that type of resettlement. The third model, characteristic of pre-1863 and post-1878 migrations from the North Caucasus, and often associated with the migration of upper-class North Caucasians, accorded more agency to prospective immigrants. In many cases, muhajirs had time to prepare for their journey and could negotiate where to settle. Chapter 3 and the story of the Khutatzades in Chapter 5 represent that type of resettlement.

## CHAPTER 1

### **Refugees in the Dobruja Region, 1860-1878: The Political Economy of Resettlement and Conflict**

In 1874, the authorities in Tulça Subprovince, located on the Danube River in the northernmost part of the Ottoman Empire, received a petition from Hajj Ishak Efendi, a locally settled Circassian refugee. The short complaint, written in Ottoman Turkish, similar to many others lying on their table, read as follows:

I am a Circassian muhajir and, a year ago, have immigrated (Ott. Tur. *hicret idüp*) to the village of Gülbaşı, in Mecidiye District. From the time of my arrival until now, I did not receive a thing from the authorities. I was not given a house, or an ox, or agricultural land. I could not collect harvest from the land. I repeatedly asked for a cash stipend, grain, and oxen to provide for my five children, but received nothing. Without a house, I do not know where we will live this winter. I beg the authorities to give me, your humble servant, a house, a pair of oxen, and a plot of land.<sup>1</sup>

The sentiments of Hajj Ishak Efendi echoed across the Ottoman Balkans and, indeed, the rest of the empire. In the second half of the nineteenth century, about a million North Caucasian Muslims from the Russian Empire arrived in the Ottoman domains as refugees. How they would cope, with or without the government's assistance, had important repercussions for the economy and social stability of their host regions and, as it turned out, the territorial integrity of the Ottoman state.

This chapter examines the resettlement of North Caucasian muhajirs in the northern Balkans, specifically the Dobruja region of Danube Province, between 1860 and 1878. It focuses on the implementation of the state resettlement program and the dynamics of

---

<sup>1</sup> The Oriental Collection at the Cyril and Methodius National Library (Natsional'na biblioteka "Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodii," Sofia, hereafter cited as NBKM) 169/1534 (11 *eylül* 1290, 23 September 1874).

refugees' conflicts. I draw on administrative registers of population, tax, land, and allowances from three Dobrujan districts: Hacıoğlu Pazarcık (now Dobrich, Bulgaria), Babadağ, and Maçın (both in Romania). These districts, situated in the subprovinces of Varna and Tulça, provide a crosscut of Circassian and Abkhaz muhajir settlements in, respectively, southern, central, and northern Dobruja.<sup>2</sup> I demonstrate that, in the 1860s, many refugee groups experienced internal conflicts, primarily over slaveholding and land usufruct rights, which slowed down their economic development and reaffirmed the role of the state as an arbiter of justice. In the 1870s, a combination of local, Ottoman, and global economic developments further impeded immigrants' economic progress, making evident the shortcomings of refugee resettlement and leading to a rise in refugee-perpetrated crime. I argue that the allotment of land was central to the downfall of refugee resettlement: slow distribution and insufficient amount of land paralyzed many muhajirs' agricultural efforts, prompting some to join the gendarmerie (*zaptiye*) or irregular militias (*başibozuk*), whereas a perceived seizure of communal land by the state in favor of muhajirs aggrieved local communities. The brewing conflict between muhajirs and others contributed to the outbreak of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, which had redrawn the map of eastern Europe.

---

<sup>2</sup> In Ottoman documents, Abkhaz and Abazins both appear as "Abaza." I assume that most Abaza muhajirs in Dobruja were Abkhaz. In the village of Rakil in Maçın District, one of the largest "Abaza" villages in Dobruja, local residents visited their relatives in Russia's "Suhum sancağı," which would correspond to Abkhazia; see NBKM Tulça 55/20, f. 38b, no. 43 (17 *mart* 1289, 29 March 1873).



## *Refugee Resettlement in Dobruja*

Danube Province, the northernmost part of the Ottoman Empire, stretched from Niş, in modern-day southern Serbia, across western and northern Bulgaria, to Tulça, in eastern Romania.<sup>3</sup> In the north, the province bordered the United Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, formally under Ottoman suzerainty until 1878, and the Kingdom of Hungary, part of the dual monarchy of the Habsburgs. To the south, lay the Ottoman province of Edirne, and, to the west, the de facto independent Principality of Serbia. The creation of Danube Province accompanied, and was integral to, the promulgation of the 1864 Vilayet Law (Ott. Tur. *Teşkil-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi*). This law, drafted by two Tanzimat reformers, Grand Vizier (1863-66) Mehmet Fuat Paşa and Governor of Danube Province (1864-68) Midhat Paşa, created a hierarchical bureaucracy running through imperial provinces, both ensuring state centralization, as many upper-level offices were appointed directly from Istanbul, and fostering local-level communal governance through an elaborate system of elected councils. Danube Province served as a pilot region for Midhat Paşa's administrative reforms, which were then replicated across the empire.<sup>4</sup>

Danube Province ranked among the wealthiest Ottoman provinces. It hosted prominent commercial centers: the growing Black Sea ports of Köstence (Constanța) and Varna, the Danubian ports of Vidin, Rusçuk (Ruse), Silistre, and Tulça (Tulcea), and the

---

<sup>3</sup> Danube Province consisted of seven subprovinces: Rusçuk, Varna, Tulça, Tırnova, Vidin, Sofia, and Niş. Niş Subprovince was part of Kosovo Province in 1865-74. A separate Sofia Province was created in 1876 but merged into Edirne Province in 1877.

<sup>4</sup> In 1868, Midhat Paşa left Danube Province to preside over the imperial Council of State and, in 1876, co-drafted the Ottoman Constitution serving as the first Grand Vizier of the short-lived First Constitutional Era; see Milen Petrov, "Tanzimat for the Countryside: Midhat Paşa and the Vilayet of Danube, 1864-1868," Ph.D. dissertation (Princeton University, 2006); Bekir Koç, "Tuna Vilayeti Göçmenleri ve Midhat Paşa," *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 2, no. 4 (2017): 55-70.

old trade emporia in the interior, such as Tarnovo, Sofia, and Niş. Danube Province was a premier agricultural region exporting grain, corn, grapes, livestock, cotton textiles, and wool.<sup>5</sup> The province hosted one of the most heterodox populations in the empire, being home to Orthodox Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs, and Romanians, and Muslim Turks and Pomaks (Slavic Muslims), as well as urban Armenian, Jewish, and Greek Catholic populations.<sup>6</sup> By 1874, non-Muslims formed about 60 percent and Muslims 40 percent of the population of Danube Province. [See Table 2.]

Table 2: Male population of Danube Province in 1874

Subprovince	Muslims	Non-Muslims	Total
Ruşçuk	173,889	119,609	293,498
Vidin	27,761	138,411	166,172
Sofya	31,736	147,954	179,690
Tırnova	62,091	138,128	200,219
Tulça	56,724	44,147	100,871
Varna	44,878	16,701	61,579
Total:	397,079	604,950	1,002,029

Source: *Salname-i Vilayet-i Tuna* (h. 1291, 1874), 124-27. For analysis of the 1874 Ottoman data, see Koyuncu, “Tuna Vilayeti’nde Nüfus ve Demografi,” 711-13.

<sup>5</sup> On economy in Danube Province, see John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), 133-53; see also Liuben Berov, *Ikonomicheskoto razvıtıe na Bülğarıia prez vekovete* (Sofia: Profizdat, 1974), 69-82.

<sup>6</sup> On demography in Danube Province, see Aşkın Koyuncu, “Tuna Vilayeti’nde Nüfus ve Demografi (1864-1877),” *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 4 (2014): 675-737; Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983), 340-65; Daniela Angelova, *Demografısko razvıtıe na Bülğarskoto Chernomorsko kraibrezhie prez XIX vek (do 1878 g.)* (Sofia: Regaliia-6, 2013).

Following the 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis, Danube Province emerged as a primary destination for North Caucasian muhajirs. It held available agricultural land, required a greater farming population, and was conveniently situated on the Black Sea, so that boats could conveniently deliver muhajirs from the Caucasus to its ports.<sup>7</sup> In 1860-78, Danube Province accepted up to 150,000 Muslim immigrants from the Caucasus, mostly western Circassians (Shapsugh, Ubykh, Bzhedugh, and Abzakh communities) and about 8,000 Abkhaz.<sup>8</sup> Elsewhere in the Ottoman Balkans, Edirne Province hosted over 200,000 North Caucasian muhajirs, and smaller groups settled in the Prizren and Salonica provinces.<sup>9</sup> Within Danube Province, North Caucasian refugees settled in the subprovinces of Niş in the southwest, Vidin in the northwest, Rusçuk in the north, and Varna and Tulça in the northeast, the latter two collectively known as the Dobruja region.<sup>10</sup>

The historical region of Dobruja had, for centuries, served as an entry into the empire from the north. The great Danube River separated the region from Wallachia and Bessarabia. In the Danubian delta, the Dobrujan port of Sulina stood across from Izmail, a mighty Ottoman fortress that Russia had held between 1790 and 1856. By the 1860s, the

---

<sup>7</sup> According to some, the Ottomans chose Danube Province, and Dobruja in particular, for strategic reasons. Yücel Terzibaşoğlu writes, “The Crimean and Circassian settlements on the [Dobrujan] plan were arranged so as to provide lines of resistance to any further Russian advance”; “Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees,” 130.

<sup>8</sup> Estimates of the muhajir population in Danube Province vary widely. The official 1874 Ottoman census lists the number of Muslim muhajir men (from the Caucasus, Crimea, and Serbia) at 64,398, or 5.64 percent of the male population of the province; see Koyuncu, “Tuna Vilayeti’nde Nüfus ve Demografi,” 686-87, 714. Several European contemporaries list the Circassian population in Bulgaria in 1860-77 as the fourth largest group after Bulgarians, Turks, and Crimean Tatars; see Nikola V. Mikhov, ed., *Naselenieto na Turtsia i Bŭlgariia prez XVIII i XIX v.: bibliografski izdirvaniia s statistichni i etnografski dannii*, vols. 2-3 (Sofia: Tsarska pridvorna pechanitsa, 1924-29).

<sup>9</sup> An often cited number is 595,000 Circassians in the Ottoman Balkans, based on an estimate by Salaheddin Bey, an Ottoman official; Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 27.

<sup>10</sup> Southern Dobruja, or Varna Subprovince, included the districts of Varna, Hacıoğlu Pazarcık (Dobrich), Balçık, Pravadi, and Mangalya. The city of Varna itself, historically, was not part of the Dobruja region. Central and northern Dobruja, or Tulça Subprovince, comprised the districts of Tulça, Maçin, Babadağ, İsakça, Sulina, Köstence, and Mecidiye.

Russian domains lay merely a few dozen miles to the north. Unlike much of Danube Province, which consisted of valleys and mountains, Dobruja was a steppe region. Mostly flat and brown, with a hilly region to its northwest and delta marshes to its northeast, the Dobruja plain was one of the westernmost extensions of the great Eurasian steppe. In the late 1870s, herds of wild steppe horses still roamed the Dobruja plain, once part of a trans-continental nomadic highway from Mongolia to Hungary.<sup>11</sup>

Dobruja, unlike much of Danube Province, held a Muslim majority by the 1870s. [See Table 2.] Out of its total population of 300,000, 170,000 were Muslims.<sup>12</sup> Situated within the fluctuating frontier zone between the Turkic/Muslim/Ottoman and Slavic/Christian/Russian worlds, Dobruja constituted a transit zone for communities migrating in either direction. Beginning in the fifteenth century, Dobruja was a common place of exile for Nogai and Crimean Tatars, whose lands lay to the north.<sup>13</sup> In the seventeenth century, Moldavian and Wallachian peasants came to Dobruja to escape serfdom. In the first half of the nineteenth century, many Bulgarians emigrated to Russian-held Bessarabia and Crimea in search of agricultural land; thousands passed through Dobruja on their way there or on their way back, and stayed there.<sup>14</sup> Later in the century, they were joined by Bulgarians from the rest of Danube Province, attracted by available land and new trade opportunities in port towns. In 1858, the population of Dobruja consisted of 30 percent Turkish, 23 percent Wallachian, and 14 percent each Crimean Tatar

---

<sup>11</sup> See Williams, *Crimean Tatars*, 202. On the history of Dobruja, see Strashimir Dimitrov et al., *Istoriia na Dobrudzha*, 3 vol. (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1984-88).

<sup>12</sup> Dimitrov et al., *Istoriia na Dobrudzha*, vol. 3, 190.

<sup>13</sup> See Williams, *Crimean Tatars*, 204-05.

<sup>14</sup> On Bulgarian migrations to Russia, see Robarts, *Migration and Disease*, 33-82; Pinson, "Demographic Warfare," 154-69. On Bulgarian migrations to Dobruja, see Todorov, *The Balkan City*, 366-83.

and Bulgarian households.<sup>15</sup> The region was also home to small Christian communities of emigrants from Russia: Cossacks, Lipovans, Molokans, and Germans. In the decade after the Crimean War (1853-56), over 120,000 Crimean Tatars settled in Danube Province, most of them in Dobruja.<sup>16</sup> In 1863-64, about 20,000-30,000 Circassians and Abkhaz arrived in Dobruja. North Caucasian muhajirs constituted anywhere between five and ten percent of Dobruja's overall population and a larger share of its rural population.

Dobruja prospered through the Danubian river trade in Tulça, Isakça, and Maçin with Austria-Hungary, Wallachia, and Russia and through sea trade via its cosmopolitan ports in Varna and Köstence, which increasingly catered to Mediterranean and western European markets. Ottoman Dobruja hosted the largest fair in the northern Balkans, in Hacıoğlu Pazarcık.<sup>17</sup> Dobruja's interior regions around Babadağ and Mecidiye were known for husbandry, primarily sheep- and horse-breeding, but also increasingly produced wheat and corn, under Ottoman pressure to bolster the empire's agricultural production. Railways accelerated this economic transition, linking up interior sites of production with ports to facilitate export. The first railway project in the Ottoman Balkans (and the first one completed in the empire) was a short railway in Dobruja, built between Çerna Voda and Köstence via Mecidiye in 1860.<sup>18</sup> In 1866, the second railway in the Balkans connected

---

<sup>15</sup> Edward S.I. Neale [British Consul in Varna] (28 March 1858), in *Izvori za istoriiata na Dobrudzha*, eds. Velko Tonev et al. (Sofia: Vekove, 2003), vol. 4, p. 44. In addition to these communities, Dobruja hosted Christian and Muslim Roma populations. In 1831-33, 150 Muslim families immigrated from Syria. In 1873, about 150 muhajirs from Lazistan arrived to settle in Isakça, northern Dobruja; NBKM 169/1526 (24 *cemaziyelahir* 1290, 19 August 1873).

<sup>16</sup> On Crimean Tatars in Dobruja, see Kemal H. Karpat, "Ottoman Urbanism: The Crimean Emigration to Dobruca and the Founding of Mecidiye, 1856-1878," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 3, no. 1 (1984-85): 1-25; Williams, *Crimean Tatars*, 196-226; Maria Mikhailova-Mrůvkarova, *Za Krimskite Tatari ot Severoiztochna Bŭlgariia* (Sofia: Avangard Prima, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Other prominent fairs were in Eski Cuma (now Targovishte, Bulgaria) and Mecidiye (now Medgidia, Romania). See Todorov, *The Balkan City*, 416-28.

<sup>18</sup> The first Ottoman railway was the 130-km Izmir-Aydın line, which was commissioned in 1856. Its first part was opened in 1860.

Ruşçuk, the Danubian provincial capital, with Varna. Operated by British companies, the two lines transported grain, which was then sold to British and French markets.<sup>19</sup>

*Institutional Framework for Resettlement:  
The Ottoman Refugee Commission and the Ottoman Immigration Law*

Facing the necessity to resettle hundreds of thousands of Crimean Tatar, Circassian, Abkhaz and other Muslim muhajirs, who were expelled from or voluntarily emigrated from the Russian Empire, the Ottoman government created the Refugee Commission (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin Komisyonu*) in 1860.<sup>20</sup> The Commission, operating as an independent agency of the government, had its own budget, staff, and branches across the empire. Its primary duties included registering incoming muhajirs, finding for them temporary settlement in port cities, feeding them, paying for their medications, and finally transporting them to their final places of residence, whether newly-built or long-settled villages. The organization closely cooperated with the central government, provincial administrations, border authorities, and the Ottoman Red Crescent.<sup>21</sup> In November 1865, the Ottoman government, assuming that the worst part of the Circassian refugee crisis had passed, dissolved the Commission – evidence that the Ottoman government was not prepared for

---

<sup>19</sup> The Rusçuk-Varna line was built by a company owned by William Gladstone, leader of Britain's Liberal Party, who was an outspoken critic of Benjamin Disraeli's government's response, perceived by him as insufficient, to the Ottoman suppression of the 1876 April Uprising in Bulgaria.

<sup>20</sup> See Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 83-126. In the years prior to the establishment of the Commission, the Ottomans experimented with various forms of refugee management. In 1849, the government set up a special commission to settle refugees from Hungary. During the 1853-56 Crimean War, the Ministry of Trade took charge of refugee-related matters; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 57-58.

<sup>21</sup> The Ottoman Red Crescent, founded as *Hilal-i Ahmer Cemiyeti* in 1868, was the empire's foremost humanitarian organization. It focused on providing medical relief to soldiers.

the scale of the refugee crisis and had a questionable understanding of what the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of refugees entailed. The continued flow of North Caucasian refugees and complaints about resettlement from throughout the empire prompted the Ottomans to reinstate the Commission eight months later.<sup>22</sup>

The Commission was reorganized several times, and only in 1878, did it become a permanent governmental agency, set up as a general directorate (*İdare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin Komisyonu*).<sup>23</sup> In 1893, the Commission added “Islamic” to its name (*Muhacirin-i Islamiye Komisyonu*), reflective of the Pan-Islamist orientation of Abdülhamid II’s government and the role that the organization was expected to play in the Ottomans’ soft policy towards the Muslim world. As the state accepted new rounds of displaced Muslims from elsewhere, the Commission expanded its infrastructure to take care of new refugees. It played the leading role in resettling muhajirs from Bulgaria after the 1877-78 War and those from Serbia, Macedonia, and Greece after the 1912-13 Balkan Wars.<sup>24</sup>

The Ottoman refugee resettlement program operated within the government’s immigration framework. The Ottoman immigration program relied on three incentives: the core guarantee of free land, temporary exemptions from taxation and military service, and conditional allowances. The 1857 Immigration Law (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin Kanunnamesi*), a cornerstone of the program, stated that immigrants would be given the most fertile of the

---

<sup>22</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 113.

<sup>23</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees,” 131. On reorganizations, see Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 58-62.

<sup>24</sup> In 1914, the Refugee Commission was reorganized as the Directorate General for the Settlements of Tribes and Refugees (*İskan-ı Aşair ve Muhacirin Müdüriyet-i Umumiye*), partially in order to prevent competing claims for land by muhajirs and nomads.

available *miri* [state] or abandoned *vakıf* [religious endowment] land.<sup>25</sup> In reality, the government struggled to provide all immigrants with sufficient land. Land allotment varied widely by region and the timing of immigrants' arrival. Earlier groups were more likely to receive larger land plots, when land was still widely available, than later waves of immigrants. Families settling in central and eastern Anatolia or Syria could expect larger land plots than those seeking refuge in the densely populated Balkan and western and northern Anatolian provinces.

In addition to free land, muhajirs received an exemption from military service for twenty-five years and from taxes for six years in the Balkans and twelve years in Anatolia.<sup>26</sup> By 1878, taxation and military service exemptions went down to three and ten years, respectively, and were further cut to one and six years in 1881.<sup>27</sup> An exemption from military service for North Caucasian muhajirs was removed altogether in 1888.<sup>28</sup> Allowances for muhajirs commonly included a one-time grant of cattle (ideally, a pair of oxen per household), crop seeds, and farming tools.<sup>29</sup> In the first years of settlement, muhajirs often received an allowance distributed in cash (15 *kuruş*<sup>30</sup> per adult and 7.5 *kuruş* per child per month) or wheat, a temporary measure deemed essential to their survival until settlements became self-sufficient.<sup>31</sup> Governmental allowances, or aid, to immigrants were

---

<sup>25</sup> Article IV, "Conditions arrêtées par le Gouvernement Impérial au sujet de la colonisation en Turquie," in *Législation Ottomane*, ed. Aristarchi Bey, 16-19.

<sup>26</sup> Article VI, "Conditions arrêtées par le Gouvernement Impérial au sujet de la colonisation en Turquie," in *Législation Ottomane*, ed. Aristarchi Bey, 16-19.

<sup>27</sup> Eren, *Türkiye'de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri*, 41; İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri*, 221-23.

<sup>28</sup> Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 66.

<sup>29</sup> Oxen were the costliest investment for the state. In 1865, in Dobruja, a price for a pair of oxen ranged between 660 and 800 *kuruş*; NBKM 169/396, 419-22, 1505-06 (1865-66).

<sup>30</sup> A *kuruş*, an Ottoman currency, was divided into 40 *para*. In 1864, a British pound was worth 128.5 *kuruş*, and 100 French francs – 498 *kuruş*. By 1878, their prices went down, respectively, to 109 *kuruş* and 432 *kuruş*; Markus A. Denzel, *Handbook of World Exchange Rates, 1590-1914* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 394.

<sup>31</sup> NBKM 22/733 (3 *mayıs* 1286, 3 May 1870).



not written into law and depended on the availability of funds in regional treasuries. In practice, in many areas, they were distributed irregularly if at all.

The 1857 law tied all financial incentives, including exemptions and allowances, to immigrants' staying on their government-issued land. Refugees could claim preferential treatment for tax and military draft purposes as long as they could be found tilling their land plots. Muhajirs had a right, and commonly used it, to petition for their relocation to another village for family reunification or environmental reasons.<sup>32</sup> Even if muhajirs received a governmental authorization to change their settlement, their tax exemption schedule would still commence from the time of their original allotment. According to the 1857 law, immigrants could sell the land only after having tilled the land for twenty years (reduced to ten years in 1887). Leaving the land before the twenty-year term resulted in the government's reappropriation of the land, along with all buildings erected by muhajirs.<sup>33</sup>

When Circassian and Abkhaz muhajirs arrived in the Dobrujan ports of Varna and K stence, they were housed in army barracks or other temporary accommodation before the Refugee Commission could find permanent resettlement locations for them.<sup>34</sup> Local authorities paid for the food and medicine provided to refugees while they were in temporary locations. Once the muhajirs moved to their designated villages, subprovincial and district authorities were charged with allocating land and allowances and building

---

<sup>32</sup> On North Caucasian petitions, see Georgy Chochiev, "XIX. Y zyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı İmparatorluđu'nda Kuzey Kafkas G çmenlerinin Toplumsal Uyarlanmasına Dair Bazı G r şler," *Kebikeç* 23 (2007): 407-56.

<sup>33</sup> Articles VIII and IX, "Conditions arr t es par le Gouvernement Imp rial au sujet de la colonisation en Turquie," in *L gislation Ottomane*, ed. Aristarchi Bey, 16-19. Also, see BOA DH.MKT 1905/16 (12 *kanun-ı evvel* 1307, 24 December 1891).

<sup>34</sup> On muhajirs' arrival in the Balkan ports, see Mark Pinson, "Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians in Rumeli after the Crimean War," * tudes Balkaniques* 3 (1972): 72-74.

medical facilities for refugees.<sup>35</sup> The government often instructed local village communities to help with settling muhajirs: four households were to take care of one muhajir household. Balkan and Anatolian villagers would build North Caucasian muhajirs a house, provide them with food for the winter, supply them with a pair of oxen, a cart, a plow, and other agricultural tools, and sow their first harvest. The authorities would compensate villagers for their efforts within three years.<sup>36</sup> In practice, reimbursements to local communities were not always complete, in some areas covering only a quarter of villagers' expenses, with the rest having been proclaimed as charity.<sup>37</sup> Expectedly, local residents resisted this imposed burden and often complained to the authorities. In 1864, Bulgarian peasants in Tirnova Subprovince submitted the following petition:

The government ordered us to provide millet for Circassian muhajirs. In our area of the Balkan Mountains, it is difficult and even impossible for the following reasons. First, our people do not sow millet; it does not grow here. Second, we do not have available fields for millet because all fields are sown with other cereals. Third, we do not have enough oxen [to prepare millet fields]. Fourth, our men are scattered around Bulgaria looking for work.<sup>38</sup>

Most muhajirs in Danube Province, including Dobruja, resettled in the already existing villages. Local officials sought to place muhajirs with other Muslim communities, probably to avoid an unnecessary interreligious dimension of any potential tensions

---

<sup>35</sup> See Stoianka Kenderova, *Bolnitsi za bedni i preselnitsi v Dunavskii vilayet* (Sofia: NBKM, 2015).

<sup>36</sup> This policy of the Refugee Commission built on an established practice. The 1861 instructions for settling Crimean Tatars in Danube Province spelled out the same policy; see Museum of the Bulgarian Renaissance (Muzei na Vŭzrazhdaneto, Varna; hereafter cited as MnV) f. 5, op. 2, d. 26, no. 1613, ll. 101-02 (July 1861).

<sup>37</sup> Margarita Dobreva, "Circassian Colonization in the Danube Vilayet and Social Integration (Preliminary Notes)," *Journal of the Center for Ottoman Studies (OTAM)* 33 (2013): 12. In June 1865, residents of Sofia Subprovince "donated" 38,000 *kuruş* to refugee resettlement, the sum that the government did not reimburse them for building houses, providing food and firewood, and transporting muhajirs; Ventsislav Muchinov, "Politika na Osmanskata vlast za spraviane s bezhanskata kriza v bŭlgarskite zemi ot kraia na 50-te i 60-te godini na XIX vek," *Anamneza* 8, no. 4 (2013): 89-90.

<sup>38</sup> NBKM IIA.2892 (29 May 1864). I thank Gergana Georgieva for sharing this document with me.

between immigrants and local residents; this early policy is apparent in the 1860 instructions, issued by the newly created Refugee Commission for Dobruja, wherein Crimean Tatars were to be settled away from Christian villages to avoid potential troubles.<sup>39</sup> In southern Dobruja's Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District, for example, muhajirs constituted 24 percent of the population; they inhabited 78 out of 108 villages, sharing 50 villages with other Muslims (Turks, Crimean Tatars, and Roma), 20 villages with Muslims and Christians, and only three villages solely with Christians (Bulgarians). Five villages had a muhajir-only population.<sup>40</sup> [See Appendix I.] In central Dobruja's Babadağ District, Circassian muhajirs formed 14 percent of the population; they lived in 23 out of 58 villages, sharing thirteen villages with Turks and Crimean Tatars, six villages with both Muslims and Christians, and only two villages with Bulgarians. Two Babadağ villages, Vefikiye and Başpınar, were Circassian-only and housed 28 percent of the entire muhajir population.<sup>41</sup> [See Appendix II.] This pattern of refugee resettlement – interspersed with other communities, but with a preference for Muslim neighbors – was common throughout the Balkans. The Refugee Commission avoided settling muhajirs in towns because it intended for them to become farmers and to expand the empire's agricultural production. Nevertheless, the wealthier muhajirs and artisans often gravitated towards urban settlements, which could mean losing state support in allowances and exemptions.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 128.

<sup>40</sup> NBKM 22/274a (1874).

<sup>41</sup> The government must have taken into consideration, at least to some extent, local communities' wishes in determining where to settle muhajirs. Notably, in Babadağ District and most others, Circassians did not share villages with Moldavian, German, and Lipovan communities, who tended to live in monoethnic villages. NBKM 170/292 (c. 1872-76).

<sup>42</sup> In the town of Babadağ, Circassians formed three new neighborhoods. Babadağ muhajir artisans included hoe-makers (*çapacı*), oar-makers (*kürekçi*), sheep drovers (*celeb*), cart-makers (*arabacı*), fruit sellers (*manav*), grocers (*bakkal*), bakers (*ekmekçi*), coffee sellers (*kahveci*), gardeners (*bahçevan*), butchers

The primary duty of the Commission after it had settled refugees was the dispersal of grain and farm animals to support destitute muhajirs and encourage their pursuits in agriculture and husbandry. Economic resources were reallocated locally. For example, wheat, barley, and sheep for muhajirs in Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District came out of state storehouses and sheepfolds in the Balçık and Mangalya districts.<sup>43</sup> This policy ensured that Dobrujan tax payments, in the form of grain and sheep, stayed in Dobruja and sustained local low-income communities and, by proxy, regional economy. Taxes collected from earlier muhajirs, such as Crimean Tatars, often paid for the resettlement of Circassian muhajirs in the 1860s, whose tax payments in the 1870s, in turn, would be allocated to new groups of muhajirs arriving from the Caucasus.<sup>44</sup>

The resettlement of North Caucasians across the Ottoman Empire affected the social structures of muhajir communities, particularly pertaining to their leadership. The specifics varied depending on the ethno-cultural characteristics of each group, the circumstances of their migration (forced, voluntary, or semi-voluntary), and the type of resettlement (monoethnic, mixed muhajir, or mixed with established Ottoman communities). Amidst the chaos of the 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis and the subsequent 1867 Abkhaz migration, many muhajir communities were separated and resettled in villages scattered hundreds of miles away from each other. Mountaineers' traditional leadership, from princely families, often moved to Istanbul and other major cities. Their connections, resources, and education allowed them to integrate easily into the

---

(*kasap*), blacksmiths (*demirci*), furriers (*ferra*), as well as odd-jobbers (*talepten*); NBKM 22/268 (1866), 22A/225 (1877).

<sup>43</sup> Some wheat and sheep were brought over from Salonika; NBKM 22/289 (8 *mart* 1288, 20 March 1872); 22A/333 (26 *nisan* 1286, 8 May 1870).

<sup>44</sup> See NBKM 170A/128 (20 *muharrem* 1283, 4 June 1866); 173/308 (17 *zilhicce* 1290, 5 February 1874).

Ottoman urban elites. Many refugees, tucked away in Balkan and Anatolian villages, temporarily found themselves without traditional hereditary leadership or looked to lesser notables for guidance and patronage.<sup>45</sup> The Ottoman administrative reforms, which coincided with refugee migration, provided a framework for the consolidation of new rural refugee elites through the institution of village councils.

Village councils were a fundamental part of Ottoman governance after the promulgation of the 1864 Vilayet Law. According to new legislation, every village in the empire was to elect a village council, presided by a muhtar [village headman]. Village councils, the lowest-level administrative units in the empire, were meant to aid higher-level district and provincial authorities in tax collection and law enforcement.<sup>46</sup> The 1871 amendment to the Vilayet Law further specified the functions of village headmen, who became paid employees of the state. Village councils were part of the broader Ottoman centralization project under the Tanzimat reforms. The central government wished to know with whom it was dealing and who was to be held accountable. It was also, however, an expansion of popular participation in governance. Throughout the empire, tens of thousands of elected village representatives made executive decisions in their districts, negotiated with Ottoman authorities, and staked out local demands.

Village councils played a particularly important role in the integration of muhajir communities into Ottoman society. Village councillors, serving as the provincial authorities' eyes and ears on the ground, drew up population lists for their communities,

---

<sup>45</sup> Circassian communities differed in their upper social structure. The Kabardin, Bzhedug, Hatuqwai, Temirgoy, and Besleney communities had hereditary princes, whereas Shapsugh, Abzakh, Natukhai, and Ubykh communities did not. See Valentin K. Gardanov, *Obshchestvennyi stroi adygsikh narodov (XVIII - pervaiia polovina XIX v.)* (Moscow: Nauka, 1967).

<sup>46</sup> See Musa Çadırcı, "Türkiye'de Muhtarlık Teşkilâtının Kurulması Üzerine Bir İnceleme," *Belleten* 34 (1970): 409–420.

upon the basis of which the Refugee Commission dispensed financial aid, cereals, and farm animals. Councils and headmen played a role in allotting the assigned land to village residents and distributing aid. They managed the construction of village mosques, schools, and public fountains and made arrangements about communal farming. Village councils vouched for their residents when they applied for temporary travel permissions (Ott. Tur. *mürur tezkeresi*).<sup>47</sup> These responsibilities and privileges solidified the authority of village headmen and councillors, who were often drawn from those muhajirs who had already enjoyed a higher social status back in the Caucasus.

### *Circassian Slavery and Slave Revolts in Dobruja*

Upon having dispatched muhajirs to their new villages, the government had limited knowledge of how refugees' settling in unfolded. The authorities would often find out about resettlement problems only when refugees explicitly asked for help, by petitioning the Refugee Commission or provincial officials. For the study of late Ottoman migration, communal and individual petitions remain an invaluable tool in gauging the political economy of refugee settlements.

In January 1877, seven Circassian notables – Musa, Mehmet, Süleyman, Mehmet 'Ali, Kanhat, Idris, and 'Osman – sent a collective petition to the Tulça subprovincial governor. They complained that three slaves of Mehmet in the village of Urum Bey in

---

<sup>47</sup> *Mürur tezkeresi*, a form of an internal passport, regulated intra-imperial movement for different groups of Ottoman residents, not only muhajirs; see David Gutman, "Travel Documents, Mobility Control, and the Ottoman State in an Age of Global Migration, 1880-1915," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016): 347-68. For muhajirs' requests for *mürur tezkeresi*, see NBKM 169/2955, f. 22b, no. 47 (12 *nisan* 1287, 24 April 1871), f. 23b, no. 53 (15 *nisan* 1287, 27 April 1871).

Hirsova District refused to obey their master. By their example, two other slaves belonging to Mehmet ‘Ali of the same southern Dobrujan village also refused to do household service. That group of slaves, the “disobedient mischief-makers” (Ott. Tur. *itaatsiz mufsidler*), started inciting (*tahrik ederek*) other slaves in neighboring districts. The notables asked the governor to intervene to prevent the spread of slave disturbances. They asked to punish those slaves to set an example for others.<sup>48</sup>

A month later, two of the notables whose slaves had rebelled sent another petition to the Tulça subprovincial governor. They complained that the government failed to resolve the issue. Following their first petition, the local gendarmerie came twice. They confiscated weapons from slaves but did not arrest them. Their slaves’ behavior, they alleged, was against Circassian customs. They repeated their demand to have their insubordinate slaves arrested to serve as a deterrent for others.<sup>49</sup>

Slavery constituted the most contentious issue for many muhajir communities, cutting deeply into their social customs and economic practices. In the 1860s, many Circassian immigrants brought their slaves with them. Slave labor, which remains mostly “invisible” in Ottoman historical record, was paramount to the political economy of hundreds of muhajir villages. Occasionally, slaves rebelled against their masters’ attempts to recreate old Circassian society in the Ottoman Balkans.

Circassian slavery has been among the most visible aspects of Ottoman slavery in literature. British Romantic authors and American traveling circuses popularized the notion

---

<sup>48</sup> NBKM Tulça 54/20 (8 *kanun-ı sani* 1292, 20 January 1877).

<sup>49</sup> NBKM 169/1551 (9 *şubat* 1292, 21 February 1877).

of a “Circassian beauty” in a Sultan’s harem.<sup>50</sup> Already in the late nineteenth century, anti-abolitionist Ottoman intellectuals depicted Ottoman slavery, particularly Circassian slavery, as a more benign form of global slavery in order to distinguish it from brutal trans-Atlantic black slave trade.<sup>51</sup> Through various social and military institutions, Circassian slavery had been an engine of remarkable social mobility for those select few who became valis [governors], viziers [ministers], hasekis [favorite concubines], and Valide Sultans [mothers of sultans].<sup>52</sup> Such career trajectories were, indeed, closed to black slaves in the trans-Atlantic world or in the Ottoman state itself. After the 1860s, however, the absolute majority of Circassian slaves toiled in agricultural servitude.<sup>53</sup>

In the North Caucasus, the culture of slaveholding was not uniform. Different communities developed their own social hierarchies, economic practices, and gender norms. By the mid-nineteenth century, some had been in the process of abolishing slavery through internal reforms (Chechen and Ingush areas), and others retained elements of slaveholding (western Circassia, Abkhazia, Kabarda, and Daghestan). The social structure of slavery and serfdom in historical Circassia was complex. Unfree persons belonged to three categories: *unauty*, who were mostly women, had no right to hold any property and could be separated from their family and sold at their owners’ whim; *pshitli*, akin to Russian serfs, had limited property rights and were obliged to pay levies and do agricultural service for their masters for part of the year; and *ogi*, a transitional stage to freemen, were exempt

---

<sup>50</sup> See Linda Frost, “The Circassian Beauty and the Circassian Slave: Gender, Imperialism, and American Popular Entertainment,” in *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*, ed. Rosemarie Garland Thomson (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 248-62.

<sup>51</sup> See Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 112-34.

<sup>52</sup> See Peirce, *Imperial Harem*, 57-149, 229-65.

<sup>53</sup> See Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 81-111.



from land service and served as guardsmen for their masters.<sup>54</sup> Intra-Caucasus slavery rarely cut through racial, ethnic, or linguistic divide, with most slaves belonging to the same cultural community as their masters, which made the system markedly different from highly racialized trans-Atlantic forms of slavery.<sup>55</sup>

Following the Caucasus War (1817-64), the Russian government pushed ahead with abolitionism across the Caucasus region. Serfdom and slavery were outlawed in Terek Province [modern-day Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria] in 1866, in Daghestan Province in 1867, in Kuban Province [historical Circassian territories] in 1868, and in Sukhum District [Abkhazia] in 1870.<sup>56</sup> Tsarist reforms extended to all unfree Muslims in the region. Similarly to other European empires, Russia had lived through a bitter internal debate on abolitionism, with more liberal political strands carrying the day. Emperor Alexander II, popularly hailed as “the Liberator,” emancipated Russian serfs in 1861 and enshrined abolitionism as part of Russia’s “civilizing mission” in the periphery.<sup>57</sup> Russian abolitionism in the Caucasus, as elsewhere, was only partially driven by humanitarian concerns. Continued slavery in the Caucasus reinforced the political and

---

<sup>54</sup> SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 315 (1866).

<sup>55</sup> Most slaves belonged to the same ethnic group as their masters, but some slaves were acquired through conquest and belonged to different communities. Limited evidence exists for some Circassians bringing Russian slaves/prisoners of war with them to the Ottoman Empire; see NBKM Tulça 52/12 (8 *haziran* 1280, 20 June 1864). Also, the Caucasus served as one of the northernmost destinations for Sub-Saharan African slaves. As late as 1848-50, at least nine black slaves were purchased into Kabarda; see Central State Archive of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (Tsentral’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Kabardino-Balkarskoi Respubliki, Nalchik, hereafter cited as TsGA KBR) f. 24, op. 1, d. 7 (4 March 1852). See also Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 82.

<sup>56</sup> On slavery and abolitionism among western Circassians, see SSSA f. 7, op. 8, d. 9 (1872); f. 416, op. 3, d. 1047 (1867); Kabardins, f. 416, op. 3, d. 122 (1866), d. 321-23 (1863), d. 1051 (1865); Abkhaz, f. 416, op. 3, d. 1019 (1870), d. 1021 (1870-72); f. 545, op. 1, d. 422 (1868); Ossetians, f. 416, op. 3, d. 324 (1863), d. 1054 (1867); Chechens, f. 416, op. 3, d. 325 (1863), d. 1048 (1862), d. 1052 (1866); Daghestanis, f. 416, op. 3, d. 205 (1866); d. 326 (1863), d. 1034 (1861). See also Kurtynova-D’Herlugnan, *The Tsar’s Abolitionists*.

<sup>57</sup> Russia’s abolitionist reforms were first tried out in the Baltic provinces of Estland, Lifland, and Courland in 1816-19.

economic dominance of local Muslim notables, some of whom had previously been opposed to Russian rule. Emancipation would reduce their power and pave the way to land reform across the region. Russia's phasing out of slavery and serfdom in the Caucasus was gradual and accommodationist, similarly to how abolitionist reforms proceeded in the United States.<sup>58</sup> Nevertheless, Russian reforms provoked resistance among many slaveholding families, especially in the Kuban and Terek provinces, many of whom chose to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire, usually bringing their slaves with them.<sup>59</sup>

Slavery was never formally outlawed in the Ottoman Empire, as abolitionism faced significant resistance from many urban and rural elites. Instead, under British pressure and as a result of internal reforms, the Ottomans suppressed slave trade in a series of edicts: the sale of Circassian and Georgian slaves was prohibited in 1854-55 and that of African slaves in 1857.<sup>60</sup>

The British consul in Edirne had a starkly negative view about the proliferation of slavery in the Ottoman Balkans, reinforced by Circassian immigration:

When the Circassians settled in this Vilayet – 8 or 9 years ago ... most of the district Governors imprudently allowed the Circassian Chiefs to form their settlements by clans, and to develop in them their social institutions and customs to which they had been accustomed in their native Country. ... Phsli, or slaves of the Hanouks [chiefs] ... are generally very harshly treated, are subjected to corporal punishment and other cruel indignities and, from all I am told, do not

---

<sup>58</sup> On U.S. abolitionism, see Ira Berlin, *The Long Emancipation: The Demise of Slavery in the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015). On Ottoman abolitionism, see Toledano, *Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression*; idem., *Slavery and Abolition*, 89-134; Y. Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800-1909* (Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1996), 94-151.

<sup>59</sup> Under Russian legislation, North Caucasian notables were not allowed to compel their slaves to accompany them in emigration to the Ottoman Empire. Their slaves had to make this decision on their own. The emigration of many slaves was likely a result of coercion by their masters.

<sup>60</sup> Toledano, *Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression*, 115-23, 135-38. On British abolitionist pressure on the Ottoman Empire, see Toledano, *Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression*, 91-123, 224-78; Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*, 67-93, 132-36.

enjoy the protection and immunities the Mahomedan Legislation grants to the servile classes.<sup>61</sup>

Slave revolts remain a little-known aspect of late Ottoman history.<sup>62</sup> Ottoman slave rebellions were local affairs, with limited participation. Nevertheless, they are crucial to understanding the dynamics of immigrant integration and imperial administration of resettlement. The most distinctive element of those disturbances, which made the Circassian case so unlike the grand slave rebellions in Haiti, Cuba, and U.S. antebellum South, other than their limited scope, was the agency of the adversary. For Circassian slaves, the opponent was a Circassian slave owner, not the state.<sup>63</sup> They usually regarded the state as a guarantor of their rights. So did their owners.

For many slaves, the state was an ultimate arbiter of justice, whose protection they sought by citing state-enacted bans on slave trade and appealing to the sultan's protection of his subjects. In 1871, a British consul in Köstence wrote that Circassians in Mecidiye District rebelled against their masters who "kept [them] in a state of serfdom, made [them] work without wages, beaten and sold."<sup>64</sup> Slaves appealed to the Ottoman authorities, expressing their desire to return under Russian rule rather than live in servitude of their masters.<sup>65</sup> Around the same time, in eastern Thrace, a group of slaves rebelled when they found out that slave trade had been outlawed in the Ottoman state, assuming that they could

---

<sup>61</sup> The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Records of the Foreign Office (London, hereafter cited as TNA FO) 195/934, Blunt to Elliot, #12 (Edirne, 23 February 1871).

<sup>62</sup> On a Circassian slave riot in Mandira, Edirne in 1866, see Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 95-96. On Circassian slaveholders' armed suppression of slaves' requests for freedom in Çorlu, Tekfurdağı in 1874; see *ibid.*, 100.

<sup>63</sup> See Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent*, 108-52.

<sup>64</sup> TNA FO 195/937, Sankey to Dalyell, #13 (Köstence, 29 May 1871), f. 461.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

legally challenge their slave status. After the gendarmerie failed to persuade slaves to return to their master, the authorities had to negotiate their status and eventual manumission.<sup>66</sup>

Consuls regularly sent dispatches lamenting the continued slave trade in the Balkans despite Ottoman edicts that prohibited it. British officials held slavery to be pervasive because high-ranking officials, from district governors to judges, were complicit in the slave trade and rarely punished slave merchants or manumitted illegally purchased slaves. Russian consular officials reported as much. The Russian consul in Varna wrote that “all wealthy Turks in Varna,” including both subprovincial and district governors, “have been buying Circassian women,” who sold cheaply amidst the refugee crisis.<sup>67</sup> The British consul in Köstence wrote that one Nur Bey, an Abkhaz slave-trader from the village of Rakil, in Maçin District, sold a girl to the Maçin district governor for 3,000 *kuruş*. He sold another girl to the Maçin fisheries contractor. That case was only known because the contractor’s wife returned from Istanbul, had the girl returned to the slave-dealer, and the two men went to court over slave price restitution.<sup>68</sup> This may have been the reason for many slaves’ hesitation to contact local authorities, who were perceived as corrupt and invested in slaveholding, for help, prompting them to reach out to foreign consuls or appeal directly to the provincial governor.

The 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis reinforced the institution of slavery in the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, the mass Circassian expulsion from Russia resulted in thousands of women and children having been sold into slavery by their masters or destitute families in the ports of Trabzon, Samsun, and Istanbul.<sup>69</sup> No reliable estimates exist for

---

<sup>66</sup> *Pravo* 8, no. 21, appendix (6 August 1873), a reprint from *The Levant Times and Shipping Gazette*.

<sup>67</sup> MnV f. 5, op. 2.23, d. 1621, N. 65 (26 August 1870), ff. 2258-60.

<sup>68</sup> TNA FO 195/937, Sankey to Dalyell, #11 (Köstence, 24 May 1871), f. 459.

<sup>69</sup> See Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 85-95; Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 240-46.

numbers of such sales. On the other hand, many muhajirs took their inherited household slaves with them into their villages. Contemporary reports suggest the scope of slave ownership in muhajir villages: reportedly, in some settlements near Edirne, there were five slaves to one freeman;<sup>70</sup> and, in the Kahramanmaraş area, in eastern Anatolia, more than half of Kabardin immigrants were slaves.<sup>71</sup> Consuls reported that the Ottoman slave market was saturated after 1864: “now the stock of white slaves is easily supported by local production, whereas formerly it was supplied under very difficult circumstances by foreign and uncertain markets.”<sup>72</sup> Hence the paradox of the Ottoman settlement of refugees: all muhajirs, by default, were Ottoman subjects, in accordance with the 1857 Immigration Law, but slavery remained legal, and refugee slaves could not enjoy the full privileges of their Ottoman subjecthood or immigrant benefits conferred by the law.

Many slave-owning muhajirs notables, whose power was amplified through village councils, profited from the Ottoman resettlement of muhajirs at the expense of their own communities. First, some Circassian notables registered land that was earmarked for other muhajirs, especially slaves, in their own names, thus becoming large landowners. They were set to further benefit from the labor of their subordinates, who turned into sharecroppers on their notables' land.<sup>73</sup> Second, some notables extended high-interest loans to other muhajirs by using the capital out of the state-granted aid to the entire refugee community.<sup>74</sup> When notables were in charge of village councils, they could have free reign on the registration of land in the village and distribution of allowances. Thus, the institution

---

<sup>70</sup> TNA FO 195/934, Blunt to Elliot, #12 (Edirne, 23 February 1871).

<sup>71</sup> TNA FO 195/1405, Bennet to Dufferin, #12 (Kayseri, 17 July 1882).

<sup>72</sup> TNA FO 195/901, Blunt to Elliot, #8 (Edirne, 25 January 1868), ff. 64-64r.

<sup>73</sup> TNA FO 195/934, Blunt to Elliot, #12 (Edirne, 23 February 1871).

<sup>74</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees,” 132-34.

of slavery perpetuated inequality within muhajir settlements, making substantial portions of the refugee population economically insecure and vulnerable to exploitation.

### *Land Conflicts in Dobruja*

The scarcity of agricultural land constituted another major source of intra- and intercommunal conflicts for muhajir communities in Dobruja and across the empire. The 1857 Immigration Law needs to be read alongside the 1858 Land Code (*Kanun-i Arazi*). The introduction of the Land Code, a landmark achievement of the Tanzimat era, accelerated the transformation of a relationship between Ottoman subjects and their property, as well as a relationship between the state and landowners. The 1858 legislative act, which divided all land in the empire into five categories: *mülk*, *miri*, *vakıf*, *metruke*, and *mevat*, provided an updated and centralized framework governing land ownership that better suited the needs of an expanding Ottoman and global market.<sup>75</sup> The Ottoman Land Code laid groundwork for land-related legislation in Turkey and other Ottoman successor states in the Balkans and the Levant.<sup>76</sup>

The exact meanings of the Land Code were contested and interpreted differently by various interest groups, but, by clarifying and affirming certain forms of land ownership and sale, it opened up much of the empire to new forms of capital accumulation.<sup>77</sup> In

---

<sup>75</sup> I refrain from translating these names into English, as translations carry a Euro- or American-centric understanding of property ownership and tenure. The following translations are commonly used in historiography: state lands (*miri*), freehold or privately owned property (*mülk*), religious endowments (*vakıf*), abandoned lands (*metruke*), and dead or uncultivated lands (*mevat*).

<sup>76</sup> In Jordan, for example, the Land Settlement Law of 1933 drew heavily on the 1858 Ottoman Land Code; see Michael R. Fischbach, *State, Society, and Land in Jordan* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 106.

<sup>77</sup> For the text of the Ottoman Land Code, see Ahmet Akgündüz, *Mukayeseli İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyyatı* (Diyarbakir: Dicle Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi, 1986), 683-715; Stanley Fisher, *Ottoman Land*

Danube Province, among the Land Code's major consequences was an accelerated demise of *çiftlik*s, large agricultural estates in the hands of Muslim and Christian landowners that long dominated economic life in the region.<sup>78</sup> The Land Code was favorable to implementing the settlement of refugees. First, the state reasserted its ownership of all *miri* land; peasants and landowners had rights of usufruct, which could be sold, but not of full ownership (Article 3). Second, the state reserved the right to abrogate one's usufruct rights if the laborer did not till the land or did not pay taxes for three years (Article 68).<sup>79</sup> Third, the Land Code eroded communal rights to the land, whether of settled or nomadic communities, prioritizing individual over collective rights (Article 8).<sup>80</sup> These developments allowed for the state to dispense agricultural land in favor of refugees and backed refugees' rights to the land that may have been claimed, but not used, by someone else.

The new code also provided the definition of a *çiftlik* – in this instance, not a large agricultural estate, but an administrative unit of arable land – as a tract of land, cultivated and harvested annually, that requires one yoke of oxen to work it. It measured 70-80

---

*Laws: Containing the Ottoman Land Code and Later Legislation Affecting Land* (London: Oxford University Press, 1919).

<sup>78</sup> For the 1858 Land Code in the Balkans, see Ulf Brunnbauer, "Descent of Territoriality: Inheritance and Family Forms in the Late Ottoman and Early Post-Ottoman Balkans," in *Household and Family in the Balkans*, ed. Karl Kaser (Vienna and Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2012), 305-26, 308-11. On *çiftlik*s in the northern Balkans, see Strashimir Dimitrov, "Chiflishkoto stopanstvo prez 50-70-te godina na XIX vek," *Istoricheski pregled* 9, no. 2 (1955): 3-34.

<sup>79</sup> The rule was not always enforced. After the 1877-78 War, however, as land was in scarce supply across the empire, the Council of Ministers issued an order for the land that remained uncultivated for three years to be confiscated for the settlement of refugees; Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics: Northwestern Anatolia, 1877-1912," in *Land Rights, Ethno-Nationality, and Sovereignty in History*, eds. Stanley L. Engerman and Jacob Metzer (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 168.

<sup>80</sup> Notably, the Russian land reform in the North Caucasus, implemented over the 1860s, had the same effect. Local Muslim communities lost agricultural and pasture land that they had previously regarded as communal; see SSSA f. 1087, op. 2, d. 201 (Kabarda, 1869). f. 416, op. 3, d. 1021 (Abkhazia, 1870-72).

*dönüm*<sup>81</sup> of fertile land, or 100 *dönüm* of land of medium productivity, or 130 *dönüm* of arid and marshy land (Article 131). Regional refugee commissions aspired to this 1858 definition of a çiftlik in their allotments of land to muhajirs: one çiftlik per household.

In Dobruja, North Caucasian refugees of the first wave generally received allotments within those parameters. For example, the village of ‘Ali Bey in Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District, in southern Dobruja, was a new settlement for muhajirs from Russia.<sup>82</sup> Out of 73 muhajir households, 61 received land. Among those, 47 were registered as “old” arrivals, likely Crimean Tatars from the early 1860s, and 14 were “new” arrivals, likely Circassians who arrived after 1864. The old arrivals received, on average, 5.3 plots of land to the total of 232 *dönüm*. The “new” arrivals received, on average, 3.2 plots of land to the total of 100 *dönüm*. Four Bulgarian absentee landowners, who resided in neighboring villages, collectively owned 12,100 *dönüm*, half of the land in the village.<sup>83</sup> This pattern is representative for many villages: larger plots of land tilled by long-settled communities, smaller ones by earlier immigrants, and the smallest ones by new immigrants. Some families, likely slaves, received no land whatsoever and sharecropped for their neighbors.

Further north, in Babadağ District in central Dobruja, in the mixed village of Kongaz, Circassians held usufruct rights to an average of 111 *dönüm* per household compared to 216 *dönüm* for Bulgarians and 187 *dönüm* for Turks. In the village of Hacı

---

<sup>81</sup> A *dönüm*, a standard measurement for land in the Ottoman Empire, equals 939.9 square meters or 10,117 square feet. A hectare amounts to 10.64 *dönüm*; an acre – to 4.31 *dönüm*.

<sup>82</sup> For the demography and economy of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District, see Khristo Gandev and Gülüb Gülübov, eds., *Turski izvori za Bülgarskata istoriia*, vol. 2 – Dobrichka Kaza (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1960).

<sup>83</sup> Gandev and Gülübov, *Turski izvori*, no. 18, pp. 161-64 (1874).



Ömer, Circassian residents tilled, on average, 96 *dönüm*, and Turkish residents – 153 *dönüm*.<sup>84</sup>

A persistent belief of the Ottoman administration throughout the 1860s and 1870s appears to have been that the empire had plenty of uncultivated land, and it was a matter of efficient work of local refugee commissions to find and apportion that land to muhajirs.<sup>85</sup> The presumed availability of land, however, did not mean that the land could be readily available: some of it consisted of swamps or mountains, unusable for agriculture, or was in the difficult to access areas. In many cases, local villages or nomadic groups claimed the untilled land as communal property, in contravention of the 1858 Land Code but in line with the locally entrenched norms of land usage.<sup>86</sup> Local authorities rarely shared the central government's optimism about how much land they could dispose of. Even in Dobruja, as early as 1860, the administration noted a scarcity of cultivable land and concluded that the region could only support 20,000 more immigrants.<sup>87</sup> That was before the onslaught of the final round of Crimean immigration and the 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis.

The general allotment for new immigrant families, across Dobruja and the empire, was 60 *dönüm* per household. It was repeated in instructions to district administrators and repeatedly invoked by refugees in their petitions as a minimal standard that must be reached and yet was unavailable in many localities. For example, in northwestern Bulgaria, in

---

<sup>84</sup> NBKM 170/81 (1874).

<sup>85</sup> For a similar conclusion, see Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees," 129.

<sup>86</sup> See Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees," 149-57; see also idem., "'A Very Important Requirement of Social Life': Privatisation of Land, Criminalization of Custom, and Land Disputes in Nineteenth-Century Anatolia," in *Les Acteurs des Transformations Foncières Autour de la Méditerranée au XIXe Siècle*, eds. Vanessa Guéno and Didier Cuignard (Paris: Karthala, 2013), 25-47.

<sup>87</sup> Karpat, "Ottoman Urbanism," 222.

Rahova (Oryahovo) District, five out of six refugee villages, for which we have data, received a median of 30 *dönüm* per household; the sixth village received a median of 75 *dönüm* per household. In the neighboring İvraca (Vratsa) District, the median distribution for four refugee villages was in the range of only 15 to 24 *dönüm* per household.<sup>88</sup>

To allot land to refugees, local administrations conducted land surveys and audits of existing title deeds, which slowed down the apportionment of land. Limited funding also impeded timely distribution of farm animals and crop seeds. Many muhajirs complained that they did not receive the promised agricultural land, oxen, or even houses, even though several years had passed since their arrival. Subprovincial administrators warned that petitions had to be dealt with urgently, so that the communities “were not completely deprived of agricultural pursuits.”<sup>89</sup>

In many cases, the original land grant to a village community, which would then be allotted to individuals by a village council, was definitive. New households emerging within the village had to rely on their families’ land. Village councils could petition district authorities to reassign a young family to another settlement in order to avoid the dreaded reallocation (*takassum*) of land.<sup>90</sup> Former slaves also sent their petitions. In 1874, Ahmed, a Circassian from the village of Orta in Babadağ District, sent a message to local authorities. He informed them that he recently bought himself out of slavery, chose to stay in his old village, and since then received a house but not agricultural land. Ahmed, who

---

<sup>88</sup> Margarita Dobreva, “Bulgaristan’ın İvraca ve Rahova Kazalarında Yaşayan Çerkeslerin Nüfus Yapısı ve İktisadi Etkinlikleri (1860-1870),” *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 2 (2016): 70.

<sup>89</sup> NBKM 170/342 (28 *nisan* 1292, 10 May 1876).

<sup>90</sup> NBKM 170/290 (8 *mayıs* 1291, 20 May 1875).

was starting a new life as a freeman, requested the government to find him a plot of land, to which he was entitled as a muhajir.<sup>91</sup>

Communal petitions from Dobruja-based refugees reveal that a common understanding of the land allotment process was that land was distributed based on how many oxen muhajirs owned. In 1872, a group of Circassian muhajirs in Mecidiye District wrote the following petition:

We, [Circassian muhajirs] of the village of Düce, in Mecidiye District, write in relation to our arable lands. According to the government instructions, for every pair of oxen [that we own], we would receive 60 *dönüm* of land [from the government]. We currently have four pairs of draft oxen and, correspondingly, till 240 *dönüm* of land. However, more Circassians are arriving, and there is not enough land for everyone. A group of [new] refugees seized some of the land in our village by force. We appeal to the government to restore our rights to that land.<sup>92</sup>

Another petition, sent from Babadağ District in 1874, also testifies to a growing competition over land within muhajir communities:

We, Circassian muhajirs of the village of Ak Kadın, write to you about the distribution of our land, which proceeded based on the amount of [farm] animals that we own. When [the distribution] happened, because we were poor, we had no animals, and therefore received little land. Now, we own animals and would like to have more land in order to take up agriculture. Because our village is close to the Balkan Mountains and land there is tillable, we established a land committee, which opened up more agricultural land. However, a group of people from our village threatens to release their animals on that land, even though our village has plenty of grazing land for animals. They wish to seize our new lands. Many of us would love to set up gardens there. We ask the authorities to send a title deed official, on governmental payroll, to settle our disagreements.<sup>93</sup>

In late Ottoman Dobruja, where even established Christian and Muslim communities (Ott. Tur. *ahali-i kadime*) were often second- and third-generation immigrants, the state's claim to the *miri* land was rarely challenged. Most Ottoman

---

<sup>91</sup> NBKM 169/1536 (19 *teşrin-i sani* 1290, 24 November 1874).

<sup>92</sup> NBKM 169/1517 (26 *nisan* 1288, 8 May 1872).

<sup>93</sup> NBKM 170/1035 (4 *mayıs* 1290, 16 May 1874).

residents, including muhajirs, experienced the Land Code firsthand through single-page *tapu* [title deeds], issued to them by the state. Title deeds commonly specified the exact size and borders of a land plot. Copies of the post-1858 title deeds were preserved at local and regional land registries; these documents were readily accepted by courts and provincial administrations as evidence of usufruct rights.<sup>94</sup> Refugee communities embraced *tapu* as a definitive authorization of their individual usufruct rights. In many petitions, muhajirs expressly asked local authorities to issue them title deeds in order to resolve a local land dispute once and for all.

In 1873, district authorities of Maçın, in northwestern Dobruja, were untangling a web of complaints from Circassian residents of three Circassian villages. Maçın District, a strategic mountainous area nestled in the last “loop” of the Danube before it flows into Black Sea, hosted a heterogeneous population of Moldavians, Bulgarians, Turks, and Circassian and Abkhaz muhajirs. [See Appendix III.] Circassians moved into the first village, Balabanca, soon after 1864. They received some agricultural carts and tools, including plows, axes, and hoes, as well as cattle: some were given a pair of oxen per household (*hane*), others per extended family (*familya*), comprising several households.<sup>95</sup> The land that Balabanca Circassians initially received was insufficient for agriculture or pasture. The muhajirs, however, opened up more watered land (*sulu yerler*) on the slopes of the Maçın Mountains and, by the 1870s, tilled more than 60 *dönüm* per household.<sup>96</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> *Tapu* title deeds were issued to Ottoman residents upon the payment of ten years worth of *öşür* tax. Muhajirs, upon the allotment of land, received temporary title deeds, to be upgraded to permanent ones upon ten years of tax payment. See also Anton Minkov, “Ottoman *Tapu* Title Deeds in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Origin, Typology and Diplomats,” *Islamic Law and Society* 7, no. 1 (2000): 3.

<sup>95</sup> NBKM OAK Collection 141/2; 169/1511 (9 *kanun-ı evvel* 1281, 21 December 1865); 172/50-51 (31 *kanun-ı evvel* 1281, 12 January 1866).

<sup>96</sup> NBKM Maçın 172/87, f. 72a, no. 25 (14 *muharrem* 1289, 24 March 1872).

The second village, Sikanka, accepted several waves of Circassian refugees. Its earlier immigrants arrived together with those who settled in Balabanca and were likely related to them. By the time new Circassians arrived in 1867-68, the available land in the village was scarce. The 41 new Circassian households expected to receive 60 *dönüm* of land per household, but were allotted, on average, only 40 *dönüm*. The village, surrounded by mountains on all four sides, lacked space to expand its fields.<sup>97</sup> To offer more land to muhajirs, district authorities offered them the Kara Bilin meadows lying between them and the village of Balabanca. Balabanca muhajirs held usufruct rights to the meadow, part of which they were assigned and part of which they acquired privately in the preceding years.<sup>98</sup> They had purchased 410 *dönüm* of the meadow, having paid seven *kuruş* per *dönüm*, with the sale authorized by the Maçin district governor.<sup>99</sup> Balabanca Circassians, with issued title deeds in hand, protested the re-distribution of their meadow land. Sikanka villagers then petitioned the government to expand their lands in another direction. In the vicinity of their village lay a semi-abandoned village of Crimean Tatars, who had arrived twenty years prior and whose settlement failed. Circassians asked to apportion them some of the land of that village.<sup>100</sup>

The third village, Cafarka, attached to the neighboring Isakça District, hosted its first Circassian muhajirs in 1870. The village also faced a shortage of available land in a mountainous terrain. For this reason, district authorities apportioned 600 *dönüm* of land from Balabanca muhajirs to their new Cafarka neighbors. Balabanca Circassians, who

---

<sup>97</sup> NBKM Tulça 55/20, f. 37b, no. 36 (11 *mart* 1289, 23 March 1873).

<sup>98</sup> NBKM Maçin 172/87, f. 72a, no. 25 (14 *muharrem* 1289, 24 March 1872).

<sup>99</sup> NBKM 169/1553 (5 *nisan* 1293, 17 April 1877).

<sup>100</sup> NBKM Tulça 55/20, f. 37b, no. 36 (11 *mart* 1289, 23 March 1873).

already claimed usufruct rights to that land, protested and seized 250 *dönüm* of that land.<sup>101</sup> The Balabanca village council, including their imam, also complained to the Maçin district authorities and the Tulça subprovincial authorities about the infringement on their usufruct rights, as confirmed through their title deeds.<sup>102</sup> Negotiations between the two villages of co-ethnic refugees ensued, under the arbitrage of the authorities. Stories like these were commonplace across the empire, from the Danubian delta to the Çukurova marshes, to the Kurdish mountains. In Dobruja, muhajirs were more likely to come into conflict over land with each other; in other parts of the country, they contested land with Turks, Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians, Kurds, and Arabs.

Communal complaints and petitions about land were not unique to North Caucasian muhajirs. Dobrujan residents, as attested by hundreds of surviving documents, were avid petitioners. Thus, in 1876, German immigrants from the Russian Empire, Vasil and Andrey [sic], complained that their two villages near Isakça, in northern Dobruja, were not allotted enough land and, therefore, they could not pay *öşür* [tithe] tax.<sup>103</sup> In 1877, Turkish villagers from Köstence District, who moved (Ott. Tur. *hicret etmek*) to Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District in search of land for a new settlement, also wrote to subprovincial authorities. They lamented that they had not found a suitable location yet and lived in abject poverty. “Winter is coming,” they wrote, emphasizing their urgent need for assistance in finding land and housing for their communities to survive – a common plea in the Ottoman age of refugees and immigrants.<sup>104</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> NBKM Maçin 172/87, f. 75b, no. 48 (22 *muharrem* 1289, 1 April 1872).

<sup>102</sup> NBKM Tulça 57/1, ff. 1, 20 (15 *şevval* 1288, 28 December 1871), f. 22 (22 *şevval* 1288, 4 January 1872)

<sup>103</sup> NBKM 169/1546 (27 *temmuz* 1292, 8 August 1876).

<sup>104</sup> NBKM 169/1556 (3 *teşrin-i evvel* 1293, 15 October 1877).

## *Economic Inequality and Intercommunal Violence*

In Balkan historiography, the settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs is remembered primarily for leading to banditry throughout the country, culminating in anti-Christian violence of 1876-78. To understand why refugee resettlement came to an ignominious end in Danube Province, I will elaborate upon the process of muhajirs' economic integration.

The government's early forecast about the economy of refugee settlements was optimistic. In April 1866, when most muhajirs had only been reaping their first harvest and many had not even been allotted land plots, the official provincial newspaper, *Danube (Tuna, 1865-77)*, reported that, in the previous year, Circassian muhajirs in Dobruja produced more crops than they needed to sustain themselves.<sup>105</sup> Such news aimed to foster public goodwill and patience towards muhajirs amidst continuing refugee migration. It was also a falsehood. Muhajirs were hardly self-sufficient in their first settlement years, and many villages in Dobruja never reached the level of self-sustenance. Moreover, the authorities were hardly able to estimate refugees' agricultural output; such data would have only been recoverable from tithe tax returns, which muhajirs did not start paying until later. Some villages may have been doing better than others. Reportedly, the provincial governor was impressed with how quickly Circassian refugees had been settling in, building new houses, and taking up agriculture, and even offered the Russian vice-consul in Tulça to tour Circassian villages in the area.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> *Tuna*, no. 67 (24 April 1866).

<sup>106</sup> Konstantin N. Leont'ev [Vice-Consul in Tulça], *Diplomaticheskie doneseniiia, pis'ma, zapiski, otchety 1865-1872 gg.* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2003), no. 276, pp. 156-58 (20 October 1867).

The first complaints about refugees emerged soon after their arrival. Different communities reported that groups of armed muhajirs had robbed them on the road. In northern Dobruja, an early target of muhajirs' looting was a community of German farmers, among the wealthiest immigrants in the area. The Ottoman authorities insisted that a Circassian attack on a German village was an isolated incident over the rights to arable land. The Germans did not think so and eventually sought help from the Russian vice-consulate, even expressing a wish to emigrate to Russia if their security in Ottoman Dobruja could no longer be guaranteed.<sup>107</sup> Notably, however, refugee-related violence in Dobruja, and by many accounts elsewhere, did not follow a strict Muslim-Christian divide, nor was it necessarily perpetrated solely by muhajirs. As early as 1863, a group of Nogai Tatars from Russia's Kuban province, who had just settled in southern Dobruja, contacted the Russian consul to complain that local Turkish residents had been attacking their villages, killing people, and looting their possessions.<sup>108</sup>

The early signs of refugee-perpetrated crime and high levels of gun ownership prompted the Ottomans to issue regulations on the issue in 1869-70. The government recommended local officials not to settle muhajirs in large groups, ideally breaking them up into different settlements, a policy that had not been carried out for previous refugee groups but became the Refugee Commission's preferred policy in the years to come. The authorities were to confiscate refugees' firearms, which was notoriously difficult to implement. The government also explicitly pushed for assimilationist policies: if possible,

---

<sup>107</sup> Leont'ev, *Diplomaticheskie doneseniiia*, no. 59, pp. 200-01 (15 March 1868); no. 104, pp. 206-08 (23 April 1868); no. 129, pp. 209-10 (6 May 1868).

<sup>108</sup> MnV f. 5, op. 2, d. 24, no. 1615, ll. 147-50 (4 July 1863).



refugees were to be placed in existing villages and encouraged to intermarry with non-North Caucasian communities.<sup>109</sup>

Intercommunal relations, fueled by economic insecurity, began to unravel in the early 1870s. In this period, district authorities began to alert provincial and imperial administrations of an increase in refugee-committed crimes – mostly, theft of horses and sheep – in Dobruja and in the Balkans at large.<sup>110</sup> In the previously discussed tri-village area near Maçin, villagers reported that Circassians from Babadağ District, who would come from across the mountains, and local Circassians from Balabanca and other villages were stealing local cattle.<sup>111</sup> Balkan newspapers published a deluge of complaints about Circassian bandits who oppressed local villagers and made travel through their regions unsafe. 80 percent of all references to Circassians in the Bulgarian-language press, published primarily in Istanbul before 1878, were related to crimes committed by muhajirs.<sup>112</sup>

As intercommunal relations worsened, muhajir village councils played an increasingly important role. Local authorities called upon village councils to forestall crime in their areas. In Babadağ District, the authorities complained about muhajirs' "abominable issue of theft" of horses, oxen, and sheep from non-immigrant communities. They believed that most Circassian village headmen were not only unhelpful in resolving those crimes, but, in fact, aided and partnered in the act of theft. They urged better cooperation between

---

<sup>109</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees," 132.

<sup>110</sup> See, for example, NBKM 172/86, f. 9b, no. 70 (Maçin District, 1870); 20/823 (Varna District, 1871); 170/303 (Babadağ District, 1876).

<sup>111</sup> NBKM 172/86, f. 24b, no. 189 (11 *teşrin-i evvel* 1286, 23 October 1870).

<sup>112</sup> Georgi Iakimov, "Vüzrozhdenskiiat pechat za cherkezite v bŭlgarskite zemi prez 60-te - 70-te godini na XIX v.," *Istoriia* 4-5 (2004): 74.

district authorities across Dobruja to track down stolen animals that were quickly moved to other areas and resold there.<sup>113</sup> In 1872, the Hacıoğlu Pazarcık district authorities outlined two strategies in tackling the rise in muhajirs' crime. First, the authorities recognized the importance of developing a working relationship with elected village councils in muhajir settlements, while stressing to village headmen that it was their duty to cooperate with Ottoman authorities and to make sure that no criminals could hide among their residents. Second, the Hacıoğlu Pazarcık district authorities insisted that the prohibition on the purchase of stolen animals should be strictly enforced and urged their subprovincial superiors in Varna to increase police presence at fairs, where such sales occurred.<sup>114</sup>

As banditry continued and communal relations disintegrated across the province, the Danubian provincial administration issued instructions for district authorities to impress upon muhajir communal leaders and notables that they could no longer abet banditry, including storing the loot in their villages and harboring perpetrators. The provincial administration admonished that if Circassian leaders continued to do so and did not cooperate fully with Ottoman authorities, they would bring harm on their entire communities and would not be spared punishment.<sup>115</sup>

Many muhajir villages resorted to issuing signed communal statements, to assuage neighboring communities and to vouch for their residents' good behavior. These statements were often produced in response to crimes committed by local muhajirs. Muhajir village councils offered a guarantee (*kefalet*) that their residents or those under their jurisdiction

---

<sup>113</sup> NBKM Babadağ 9/13 (*cemaziyelahir* 1285, September/October 1868).

<sup>114</sup> NBKM 22/287 (9 *şevval* 1288, 22 December 1871).

<sup>115</sup> NBKM Silistre 30/6 (h. 1293, 1876-77).

would not harm anyone. Those who dare commit “theft or other types of crime” would be surrendered to local authorities. Muhajir communities also vowed not to harbor non-local muhajirs who did not have an authorization to be there (*tezkeresiz*). Such statements were signed and sealed by village councils, including a headman and an imam, and often heads of every village household.<sup>116</sup>

What happened in the early 1870s? Why did instances of economic crime by refugees increase across the Balkans and some parts of Anatolia? I offer four interconnected explanations. First, global prices for grain, an important export for the empire, and for Danube Province in particular, fluctuated in the 1870s. Based on data for Dobrujan grain sales from Varna, following the growth in exports through the 1860s, sales dropped significantly in 1869-70. Grain export stagnated through the 1870s, never recovering the volume of sales of 1864.<sup>117</sup> The stagnation was a result of the global Long Depression, which began in 1873 and decreased international prices and demand for grain. It directly hit those muhajir households that produced a surplus of grain.

Second, with declining agricultural exports and revenue, the Ottomans struggled to pay their mounting debt to the European states. The government took out its first loans during the 1853-56 Crimean War, then kept borrowing to pay for refugee resettlement, and,

---

<sup>116</sup> See, for example, NBKM Tulça 51/21 (7 nisan 1283, 19 April 1867).

<sup>117</sup> Michael R. Palaret, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800-1914: Evolution Without Development* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 62-63; see also Lampe and Jackson, *Balkan Economic History*, 138-39. After the 1870s, the importance of export of cereals further decreased. Thus, in 1897, the Ottoman Empire exported 48 million *kuruş* worth of barley and 15 million *kuruş* worth of wheat, compared to 177 million *kuruş* worth of grapes and 136 million *kuruş* worth of silk, respectively two leading Ottoman exports; see Donald Quataert, “The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914,” in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Halil İncalçık and Donald Quataert (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), vol. 2, 833. By 1914, about a quarter of all Ottoman agricultural production was exported; *Ibid.*, 829.

in 1869-75, borrowed more than its projected revenues for that period.<sup>118</sup> In 1875, the Porte declared a sovereign default on its loan repayments. Reduced grain exports and budgetary woes, both effects of the Long Depression, depleted the Ottoman government's cash reserves and severely impeded its ability to offer sufficient aid to muhajirs.

Third, the Balkans experienced a massive drought in 1872-73. Many struggling refugee villages lost their harvest. It coincided with a drought in Anatolia in 1872-75, with the collapsing harvests and failing exports further exacerbating the empire's financial woes and leading to its default.<sup>119</sup> This put severe pressure on the budget of the Refugee Commission and provincial treasuries, which distributed aid to muhajirs. In 1876, the Babadağ district authorities notified the Danubian provincial governor that a delay in the payment of cash allowances to muhajirs was directly responsible for their affliction with poverty.<sup>120</sup>

Finally, in 1869-70, six-year tax exemptions for Circassian muhajirs were set to expire. For many muhajirs, if not most, because they received their title deeds and oxen with a delay, exemptions expired a few years later. Many refugee settlements were in no position to pay their full dues. For example, Circassians from the village of Balabanca, the ones who were contesting land with other muhajirs in their area, owed the government 1,064 *kuruş* in tax in 1873-74.<sup>121</sup> Across the region, muhajirs were falling short on their payments, neglecting their tax bills, or borrowing money to pay their dues. Tax registers

---

<sup>118</sup> Quataert, "The Age of Reforms," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. İnalcık and Quataert, vol. 2, 773. See also Murat Birdal, *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Financial Control in the Late Nineteenth Century* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 17-62.

<sup>119</sup> Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), vol. 2, 156.

<sup>120</sup> NBKM 170/341 (4 *şubat* 1291, 16 February 1876).

<sup>121</sup> NBKM 172A/58 (h. 1289, 1872-73).

from Dobruja as late as 1877 reveal that refugee communities were paying little tax proportionate to their population. By that point, monthly cash or grain stipends were rare; the poorest and disabled muhajirs received a priority.<sup>122</sup>

The limited tax-paying capability of muhajirs is important because the government's strategy for refugees' integration rested on the idea that refugees' taxes would eventually pay for their villages' further economic development. Muhajirs' taxes were deposited into two types of accounts: at regional branches of the Public Benefits Bank (Ott. Tur. *menafi sandığı* or *memleket sandığı*) and at the Refugee Commission. The Public Benefits Bank, a Tanzimat innovation that came out of Midhat Paşa's experiments when he was a governor of Niş in 1863, was an agricultural credit cooperative that provided farmers with low-interest loans in cash, farm animals, and seeds.<sup>123</sup> In the 1870s, regional branches of the new untested bank were often short of funds, and loans to refugees, given the high risk that they entailed, were hardly a priority. Village tax accounts with the Refugee Commission were supposed to pay for salaries to village teachers and building schools.<sup>124</sup> In many villages, however, muhajirs' tax contributions to those accounts were minimal.

---

<sup>122</sup> NBKM 175/46 (27 *ağustos* 1289, 8 September 1873). Many muhajirs complained about the suspension in aid and asked that their benefits resume; see NBKM 22/293 (Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District, 1874).

<sup>123</sup> The Public Benefits Bank, established nationally in 1865, was renamed as the Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*) in 1887. By 2016, it remains state-owned and is the largest bank in Turkey by total assets. Midhat Paşa's original 1863 institution was among the first agricultural cooperatives in European history. The Raiffeisen rural credit unions appeared in Prussia in the late 1840s, and similar institutions emerged in Austria, Belgium, and Italy only after the 1880s; see Mehmet Çelik, "Tanzimat in the Balkans: Midhat Pasha's Governorship in the Danube Province (Tuna Vilayeti), 1864-1868," M.A. dissertation (Bilkent University, 2007), 58-62. Roger Owen is skeptical about the success of the Public Benefits Bank in providing loans to peasants. Because provincial and subprovincial *menafi sandığı* were governed by locally elected councils, often made up of well-off landowners and merchants, agricultural loans were more likely to end up in the hands of richer cultivators; see *The Middle East in the World Economy*, 118.

<sup>124</sup> Dobrova, "Circassian Colonization," 18.

Muhajirs expressed their discontent with inadequate state support in many petitions to the authorities. In March 1870, for example, Circassian muhajirs from several villages in Maçin District wrote a communal petition to district authorities. The petition was written in Arabic, which signals that muhajirs might not have found anyone proficient in Ottoman Turkish to express their grievances, a sign of their limited social integration. Their petition read as follows:

We are submitting this great complaint on behalf of Circassian muhajirs, the young and the old, of Maçin District. We elected our legal representative, Muhammad Amin, to present our complaints to the councillors of Maçin. We are pitiful and weak, and we did not find mercy or compassion from you until now because what we asked for has not been fulfilled, like it has been for other muhajirs. You made us carry a heavy burden, in contrast to other muhajirs. We have arrived to [serve in] the reserve forces (Ar. *'asker ikhtiyāī*) three years ago and have been living in poverty, with no monthly stipend and no provision of food or drink. We have been pleading [for help] day after day, and we received no good will from either [the army] major or the council. Our beloved state has halted [its support for] reserve forces, which is why we did not send any of our reserve soldiers to [serve at] the cordon. All our village headmen, village council members, and reserve soldiers raise their complaints to Tulça [Subprovince], as our hopes of [receiving] compassion have been dashed by you, and we do not rest because of you.<sup>125</sup>

This petition on behalf of slighted muhajirs, unusually stern for this genre of writing, reveals curious details. First, the authorities fell short of providing funds for settling immigrants, even to muhajirs placed on a strategic frontier, across the river from Russia's Bessarabia. Second, different refugee groups were in contact with their ethnic brethren and knew what they were entitled to and what others in the region had received. Later waves of refugees, such as these petitioners who had arrived in 1866, demanded the same treatment as accorded to earlier muhajirs. Third, this group explicitly described itself as having come to serve as "reserve soldiers," presumably as voluntary troops for the

---

<sup>125</sup> NBKM 172Ar/1/1 (29 *zilkade* 1286, 2 March 1870). I thank Vladimir Bobrovnikov for kindly sharing with me this and other documents, collected by the 2009 Russian Institute of Oriental Studies archival expedition to Bulgaria.

border guard. This may have been a deliberate move to demonstrate their worth to the state and/or a veiled threat, alluding to their fighting skills, in order to elicit support from the authorities.

By the mid-1870s, many muhajir settlements in Dobruja were not self-sufficient in terms of food production. In 1876, the Tulça authorities received communal pleas for aid from two Circassian villages, Vefikiye and Ğuğaca. Vefikiye was one of the largest Circassian villages in Dobruja. Its village council, including two headmen and a people's representative (Ott. Tur. *ahali-i vekil*), informed the authorities that the village had run out of bread. Circassian muhajirs faced the "most severe necessity" in foodstuff and asked the district to provide them with 300 *kile*<sup>126</sup> of millet, which they would repay after the next harvest.<sup>127</sup> The village council of Ğuğaca, similarly, complained of insufficient grain and bread reserves and asked for a loan of 90 *kile* of millet, taken out of the regionally collected taxes.<sup>128</sup> The Babadağ district council, overseeing the two villages, verified and endorsed Circassian petitions to the subprovincial authorities.

With muhajirs' agricultural settlements struggling across the northern Balkans, some officials openly questioned the government's strategy in settling most refugees in villages and turning them into peasants. In 1874, officials in Silistre District wrote that some Circassians in their area were as successful in agriculture as local residents, whereas others sold their agricultural tools out of want, failed to produce crops, and were now

---

<sup>126</sup> A *kile* is an Ottoman unit of volume. Its value varied widely by region, time period, and commodity. In the late Ottoman period, in wheat and flour, it usually equaled 20 *okka*, or 25.66 kg.

<sup>127</sup> NBKM 170A/169, no. 2, 4 (1 *mayıs* 1292, 13 May 1876).

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 1, 3 (2-3 *mayıs* 1292, 14-15 May 1876).

starving. The authorities suggested that those muhajirs should be given an opportunity to do crafts and trade to which they were accustomed.<sup>129</sup>

To assess economic inequality between muhajirs and other communities, I analyze economic data from available tax registers for Dobruja's Babadağ District.<sup>130</sup> Ottoman tax registers provide information on the male population and *öşür* tax for every village. The *öşür* tax was levied on every able-bodied man and is a good indicator of the general well-being of the community because it corresponds to the cost of grain and vegetables produced per household. Prices for agricultural products were similar across the district, and the amount of produce ordinarily had a correlation to the amount and fertility of land that a household tilled. Overall, although far from a precise calculation, the *öşür* tax offers the best available data on the comparative economy of different Ottoman communities within the same region. In 1873, across 56 tax-paying villages of the district, the average *öşür* tax per adult male was 70.32 *куруş*. If broken down by communities residing in 26 monoethnic villages, Germans paid on average 108.06 *куруş*, Bulgarians – 103.60 *куруş*, Moldavians – 86.34 *куруş*, Crimeans – 63.11 *куруş*, Turks – 60.80 *куруş*, and Circassians – 36.11 *куруş*.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>129</sup> NBKM 119/1005 (8 *rebiülevvel* 1291, 25 April 1874).

<sup>130</sup> For published data on other late Ottoman Danubian districts, see Slavka Draganova, *Materiali za Dunavskii vilaet: Rusenska, Silistrenska, Shumenska i Tutrakanska kaza, prez 50-te - 70-te godini na XIX v.* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1980); idem., *Berkovskoto selo v navecherieto na Osvobozhdenieto: statisticheskoto izsledvane spored Osmanskite danüchni registri* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1985).

<sup>131</sup> I exclude from my analysis all mixed villages in the district because tax registers do not provide a break down of tax payments by different communities. I estimate the average of all males living in monoethnic villages divided on the total *öşür* tax, not the average of village totals because villages were of different sizes. Data from Vladimir Todorov-Khindalov, ed., *Godishnik na Narodna Biblioteka v Sofiia, 1926-28* (Sofia, 1930).



In addition to the *öşür* tax, which was set at ten percent but could rise up to fifteen percent in certain years, local communities paid four major taxes: a military tax (*bedel-i askeri*) for non-Muslims at 26.5 *kuruş* annually, a profit tax (*temettüat vergisi*) of three percent (four percent since 1878), an income tax (*irad vergisi*) of four percent, and a property tax (*emlak vergisi*) of four percent.<sup>132</sup> By 1877, Circassian muhajirs did not pay a profit tax or an income tax, unlike other communities. Across 32 villages, with monoethnic populations, the average property tax per resident was as follows: for Bulgarians – 22.99 *kuruş*, Germans – 22.47 *kuruş*, Moldavians – 18.56 *kuruş*, Turks – 17.55 *kuruş*, Crimean Tatars – 16.16 *kuruş*, Lipovans – 8.75 *kuruş*, and Circassians – 7.99 *kuruş*. The difference was even more pronounced in the town of Babadağ itself, where the older neighborhoods reported the average property tax of 15.52 *kuruş* per male, in contrast to the average tax for immigrant neighborhoods of Crimean Tatars – 1.94 *kuruş* and of Circassians – 1.32 *kuruş*.<sup>133</sup> [See Appendix IV.]

The available statistics for sheep and goat ownership among Babadağ District residents in 1872 corroborate the extent of intercommunal inequality. 61 percent of tax-paying Bulgarian households, 34 percent of Turkish households, and 22 percent Circassian households owned 100 or more sheep and goats. Conversely, 28 percent Circassian

---

<sup>132</sup> Smaller taxes in Danube Province included an animal tax (the reformed sheep tax) of nine *kuruş* annually for cattle and four *kuruş* for sheep, goats, and pigs, with the right of pasture taxed at the same rate; a tax on agricultural produce for sale at one *kuruş* per cart of produce and five percent on cattle sales; and a road construction tax, whereby, since 1869, peasants spend four days a year, or twenty days in a year within a five-year period (after 1889, 25 days), building roads; see Leont'ev, *Diplomaticheskie doneseniia*, no. 190, pp. 227-28 (6 July 1868); İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri*, 220. For a classic study on late Ottoman taxes, see Stanford J. Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 4 (1975): 421-59.

<sup>133</sup> The NBKM Badagağ 9/12 tax register does not provide population numbers. I utilize population data from the NBKM 170/292 and 170A/243 registers. I estimate the average of all men and women living in monoethnic villages divided on the total property tax, not the average of village totals because villages were of different sizes. Data from NBKM Babadağ 9/12 (25 *mayıs* 1293, 6 June 1877).

families owned one to ten sheep and goats, whereas only 18 percent Turks and one percent Bulgarians did.<sup>134</sup> The situation was likely even worse for muhajirs: only tax-paying farmers were included in the statistics; likely, the poorest families did not pay tax, either being exempt from it or dodging it, and were not listed in tax registers. For Danube Province as a whole, the numbers were similar. Households that reported owning less than ten sheep and goats represented 80 percent of Muslim Roma, 60 percent Circassians, 57 percent Christian Roma, 38 percent Turks, 25 percent Tatars, and 21 percent Bulgarians.<sup>135</sup> In the two decades before 1878, the rough average estimate for Danube Province was twenty to thirty sheep or goats per household.<sup>136</sup> Muhajir averages were far below those numbers, pointing to widespread poverty among North Caucasians.

Data are comparable for other Danubian regions. In Berkovça (Berkovitsa) District, in the northwestern part of Danube Province, according to one estimate, by the 1870s, almost two-thirds of Circassian households did not produce enough crops to feed a four-member household.<sup>137</sup> 66 percent of muhajir households there could be considered “poor,” against the average of 11 percent for all ethnic groups in the district.<sup>138</sup> In the same district, an average Circassian household held 44 *dönüm* of land, compared to 56 *dönüm* for Turks and 88 *dönüm* for Bulgarians. The average price of land, which reflected, above all, the

---

<sup>134</sup> Slavka Draganova, *Selskoto naselenie na Dunavski vilayet* (Sofia: Avangard Prima, 2005), 130.

<sup>135</sup> The notable difference for Danube Province as a whole is that the percentage of households owning over 100 sheep and goats was similar to Bulgarians, Tatars, Turks, and Circassians, within the 10-15 percent range. These calculations should be taken with a grain of salt, as the overall sample is only 16,293 households, including 124 Circassian families. Well-off families are more likely to feature in the sample; Draganova, *Selskoto Naselenie*, 129-30.

<sup>136</sup> Draganova, *Selskoto Naselenie*, 231. Another study provides a similar number of 79.5 *dönüm*; see Palairat, *The Balkan Economies*, 65.

<sup>137</sup> Dobрева, “Circassian Colonization,” 19-20; see also Dobрева, “Remarks on the Circassian Settlements in the Kaza of Lom and Belogradchik,” in *Prouchvaniia po Stopanska istoriia i istoriia na sotsialno-ikonomiceskata sfera v Iugozapadna Bŭlgariia*, eds. Petar Parvanov and Boryana Dimitrova (Blagoevgrad: UI Neofit Rilski, 2015), 106-30.

<sup>138</sup> Draganova, *Berkovskoto selo*, 33-34.

quality of soil, was 60.4 *kuruş* per *dönüm* for Circassians, compared to 87.3 and 91.8 *kuruş* per *dönüm* for, respectively, Turks and Bulgarians.<sup>139</sup> The amount and quality of land translated into harvests: an average Circassian household produced 205 sheaves of wheat and 1,083 *okkas*<sup>140</sup> of corn, compared to 272 sheaves and 1,060 *okkas* for Turks, and 467 sheaves and 1,486 *okkas* for Bulgarians.<sup>141</sup> The average price of houses in the area was 641 *kuruş* for Circassians against 2,300 *kuruş* for Turks and 3,732 *kuruş* for Bulgarians.<sup>142</sup>

This economic disparity between long-settled and immigrant populations in Dobruja represents a general pattern in the Ottoman Balkans. It should come as no surprise that a refugee population lagged behind its neighbors in terms of accumulated wealth. It takes immigrants generations to catch up, if ever, with established communities. Yet this disparity, exacerbated by economic turbulence in the 1870s, is crucial to understanding what happened in the Balkans in 1876-78.

The worsening economic climate and the failure of muhajirs' agricultural settlements accelerated Circassians' entrance into the Ottoman gendarmerie (*zaptiye*). These were often the only salaried positions available to Muslim immigrants in the countryside. In a telling petition, in 1874, Abkhaz muhajirs from the village of Rakil, in Maçin District, expressed their communal desire to join the *zaptiye* service in order to escape poverty. They explained that they did not receive sufficient agricultural land, or allowances, and were not farming at the moment.<sup>143</sup> Without connections or military training, North Caucasian muhajirs could not easily join the Ottoman army. They were

---

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>140</sup> An *okka*, an Ottoman measure of weight, equals 400 *dirhem*. One *okka* corresponds to 1.283 kg.

<sup>141</sup> Draganova, *Berkovskoto selo*, 46.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 38-39.

<sup>143</sup> NBKM 172A/127 (2 *mart* 1290, 14 March 1874).

exempt from military service and, in that period, could only volunteer as irregular cavalry (*başıbozuk*) forces. By the late 1870s, many muhajir men were part of *başıbozuk* militias.

The 1876 April Uprising marked a breakdown in intercommunal relations and a surge in violence perpetrated by refugees. The uprising was organized by the Bulgarian revolutionary committees, with an ultimate objective of Bulgaria's independence. The uprising only lasted several weeks. The Ottoman *başıbozuk* forces, with many muhajirs in their ranks, violently put down the rebellion.<sup>144</sup> The atrocities committed by Ottoman forces, dubbed in the trans-Atlantic media as the “Bulgarian Horrors,” set the stage for Russia's declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire in April 1877.

The 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War is known as the “Liberation War” (Bg. *Osvoboditelna vojina*) in Bulgarian historiography and the “War of [12]93” [Tur. *93 Harbi*] in Turkish historiography. It started in April 1877, when the Russian troops marched into Romania, upon Romania's invitation. In June, the Russian-Romanian forces crossed the Danube into Ottoman Bulgaria.<sup>145</sup> Many Ottoman Bulgarians supported Russian troops; others fought on the Ottoman side. Dobruja, like the rest of Danube Province, soon became engulfed in intercommunal violence. In July, the coastal town of Kavarna, near Varna, was besieged by an armed militia, including Circassian, Laz, and Tatar muhajirs, from regular and irregular soldiers, who demanded a hefty fee from townsfolk for their “protection.” A

---

<sup>144</sup> Exact numbers of fatalities in 1876 are unknown and disputed. Eugene Schuyler, the American Consul in Istanbul who visited the region after the atrocities, claimed that 65 Christian villages were destroyed and 15,000 people were killed; “Mr. Schuyler's Preliminary Report on the Moslem Atrocities” (10 August 1876), in Januarius A. MacGahan and Eugene Schuyler, *The Turkish Atrocities in Bulgaria* (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1876), 89-94.

<sup>145</sup> On the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, see M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, eds., *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2011).

failed attempt at extortion escalated to looting of this predominantly Greek town.<sup>146</sup> In the months leading to the Russian occupation, *başıbozuk* forces committed numerous acts of violence against local Christian populations.<sup>147</sup> In turn, Russian troops and armed Bulgarian volunteers perpetrated violence against Turkish, Tatar, and Circassian civilians.<sup>148</sup> By the time of the 1877-78 war, the violence, whatever its underlying economic and political motives, was explicitly interreligious. The Russian coalition, which included Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and the Bulgarian volunteers, won the war. By the end of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, virtually the entire North Caucasian population of Danube Province fled for the safety of Ottoman Anatolia or Greater Syria.<sup>149</sup> Over a half million Muslims had been displaced from the Balkans by 1879.<sup>150</sup>

### *The Post-1878 Balkans and Refugee Lands*

The 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War set Bulgaria on a path to independence. The Treaty of San Stefano, which ended the war in March 1878, proposed a massive Bulgarian state that would have dominated the eastern Balkans, which remained a Bulgarian irredentist ideal for generations to come. In summer 1878, Britain, France, and Austria-

---

<sup>146</sup> On the 1877 Kavarna massacre, see Velko Tonev, *Kavarna se Vdigna: Izsledvane, dokumenti i materialni za vüstantieto na kavarnentsi prez 1877 g.* (Sofia, 1997); Tonev et al., *Izvori za istoriata na Dobrudzha*, vol. 4, 389-93, 398-405.

<sup>147</sup> See Bilal N. Şimşir, ed., *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri: Belgeler* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1989), vol. 1, 122-23; Tonev et al., *Izvori za istoriata na Dobrudzha*, vol. 3, 306-07; vol. 4, 210-12, 308-12, 343-49, 362-67, 371-73, 383-93,

<sup>148</sup> See Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 130-31, 172-73, 178-81, 199-200, 350; NBKM Varna 24/22 (11 *haziran* 1294, 13 June 1878).

<sup>149</sup> On refugee migration from the Balkans during the 1877-78 war, see İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri*, 11-41; McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 59-108.

<sup>150</sup> Aydemir estimates that out of a half million displaced Muslims, 300,000 were Circassians; *Göç*, 141. McCarthy puts the number of Muslim refugees from Bulgaria by 1879 at 515,000 and Muslim losses at 261,937; *Death and Exile*, 90-91.

Hungary forced Russia to revise the post-war settlement in the Treaty of Berlin. Most of Danube Province was remade into an autonomous Principality of Bulgaria, under nominal Ottoman sovereignty but de facto independent. The subprovinces of Tulça and Niş, within Danube Province, were ceded to respectively Romania and Serbia. Out of the subprovinces of Plovdiv and Sliven, within Edirne Province, the European Powers fashioned an autonomous Ottoman province of Eastern Rumelia. The Ottomans had little actual control over these territories. The Principality of Bulgaria annexed Eastern Rumelia in 1885; the unification was formally recognized internationally in 1908, when Bulgaria proclaimed its independence.

The Russians, whose troops were present in Bulgaria throughout 1878, took an early lead in reforming the administration of the new Bulgarian state.<sup>151</sup> One of the pressing issues was the question of Muslim refugees, both native Turks and Pomaks, and Crimean and North Caucasian muhajirs who had fled their homes in the northern Balkans. There was a pressure from many sections of Bulgarian society to ban the re-entry of North Caucasian muhajirs into Bulgaria. The Bulgarian bishop of Filibe (Plovdiv), for example, wrote to the Russian vice-consul to express his support for the Russian proposal at the 1876-77 Constantinople Conference – a conference on the future of Bulgaria held in the Ottoman capital, to which the Ottomans were not invited – to move all North Caucasian muhajirs out of the Balkans and into Anatolia. He asked that Bulgarians be delivered from

---

<sup>151</sup> The provisional authorities adapted Russia's institutional knowledge to Bulgarian circumstances. For example, when faced with the need to counsel Bulgarian district governors on how to administer *vakıf* properties, tsarist authorities consulted a report from Orenburg on how Russia administered her *vakıf* properties in Turkestan; see Central State Archive of Bulgaria (Tsentralniiat dŭrzhaven arkhiv, Sofia, hereafter cited as TsDA) f. 159K, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 1-32 (9 October 1877). The first head of the Provisional Russian Administration in Bulgaria was Vladimir Cherkassky, an avowed Pan-Slavist. In a twist of historical irony, he came from a princely Circassian family that converted to Christianity and joined Russian service in the sixteenth century.

that “terrible plague” and cited a precedent – five months earlier, the Greek royal family successfully negotiated with the Ottomans not to settle Circassians on the Greek border.<sup>152</sup>

In August 1878, Prince Aleksandr Dondukov-Korsakov, the head of the Russian provisional administration in Bulgaria, issued an order allowing Bulgarian Muslims, who fled their homes, to return, with the exception of the Circassians.<sup>153</sup> He justified the ban by asserting that Circassians had committed crimes during the war and that the Christian population was likely to exact revenge should Circassians return. Dondukov-Korsakov pointed out that emptied Circassian lands could be used to accommodate returning Muslim refugees who were native to Bulgaria.<sup>154</sup>

The lands vacated by North Caucasian muhajirs became a hotly contested commodity in post-independence Bulgaria. The debate surrounding their legal status reveals how the land distribution in 1860-78 came to be remembered and exposes the continuity in the post-1878 state management of the land.<sup>155</sup> In 1880, the Bulgarian government issued the Law Regarding Circassian and Tatar Lands.<sup>156</sup> This law categorized all abandoned estates as private, communal, or state lands. Private and communal lands

---

<sup>152</sup> “Pis’mo bolgarskogo Episkopa Filippopolia k Vitse-konsulu Gerovu” (22 December 1876), in Todor Panchev, ed., *Dokumenti za Bŭlgarskata istoriia* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1932), vol. 2, 282-83. On the Greek case, see BOA HR.TO 122/77 (31 July 1876), in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, ed. Gurulkan, vol. 2, 287-88.

<sup>153</sup> Prince A.M. Dondukov-Korsakov to D.A. Miliutin (6 August 1878), in *Sbornik materialov po grazhdanskomu upravleniiu i okkupatsii v Bolgarii v 1877-78-79 gg.*, ed. Nikolai R. Ovsianyi (Saint Petersburg: Tovarishchestvo Khudozhestvennoi Pechati, 1906), 22-26.

<sup>154</sup> Article 12 of the Treaty of Berlin (13 July 1878) stipulated that Muslim landowners who chose to remain outside of the Principality may retain their lands. North Caucasian muhajirs were not allowed to retain their lands in violation of the article.

<sup>155</sup> On land policy in post-1878 Bulgaria, see Anna M. Mirkova, *Muslim Land, Christian Labor: Transforming Ottoman Imperial Subjects into Bulgarian National Citizens, 1878-1939* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017); Petŭr Todorov, *Agrarnite omosheniia v Iuzhna Dobrudzha 1878-1944 g.* (Veliko Tŭrnovo: VU Kiril i Metodii, 1982); Khristo Khristov, *Agrarniat vŭpros v Bŭlgarskata natsionalna revoliutsiia* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1976).

<sup>156</sup> “Zakon za cherkezkite i tatarskite zemi” (14 December 1880) in TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 5, ll. 29-32; on drafting the law, see TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 5; d. 66, ll. 16-19.

were returned to, respectively, individuals and village communities, from whom the Ottoman government took them, unless the Ottomans had compensated their former owners, in which case those lands were now considered state property. The Bulgarian state also claimed all Circassian and Tatar lands that had not been cultivated prior to muhajirs' arrival as state land. Overall, in southern Dobruja, through an 1886 survey of "abandoned" Circassian and Tatar lands and "unclaimed" Turkish lands, the state took control of more than 157,147 *dönüm* of land, over 96 percent of which were agricultural fields.<sup>157</sup>

The Bulgarian government had several options as to what to do with the new land in its possession. Strapped for cash, the government sold some of it at public auctions, a policy that contributed to the consolidation of mass agricultural estates in southern Dobruja in the post-1878 period.<sup>158</sup> The government rented out some estates to private individuals.<sup>159</sup> The lion's share of the land, however, was reserved for new Bulgarian immigrants, or *preseknitsi*, who moved to their newly independent "homeland" from different parts of the Ottoman, Romanov, and Habsburg domains.<sup>160</sup>

After the promulgation of the 1880 law, the government in Sofia was inundated with hundreds of individual and communal petitions from ethnic Bulgarians asking for land reclamation and confirmation of their title deeds.<sup>161</sup> Bulgarian rural communities often contested what the government considered to be state land. First, villages regarded many lands that the Ottomans had assigned to muhajirs between 1860 and 1878 as their historical communal land (Bg. *obshtinskata zemia*), whereas the Bulgarian state, drawing on

---

<sup>157</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 107, ll. 73-84 (1886).

<sup>158</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 31, ll. 61-76 (2 April 1880).

<sup>159</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 49, ll. 45-46 (1881-82).

<sup>160</sup> State Archive, Dobrich Branch (Dürzhaven arkhiv, Dobrich) f. 181K, op. 1, d. 1, ll. 60-60ob, 62-62ob (November 1879); TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 26, ll. 12-12ob (1880)

<sup>161</sup> See petitions in TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 26 (1880), d. 95 (1881-85), d. 107 (1886), d. 180 (1885-91).



inherited Ottoman documentation, considered it to have been *miri* [state] land before 1860. Many peasants demanded an immediate restoration of what they perceived as their right (Bg. *zakonno nashe pravo*) to the land that they argued they had lost to North Caucasian muhajirs.<sup>162</sup> In a telling 1880 petition from around Kula, in northwestern Bulgaria, Bulgarian peasants wrote:

Sixteen years ago, Circassians arrived in our district. The Ottoman government, by force, took the best and most fertile lands from us. Having lost the good land, we had to go to Serbia, Wallachia, and other places to earn a living. Upon the Circassians' departure, we returned, took back our land, and started tilling it. However, the government prohibits us from working that land. We are begging the government to reconsider this policy because we are farmers and have no other land and need to provide for our children. If you do not give this land to us, we will be forced to [again] scatter around looking for work.<sup>163</sup>

Second, many petitioners disputed that they had received compensation for their land from the Ottoman government and demanded restitution of their land from the Bulgarian government as its successor. Remarkably, some Bulgarians who admitted having been compensated by the Ottomans for their land offered to return that same money to the new government in Sofia in exchange for their former lands. The 1864 Ottoman compensation rate was *75 kuruş per dönüm*. The Bulgarian government agreed to the exchange at that same rate.<sup>164</sup> In this curious case, the Bulgarian government did not only honor transactions between the Ottoman state and Bulgarian peasants but even willingly served as their guarantor. Overall, the Bulgarian government upheld many tenets of the Ottoman land code, which preserved the dominant role of the state and guaranteed

---

<sup>162</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 26, l. 78 (25 November 1880).

<sup>163</sup> TsDA, f. 159K, op. 1, d. 26, ll. 12-12ob (17 May 1880); for similar sentiments of disappointment and threats to re-emigrate, around Varna, see f. 159K, op. 1, d. 57, l. 365 (20 October 1882).

<sup>164</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 66, ll. 154-55 (1883).

continued dominance of regional land magnates, and, therefore, a degree of political stability in a new state.

In some cases, for example, near Tsaribrod (now in Serbia), new Bulgarian immigrants moved into muhajirs' abandoned houses and tilled their lands. The government had little choice but to acquiesce to the acts of squatting. It sold them additional abandoned land at below-the-market prices.<sup>165</sup> The transformation that occurred included transfers of land from departing Muslims in favor of arriving Christian immigrants.

Romania, which assumed control over central and northern Dobruja after 1878, also appropriated abandoned Circassian and Abkhaz lands as public land. Romania's 1880 and 1882 land laws allowed new cultivators to convert public land into private property upon fifteen years of tax payments (since 1884, twenty years);<sup>166</sup> in Bulgaria, the 1880 law required settlers to make tax payments on their new land for ten years (later, twenty years), upon which they would be free to sell it.<sup>167</sup> Both systems resembled the 1857 Ottoman Immigration Law, which allowed for the sale of usufruct rights after twenty years of tax payments.

In 1880, ethnic Romanians formed only 27.5 percent of central and northern Dobruja's population. In the following years, the Romanian government encouraged migration from other parts of the country to "Romanianize" the sparsely populated region, allotting or selling 104,550 hectares of land, which was once tilled by muhajirs, to

---

<sup>165</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 95, l. 134 (25 August 1881).

<sup>166</sup> George Ungureanu, "The Avatars of the Miri Land in Post-Ottoman Dobrudja: Judicial Formulas and Ethno-Political Interests," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* (Rome) 2, no. 3 (2013): 12.

<sup>167</sup> Todorov, *Agrarnite otmosheniia v Iuzhna Dobrudzha*, 17.

Romanian settlers.<sup>168</sup> The government carried out a comprehensive cadastral survey in 1883 to reapportion the Dobrujan land. In most cases, Romanian immigrants who arrived in Dobruja from other parts of the country took over the abandoned Circassian and Abkhaz lands.<sup>169</sup> Notably, cadastral surveys of state land, followed by redistribution of land to Romanians and Bulgarians, were part of a broader campaign by, respectively, the Romanian and Bulgarian states to reshape the ethnic make-up of their new territories. Nowhere were they more pronounced than in Dobruja, a formerly Muslim majority region, which had to be re-made in the post-1878 period.

Notably, Circassian, Abkhaz, Crimean Tatar, and Nogai Tatar muhajirs who left northern Dobruja in 1878 did not forget about their abandoned lands and tried to reclaim their property. After the 1877-78 war and the Romanian independence, the Ottoman Empire and Romania agreed that the Romanian Refugee Commission (Ott. Tur. *Romanya Muhacirin Komisyonu*) would be established under the auspices of the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, primarily to deal with the property left in Romania by muhajirs who had moved to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>170</sup> That commission accumulated hundreds of statements and petitions from muhajirs regarding their former agricultural lands. For example, Nogai Tatar and Circassian muhajirs from Babagağ District left at least 37 requests regarding land in [the village of] Kamber, 37 in Kongaz, 40 in Hacilar, 11 in Çineli, 14 in Ak Kadın, 34 in Başpınar, five in Vakıfe (Vefikiye?), 13 in Karaman, eight in

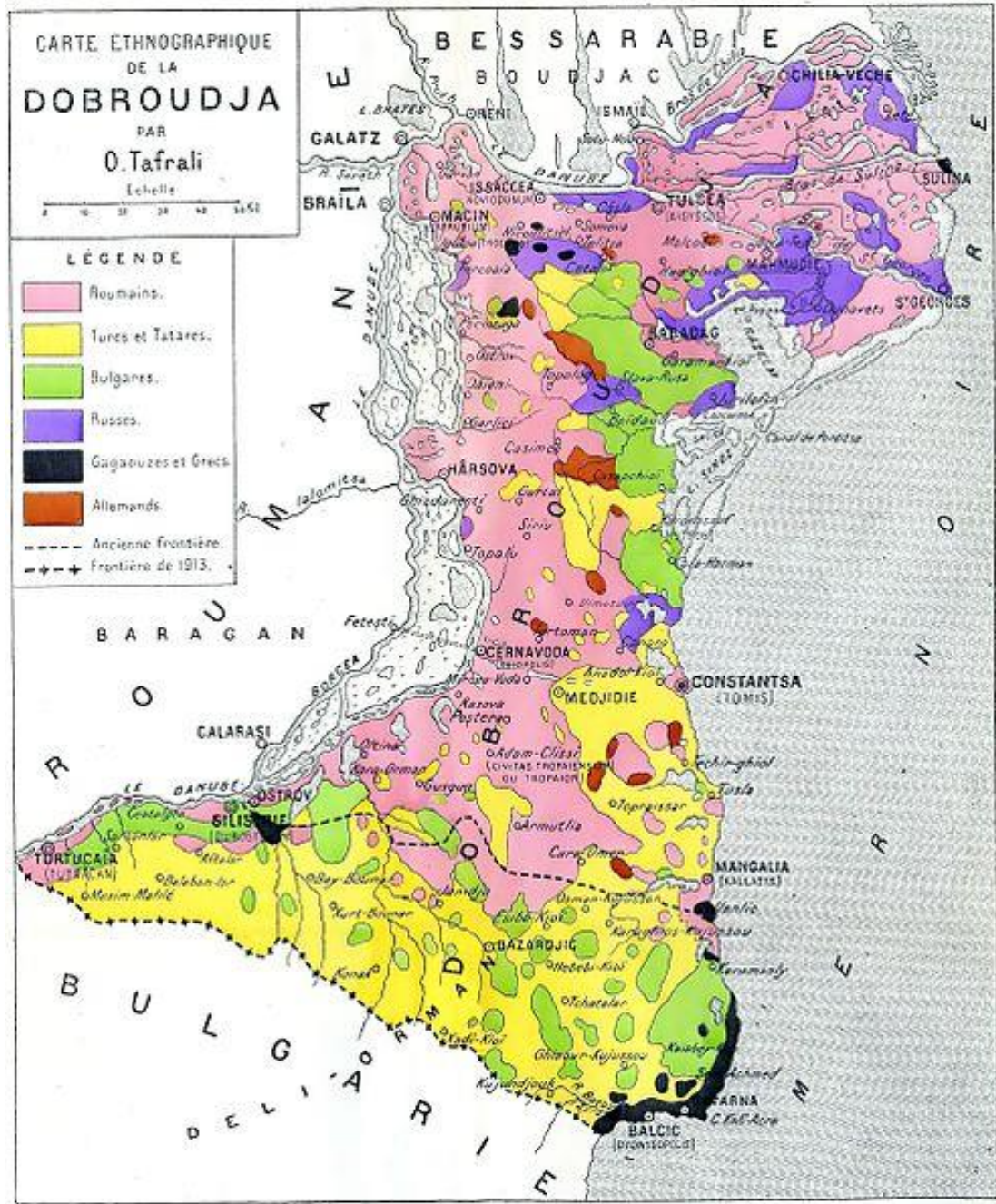
---

<sup>168</sup> Todorov, *Agrarnite otmosheniia v Iuzhna Dobrudzha*, 13. Justin McCarthy estimates that, as a result of war atrocities and emigration, the Muslim population of central and northern Dobruja decreased from about 184,000 to about 32,000, or by 83 percent, between 1877 and 1879; “The Demography of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War,” in *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*, ed. Ömer Turan (Ankara: Middle East Technical University, 2007), 66-69.

<sup>169</sup> See National Archive of Romania, Tulcea Branch (Direcția Județeană Tulcea a Arhivelor Naționale), 156/28 for survey in the former Tulça Subprovince; see 173/112 for the villages of Balabanca and Cafarka.

<sup>170</sup> Mihai Maxim, “Yergögü,” *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 43 (2013): 484.

Figure 3: Ethnographic map of Dobruja in 1918



This color coded map depicts the following ethnic groups: Romanians (pink), Turks and Tatars (yellow), Bulgarians (green), Russians (purple), Gagauz and Greeks (black), and Germans (red). Source: Oreste Tafrali, *La Roumanie Transdanubienne (La Doubroudja)* (Paris: Éditions Ernest Leroux, 1918).

Hamamcı, four in Zemlik; and from Maçın District, 15 in Soğanlık, 14 in Balabanca, 18 in Çerna, and 12 in Kırcalar.<sup>171</sup> In statements collected about twenty-five years after displacement or emigration from Dobruja, muhajirs gave specific information about the size and location of their or their parents' former lands.

Dobruja itself remained a contested ground, this time between the Bulgarian and Romanian nation-states. In 1878, Bulgaria initially received the entire Dobruja, in San Stefano, but then, in Berlin, Russia ceded northern and central Dobruja to Romania in exchange for southern Bessarabia for herself. After the 1913 Second Balkan War, when Bulgaria had attacked Serbia and Greece, Romania intervened and occupied southern Dobruja, directing Romanian settlers there. During World War I, when Bulgaria and Romania fought in different alliances, the Central Powers first reassigned the entirety of Dobruja to Bulgaria, and the Allied Powers then returned the whole region to Romania. During World War II, Bulgaria regained southern Dobruja, followed by a population exchange of Bulgarian and Romanian minorities into their "mother" states. The final border between the two countries, now an internal European Union border, stabilized at what was an arbitrarily drawn cross-Dobruja line of the 1878 Treaty of Berlin.

### *Conclusion: Refugees, the State, and Lessons of Resettlement*

The resettlement of Muslim refugees from the Caucasus in the northern Balkans in 1860-78 ultimately failed. By the end of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, all North

---

<sup>171</sup> The count is based on descriptions of documents in the HR.MHC.02 collection, as they appear in the BOA digital catalogue. For example, for the village of Kamber, see BOA HR.MHC.02 2/9; 4/12-13; 6/25, 27; 8/38; 9/4-6, 9-10, 13-15, 19, 23, 25, 27; 10/3-5, 11, 16-18, 21, 24, 26-27, 34, 40; 11/2, 5-6, 41; 70/15; 72/49 (h. 1319-20, 1903-04).

Caucasian muhajirs fled Danube Province. The settlement of refugees in the Ottoman Balkans floundered at its early stage. The state failed to efficiently deliver the key components of its resettlement/immigration package, a sufficient amount of land and agricultural aid, for refugee economies to take off. By the 1870s, hundreds of refugee villages were in distress, as the state scaled down its support amidst an economic recession, which coincided with the expiration of tax exemptions for muhajirs. Limited economic self-sufficiency contributed to many muhajirs' committing economic crimes against their neighbors or seeking employment in the *zaptiye* service and *başıbozuk* forces, both of which further inflamed intercommunal relations in Danube Province.

This chapter challenges historiography on the resettlement of muhajirs in the Balkans. On the one hand, I presented a counter-narrative to the analysis of Muslim refugee resettlement in much of the Balkan, and particularly Bulgarian, historiographical tradition. In that body of literature, North Caucasian muhajirs are remembered primarily as bandits or state henchmen, reflective of the role that some of them played in suppressing the 1876 April Uprising and during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. Their settlement in Danube Province is interpreted as the Ottomans' demographic and military ploy to increase the Muslim population in the Balkans, while keeping in check its Christian communities.<sup>172</sup> This interpretation, which served its historical and historiographical purpose in the post-1878 period, generalizes refugees' experiences, retrospectively reads the history of refugee resettlement through the prism of its demise, and searches for the root of refugee-related problems with decision-makers in Istanbul rather than in regional circumstances. By

---

<sup>172</sup> See, for example, Ventsislav Muchinov, *Migratsionna politika na Osmanskata imperiia v Bŭlgarskite zemi prez XIX vek (do 1878 g.)* (Sofia: Regaliiia-6, 2013); Todor Balkanski, *Cherkezite v bŭlgarskite zemi: ezikovoarkheologicheski pročit* (Veliko Tŭrnovo: IK Znak 94, 2011).

focusing on Dobruja, this chapter examined local conditions that gradually led to the disintegration of communal stability in 1876-78. On the other hand, I problematized the narrative of resettlement that is widespread in Turkish scholarship.<sup>173</sup> In that literature, which often downplays muhajirs' role in the 1876-78 violence in the Balkans, the Ottoman state appears as a hegemonic actor and muhajirs exercise surprisingly little agency. By using refugees' petitions, I demonstrated that muhajirs actively fought for economic justice and criticized what they perceived as the government's indifference to their grievances. Moreover, the existing scholarship frames conflicts, caused by refugee resettlement, primarily in intercommunal terms, as North Caucasian muhajirs versus local Christian or Muslim residents. This approach, which supports certain ethno-nationalist and developmentalist narratives, obscures tension that was found within muhajir communities themselves. I assert that conflicts within muhajir communities, particularly over slavery and land, affected immigrants' overall economic well-being.

The political economy of refugee resettlement is crucial to understanding sectarian upheavals across the Balkans. Intercommunal conflict in modern Middle Eastern history is often presented as an outcome of long-standing cultural grievances, exacerbated by political oppression. This vision has origins in the Orientalist narrative of an allegedly centuries-long Muslim-Christian antagonism and nationalist historiographies in modern Turkey and the Balkans. This perspective seems convincing if one were to look at the conflicts in the late Ottoman and post-Ottoman world: the Armenian Genocide, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the division of Cyprus, the Lebanese Civil War, the Yugoslav Wars, and the implosion of post-2003 Iraq and post-2011 Syria – what they all share is violent

---

<sup>173</sup> See, for example, Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*; Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*.

politicization of ethnic and/or religious differences. Political sectarianism, however, in its correlation of ethno-religious identities with physical territory and political loyalties, is a modern phenomenon in the Middle East and the Balkans.<sup>174</sup> How exactly and when it developed remains a subject of debate. Recently, several scholars pointed to the economic foundation of late Ottoman sectarianism, specifically the post-1858 commodification of land and new forms of capital accumulation, which intensified communal conflicts over the land and resources that were then channeled into and remembered as ethno-religious conflicts.<sup>175</sup> Focused studies of the dynamics of this transition remain rare. This history focusing on the political economy of refugee resettlement, while complementing the narratives of the Bulgarian revolutionary struggle and the Russo-Ottoman geopolitical rivalry, lays out a road map to understanding the destabilization of the Balkans in 1876-78.

The short-lived Danubian settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs had far-reaching consequences. For the Balkan nation-states, particularly Bulgaria that “came of age” in 1878, the expulsion of North Caucasian refugees was among the first steps in a series of policies that diminished their once-prominent Muslim populations to tiny minorities over the course of the twentieth century.<sup>176</sup> The Ottoman government learned of the risk (or potential) of Muslim immigration in generating interethnic and interreligious violence, contingent on economic desperation and limited social mobility of muhajir communities. In the aftermath of the 1877-78 war, the Ottomans may have given a higher priority to

---

<sup>174</sup> See Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>175</sup> See Klein, *Margins of Empire*; Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees*.

<sup>176</sup> On Turkic-speaking communities in post-1878 Bulgaria, see Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria, 1878-1908* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1998). On Dobrujan Muslims in post-1878 Romania, see Catalina Hunt, “‘Speaking National’ in Dobruca. Muslim Adaptation to Romanian Policies Between 1878 and 1914,” *Revue Des Études Sud-est Européennes* 52 (2014): 145-69.



efficient distribution of land to muhajirs. The post-1878 refugee settlement, including by muhajirs who had fled Danube Province, included some of the most successful examples of muhajirs' economies in the history of late Ottoman immigration, notably Circassian settlements in Transjordan.

## INTERLUDE

### **The Levantine Refugee Crisis of 1878-80**

The 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War led to the displacement of over a half million Muslims from Danube Province, in the northern Balkans, and Elviye-i Selâse (the three administrative units of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum), in eastern Anatolia.<sup>1</sup> Many refugees were North Caucasian muhajirs who had only been living in the Ottoman Empire since the early 1860s. Following the 1878 Treaty of Berlin and Prince Dondukov-Korsakov's order banning the Circassians' return to Bulgaria, most North Caucasian muhajirs from Danube Province became "double refugees." Unable to return to their homes, they had to resettle for the second time. The Ottoman government, facing its second mass-scale Circassian refugee crisis (since 1863-64), opened up Greater Syria for refugee resettlement.<sup>2</sup>

Why did the Ottomans not send muhajirs to Greater Syria earlier? In the 1860s, it would have been too expensive for the Ottoman government to resettle Circassian muhajirs in the Levant. The ports of northern Anatolia and the western Balkans, all on the Black Sea, were the closest harbors to the Circassian coast during the 1863-64 Circassian refugee crisis. Correspondingly, Circassians who found themselves in the ports of Burgas, Varna, and Köstence, were resettled in the Danube and Edirne provinces, in the northern Balkans. In turn, most refugees who disembarked in Trabzon, Samsun, Ordu, and Istanbul were ordered to move to villages in northern and western Anatolia.

---

<sup>1</sup> McCarthy estimates 515,000 Muslim refugees from Bulgaria by 1879 and more than 70,000 Muslim refugees from the South Caucasus, primarily from the Kars and Ardahan areas, by 1881; *Death and Exile*, 90, 113.

<sup>2</sup> On Damascus Province during the 1877-78 war, see Ş. Tufan Buzpınar, "The Repercussions of the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877-1878 on the Ottoman Arab Provinces," in *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*, ed. Turan, 227-39; İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri*, 208-10, 212-14.

Following a humiliating loss in the 1877-78 war, which put a spotlight on how the Ottoman Empire treated its Christian communities, the Ottoman government exercised limited freedom in where it could resettle muhajirs. The 1878 Treaty of Berlin prohibited the Porte from settling refugees in Eastern Rumelia, a Bulgarian-majority province that would be annexed by and united with the Principality of Bulgaria in 1885. The Ottoman government could not resettle too many Muslim refugees in its remaining Balkan territories or in eastern Anatolia lest it provoke complaints from Christian communities and European consuls. The eastern provinces of Damascus, Aleppo, and Adana with relatively sparse populations and the abundance of land, emerged as attractive refugee destinations. [See Appendices V, VI, and VII.] The government expected muhajirs to settle the interior of Syria. Notably, in the 1878-1914 period, practically no North Caucasian muhajirs settled in the mutasarrifates of Mount Lebanon and Jerusalem, the two territories with special administrative status, owing to their large Christian populations and European involvement.

### *Refugees in the Levantine Ports*

The port cities of Damascus Province were the first to bear the brunt of the 1878-80 Levantine refugee crisis.<sup>3</sup> Muhajirs from the Balkans started arriving in early 1878, having previously waited for months in Edirne, Salonika, and Istanbul for embarkation. The central government designated all ports between Adana and Haifa as recipients of

---

<sup>3</sup> By 1878, Damascus Province included the subprovinces of Damascus, Hama, Latakia, Tripoli, Beirut, Acre, Hawran, and Balqa'. In 1888, all coastal subprovinces of Damascus Province were united into Beirut Province. The broader region of Greater Syria also included Aleppo Province, with its attached mutasarrifate of Deir ez-Zor, and the autonomous mutasarrifates of Jerusalem and Beirut.

refugees. In February 1878, the first 1,000 Circassian refugees disembarked in Beirut, 1,500 in Acre, and 2,000 in Tripoli. [See Table 3.] In March, 8,000 more Circassian refugees arrived in Tripoli, which had become a major refugee destination in the Eastern Mediterranean. By April, up to 25,000 Muslim refugees, mostly Circassians, had arrived in Damascus Province.<sup>4</sup>

Table 3: Circassian arrivals from the Balkans to Greater Syria in 1878

Date	Population	Port city	Interior transit	Notes	Reference
Feb 1878	1,000	Beirut	Damascus		TNA FO 424/68, conf. 3602, f. 146. no. 247, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:351-52.
	1,500	Acre	Nablus		
	2,000	Tripoli	Homs		
Mar 1878	1,300	Latakia		Arrived from Salonika. Mostly Circassians, some Rumeli Turks.	TNA FO 424/68, conf. 3602, f. 186, no. 344/1, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:357.
Mar 1878	2,500	Latakia (planned), Acre (arrived)		Arrived from Kavala. 500 refugees died aboard the Austrian steamboat <i>Sphinx</i> . Many survivors moved to Amman.	TNA FO 424/69, conf. 3625, ff. 27-29, no. 59/2-3, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:387-90.
Mar 1878	8,000	Tripoli	Hama		TNA FO 424/69, conf. 3625, ff. 162-63, no. 279, 279/1, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:403-4.
	1,500	Latakia			

<sup>4</sup> According to the numbers of Henri Guys, the French consul in Beirut; see Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 415. Konstantin D. Petkovich, the Russian consul in Beirut, reported that, by September 1878, 45,090 muhajirs were present on the Syrian coast, of them around 20,000 earmarked for Aleppo Province; see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 159; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 63. According to Ottoman sources, by September 1879, 26,713 Rumelian refugees, chiefly Circassians, had been sent to Damascus Province and 15,709 to Aleppo Province from Istanbul alone; see Georgy Chochiev, "Rasseleniye severokavkazskikh immigrantov v arabskikh provintsiiakh Osmanskoi imperii (vtoraia polovina XIX - nachalo XX v.)," in *Osmanskaia imperiia: sobytiia i liudi*, eds. Mikhail S. Meier and Svetlana F. Oreshkova, (Moscow: Gumanitarii, 2000), 102.

Date	Population	Port city	Interior transit	Notes	Reference
July 1878	500	Tripoli		By July 1878, Tripoli had 10,000 refugees that were to be sent to Hama.	TNA FO 424/73, conf. 3752, f. 66, no. 89/1, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:542; Lewis 1987: 97.
July 1878	1,200	Acre			TNA FO 424/73, conf. 3752, f. 67, no. 89/3, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:544.
July 1878	482	Haifa	Nablus	Not allowed to disembark in Acre.	
Aug 1878	1,200	Beirut	Homs, Hama, Nablus	Arrived from Salonika and Istanbul.	TNA FO 424/74, conf. 3776, ff. 158-59, no. 239, in <i>RTGB</i> , 1:594.
Sep 1878	900	Acre	Nablus	Arrived from Salonika. Not allowed to disembark in Beirut.	Kushkhabiev 1993: 68.

The situation in port cities was dire. The Ottoman authorities were caught off guard by having to accommodate thousands of refugees whom they had already resettled once, with much trouble and at a great cost. Port authorities and municipalities in Greater Syria, having been spared the refugee crisis of the 1860s, had little experience in dealing with a humanitarian disaster on this scale. Thousands of refugees slept in mosques, tekkes, and army barracks. As those filled up, refugees were forced into the streets and bazaars.<sup>5</sup> The Tripoli and Latakia authorities occasionally dispersed their refugees around smaller coastal towns and villages, such as Jableh, Baniyas, and ‘Arab al-Mulk, for lack of accommodation

---

<sup>5</sup> TNA FO 424/68, conf. 3602, f. 186, no. 344/1, in Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 357.

within the city.<sup>6</sup> The Acre and Beirut port authorities often refused to let new ships disembark refugees, rerouting them to other Eastern Mediterranean ports.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, the authorities searched for interior locations suitable for permanent refugee villages. Local authorities sought to move refugees inland as soon as possible. This was necessary in order to guarantee space in the ports for new refugees, prevent the spread of epidemics and crime on the coast, and ensure the North Caucasian muhajirs would not attempt to escape back to Rumelia or Anatolia by sea. Local authorities also had a financial incentive. The central government, through the Ottoman Refugee Commission, paid for the transportation of refugees to the ports and interior villages, as well as their subsistence when “on the move.” Regional administrations were responsible for funding the maintenance of refugees, once they were not moving, either in ports or temporary interior locations. This system ensured that port authorities had a vested interest in dispatching refugees to their designated permanent villages as soon as possible. This financial arrangement resulted in drawn out negotiations between ports and hinterland districts over who could accommodate how many immigrants.

As few agricultural settlements were ready to accept muhajirs in 1878, the North Caucasians were first sent to big cities in Syria’s interior for temporary residence. Refugees from Beirut went to Damascus, from Acre and Haifa to Nablus, from Tripoli and Latakia to Homs and Hama, and from Alexandretta to Aleppo. Coastal municipal authorities footed the bill to clear out their refugee populations. Many Arabic-language receipts for refugee-

---

<sup>6</sup> TNA FO 424/69, conf. 3625, ff. 162-63, no. 279, in Şimşir, *Rumeli’den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 403.

<sup>7</sup> TNA FO 424/74, conf. 3776, ff. 158-59, no. 239, in Şimşir, *Rumeli’den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 594; Anzor V. Kushkhabiev, ed., *Istoriia adygov v dokumentakh Osmanskogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva* (Nalchik: Respublikanskii poligrafkombinat im. Revoliutsii 1905 g., 2009), 93.

related expenses survive in Sofia.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in 1877, the Beirut treasury paid 118.5 *kuruş* for road expenses of two Daghestanis, Ahmed ibn Yusef and Rafiki Mehmed, moving to Damascus. The sum included the cost of lodging, bread, and wheel carts; the latter, at 105 *kuruş*, was the costliest part of the journey.<sup>9</sup> At the height of the refugee crisis in 1878, funding for the transportation of thousands of muhajirs was not readily available, resulting in long delays.

North Caucasian refugees, who already spent months waiting for a vessel in the Balkan ports and weeks on overcrowded ships, were often penniless and sickly.<sup>10</sup> Diseases, such as typhus and smallpox, which typically accompany migrant populations in wartime, ravaged the Levantine port cities and hinterland. In early 1878, smallpox swept through the tightly-packed mosques and madrasas of Tripoli.<sup>11</sup> The high rate of mortality is evident in the receipts for funeral services for deceased refugees, paid for by the city authorities. By December 1878, sixty muhajirs had been dying daily in Tripoli.<sup>12</sup> Refugee population registers also suggest high child mortality. For example, when one group of muhajirs

---

<sup>8</sup> In 1931, the Turkish government sold many archival documents for recycling to a paper factory in Bulgaria. The documents arrived by train, and, upon customs inspection, were sent to the National Library, where they form the bulk of the Ottoman collection of the Oriental Department; Seçil Uluışık, "National Library of Bulgaria," *Hazine* (9 May 2015). <[hazine.info/national-library-bulgaria](http://hazine.info/national-library-bulgaria)> (accessed on 11 October 2017); see also Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, "Rossiiskie musul'mane posle arkhivnoi revoliutsii: vzgliad s Kavkaza i iz Bolgarii," *Ab Imperio* 4 (2008): 325-26. For short descriptions of Arabic documents, see Stoyanka Kenderova and Viktor V. Lebedev, *Inventory of the Documents in Arabic Language Kept in the Oriental Department of the Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia, XIII-XX c.* (Sofia, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> NBKM 279A/357 (9 *mart* 1293, 21 March 1877). Also, see NBKM 282A/278 (19 *mart* 1293, 31 March 1877).

<sup>10</sup> BOA HR.TO 254/8 (27 July 1878); Y.PRK.KOM 3/24 (23 *zilhicce* 1298, 16 November 1881), reprinted and translated in Kushkhabiev, *Istoriia adygov*, 94-100.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 99.

<sup>12</sup> NBKM 286Ar/60 (1878-81).

arrived in Damascus District in January 1880, its adult-child ratio was staggeringly low at 10:1.<sup>13</sup>

The Circassians' unfortunate reputation as troublemakers in the Balkans followed them to Syria. Local residents quickly blamed a spike in contraband trade and robberies on refugees. According to consular reports, some muhajirs brought with them gold, which, upon police inspection, turned out to be loot from Bulgarian churches.<sup>14</sup> A British consul reported a local rumor that the North Caucasians had abducted Rumelian girls and sought to sell them into slavery in Syria. The authorities investigated and even found one Christian woman living with muhajirs, but she claimed to have voluntarily followed a young Circassian man by the name of Ismail and wanted to marry him and convert to Islam. Local authorities put her under house arrest, and the Greek Orthodox clergy tried to change her mind, apparently to no avail.<sup>15</sup> The Tripoli Christians also complained to local consuls that the Circassians assaulted and robbed a Christian merchant. After an ensuing investigation, the British consul reported that the aforementioned merchant was not sober at the time of the incident and harassed a Circassian woman, thereby incurring wrath of her compatriots.<sup>16</sup>

Municipal authorities often shared local residents' concerns and suspicions. Thus, in July 1878, the Acre authorities refused to let a carrier ship into the port, and over 400

---

<sup>13</sup> Individuals younger than 10 years old were counted as children. NBKM 279A/361 (28 *şubat* 1298, 12 March 1883). One explanation, other than high child mortality, is that some muhajirs registered children as adults in order to qualify for greater government assistance. A child received only a half of an adult's financial aid.

<sup>14</sup> TNA FO 424/68, conf. 3601, f. 146, no. 247 (28 February 1878), in Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 351-52.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> TNA FO 424/73, conf. 3752, f. 66, no. 89/1 (19 July 1878), in Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 542-44.



Circassians disembarked on the shore outside of the port. The unwanted refugees asked for shelter at a local mosque and were turned away. Eventually, some of them forced their way inside, had an armed fight with the locals, and were arrested and brought to court.<sup>17</sup> It was not the only reported clash between refugees and local residents in Acre, and it would not be unreasonable to assume the same pattern for other port cities during the crisis.

The refugee crisis, following an expensive war, contributed to rising costs of food products, particularly in areas of high population pressure. A comparison of prices for bread that local authorities purchased for refugees, however incomplete and incidental, gives us an idea about the impact of war and refugee crisis on the economy. [See Table 4.] The price of bread was highly unstable during the crisis, subject to local economic pressures and global market prices, affected by the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire, the two grain exporters. As more refugees disembarked in Levantine ports in March 1878, an *okka* of bread in Tripoli reached the price of 175 *para* against the regular price of 60-63 *para* across Syria. Later in 1878, the prices for bread in Tripoli went down to stabilize at around 125 *para* per *okka*. Generally, bread was more expensive in overcrowded ports than in the hinterland. As more refugees arrived in their designated settlements, population pressure pushed up prices in the interior. For example, prices for bread in Hama (91 *para* per *okka*, October 1879) and Quneitra (100 *para* per *okka*, February 1880) were relatively high because their surrounding areas absorbed many immigrants, and merchants likely had to import cereals from other regions.

---

<sup>17</sup> BOA HR.TO 205/21 (24 July 1878), in Kushkhabiev, *Istoriia adygov*, 93.

Table 4: Cost of bread in Damascus Province, 1878-80

Location	Date	Cost per <i>okka</i> , in <i>para</i>	Reference
Tripoli	March 1878	175	279A/358
	April 1878	c. 148	
	May 1878	125	
	June 1878	125	
	July 1878	125-150	
	August 1878	125	286Ar/60
	July 1879	62	286Ar/61
	November 1879	74	
Jableh	June 1878	63	282A/200
Jableh and 'Arab al-Mulk	January 1880	70	279A/2299
	February 1880	70	287Ar/11
Latakia	March 1879	60	287Ar/12
Acre	March 1879	65	280Ar/13
	April 1879	70	
Nablus	July 1879	63	283Ar/54
	August 1879	61	
	September 1879	61	283Ar/54, 279A/359
Jenin	August 1879	61	283Ar/56
Hama	October 1879	91	279A/2151
Quneitra	February 1880	100	279A/1924

All documents are from NBKM.

The inflation of food prices was even more dramatic in other parts of the empire, for example, in the northern Balkans, the region hit hardest during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. Local authorities in Şumen District documented their expenses on bread for Circassian, Abkhaz, and Crimean Tatar muhajirs who had been fleeing their district. From the already high 150 *para* per *okka* in July 1878, the price of bread went up to 200 *para* per *okka* in December 1878, and to 260 *para* per *okka* in February 1879.<sup>18</sup>

The assigned daily food ration amounted to 200 *dirhem* (642g) of bread per adult and 100 *dirhem* (321g) per child, or 150 *dirhem* (481g) of flour per adult and 75 *dirhem* (241g) per child.<sup>19</sup> [See Table 5.] With no other aid given out by the authorities, these rations constituted a bare minimum required to preserve life. Even then, municipal treasuries could not always cope with the demand, as the case of coastal villages Jableh and ‘Arab al-Mulk attests. Since June 1878, the two villages temporarily housed several thousand refugees at a time, struggling to distribute bread to all. By early 1880, the situation worsened because the municipal councils of Jableh and ‘Arab al-Mulk had enough money to provide food to no more than ten percent of the refugee population of over 2,000 people. The authorities issued an order that bread should be distributed to the neediest refugees: widows, elderly, orphans, and disabled persons.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> NBKM OAK Collection 180/9 (1878-79).

<sup>19</sup> NBKM 287Ar/12, 287Ar/43, 279A/1924, 279A/2151; 280Ar/29; OAK Collection 180/9 (1878-79).

<sup>20</sup> NBKM 282A/200 (27 *teşrin-i sani* 1294, 9 December 1878); NBKM 279A/2299 (21 *kanun-ı sani* 1295, 2 February 1880); 287Ar/11 (24 *şubat* 1295, 7 March 1880).

Table 5: Daily rations for muhajirs in Damascus Province, 1878-80

Provision	Location	Date	Daily Ration	Population	Reference
Bread	Jableh	June 1878	Irregular, ranging from one to 87 <i>okka</i> per family per month	2,000-3,000 people	282A/200
	Jableh and 'Arab al-Mulk	Feb 1880	Only to widows, orphans, elderly, and disabled	2,029 people	287Ar/11
	Latakia	Mar 1879	200 <i>dirhem</i> per adult 100 <i>dirhem</i> per child	414 people	287Ar/12
	Nablus	Sep 1879	184-185 <i>dirhem</i> per adult 92 <i>dirhem</i> per child	641 people (516 adults, 125 children)	279A/359
	Quneitra	Feb 1880	200 <i>dirhem</i> per adult 100 <i>dirhem</i> per child	1,305 people (955 adults, 350 children)	279A/1924
Bread and wheat	Hama	Oct 1879	200 <i>dirhem</i> per adult 100 <i>dirhem</i> per child	445 people (371 adults, 74 children)	279A/2151
Flour	Tiberias	Apr-July 1879	150 <i>dirhem</i> per adult 75 <i>dirhem</i> per child	84 people	280Ar/29
Money	Jabal Kalmun District	Dec 1879	30 <i>para</i> per adult 15 <i>para</i> per child	749 people (670 adults, 79 children)	279A/360
		Jan 1880	30 <i>para</i> per adult 15 <i>para</i> per child	752 people (684 adults, 68 children)	279A/361

All documents are from NBKM.

The authorities could choose to pay a daily allowance in cash: 30 *para* per adult and 15 *para* per child, which would buy the prescribed 200 *dirhem* of bread per adult and

100 *dirhem* per child, if the price of bread was at its lowest: 60 *para* per *okka*.<sup>21</sup> During the refugee crisis, the price was hardly ever that low in resettlement areas. [See Table 4.] Registers of monthly allocations of bread and wheat for refugees reveal that over half of designated recipients of food subsidies were women.<sup>22</sup> Bread handouts were cancelled in 1880, presumably for the lack of funds and to forcefully prompt agricultural self-sufficiency among North Caucasian muhajirs.<sup>23</sup>

The massive refugee crisis created economic hardship for many, but was also an economic opportunity for others in host regions. In the Levant, large landowners and wheat merchants benefited from the rising prices of bread, and millers and bakers witnessed a boost to their business. Some entrepreneurs secured contracts to sell directly to municipal authorities. Thus, in 1878, a Tripoli bread merchant, Mustafa Aga al-Shermene, was paid 309,851 *kuruş* 30 *para* for two and a half months' worth of bread and peksimet<sup>24</sup> for refugees.<sup>25</sup> Another contractor, known only as Mustafa, received 100,129 *kuruş* for the bread given out to Crimean Tatar and Circassian immigrants over two months.<sup>26</sup> The government also paid refugees' medical bills. A chemist, Ilyas al-Haddad, charged the Tripoli municipal treasury 5,400 *kuruş* for medicine that he prescribed to refugees.<sup>27</sup> The sums paid out to contractors for accommodation and maintenance of refugees were

---

<sup>21</sup> The numbers remained steady for over two decades. For 1880, see NBKM 279A/360 (30 *kanun-ı evvel* 1295, 11 January 1880); 279A/2299 (21 *kanun-ı sani* 1295, 2 February 1880); 287Ar/11 (24 *şubat* 1295, 7 March 1880). For 1901-2, see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 71.

<sup>22</sup> NBKM 279A/360 (30 *kanun-ı evvel* 1295, 11 January 1880); 279A/2151 (24 *kanun-ı sani* 1295, 5 February 1880).

<sup>23</sup> BOA İ.MMS 59/2786 (2 *şaban* 1295, 1 August 1878).

<sup>24</sup> Peksimet is zwieback or rusk, a type of hard, dried bread that does not stale for a long time and could therefore be stocked up.

<sup>25</sup> NBKM 279A/358 (28 *eylül* 1294, 10 October 1878).

<sup>26</sup> NBKM 286Ar/61 (9 *kanun-ı evvel* 1295, 21 December 1879).

<sup>27</sup> NBKM 286Ar/59 (17 *mayıs* 1294, 29 May 1878). Also see 286Ar/57 (1 *temmuz* 1294, 13 July 1878); 282Ar/40 (late 1870s).

enormous. Although direct proof is difficult to ascertain in the available documentation, one could expect a fertile field for corruption in a situation when local municipalities gave out contracts to local businesses, while receiving reimbursement from the imperial center. At least one contemporary observer reported that much government funding for refugees was embezzled.<sup>28</sup>

### *Refugees in the Syrian Interior*

Prior to the 1878-80 refugee crisis, few North Caucasians immigrated in Greater Syria, compared to Anatolia and the Balkans. The first Circassian muhajirs arrived in Syria by sea as early as 1859. They were few, and their agricultural settlements around Quneitra, Nablus, and Aleppo likely failed.<sup>29</sup> In 1865-66, 13,648 Chechens arrived in Ra's al-'Ayn, in northern Syria.<sup>30</sup> Most of those muhajirs came overland through Tiflis, Kars, Erzurum, and Diyarbekir. Around 1872, about 1,000 Circassians and 400 Daghestanis settled around Homs and Hama and in the Golan Heights.<sup>31</sup> These early villages were southernmost North Caucasian settlements at the time, and epidemics and local conflicts took their toll on minute muhajir communities. By the late 1870s, only 5,000 Chechens remained in Ra's al-

---

<sup>28</sup> Nikolai V. Maksimov, *Dve voiny 1876-1878 gg.* (Saint Petersburg, 1878), 574; cited in Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 60.

<sup>29</sup> See, for Quneitra, BOA A.MKT.MHM 169/66 (10 *rebiülahir* 1276, 6 November 1859); for Aleppo villages, A.MKT.MHM 203/14 (5 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 19 December 1860); for Nablus villages, A.MKT.NZD 335/81 (6 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 20 December 1860); A.MKT.NZD 336/57 (11 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 25 December 1860); A.MKT.MHM 204/42 (16 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 30 December 1860).

<sup>30</sup> Berzhe, *Vyselenie gortsev*, 61.

<sup>31</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 65. Lewis cites 1873 as the foundation date of earliest muhajir villages near Hama, but lists the population as Daghestani. He also cites 1873 as the foundation date of Quneitra, the earliest Circassian village in the Golan Heights; see *Settlers and Nomads*, 117, 119. According to archival evidence, several Daghestani villages were established near Hama as early as 1865; see BOA İ.MMS 50/2155 (15 *şaban* 1291, 27 September 1874).

‘Ayn; about three to four hundred people lived in Quneitra; and many villages around Hama and Nablus lay abandoned.<sup>32</sup> In this respect, the 1878 refugee wave constituted a lifeline to the existing North Caucasian communities in Syria.

The lack of governmental support was central to the failure of earlier immigrants. For example, muhajir villages around Hama were hard hit by insufficient aid and resulting insolvency throughout the 1870s. In 1871, the Daghestani muhajirs complained to the Refugee Commission about unfavorable climate, unsatisfactory land allotments, and late and incomplete distribution of aid by the Hama district authorities. They requested to move to a different area. The local government refused to provide new land but issued some payments to placate the muhajirs.<sup>33</sup> In July 1874, it came to the attention of the Refugee Commission that the North Caucasians, who had been staying in the vicinity of Hama for nine years, did not receive some of the promised aid and the villages were owed 139,000 *kuruş* in subsidies, including 90,000 *kuruş* in direct payments to muhajirs. The Commission reasoned that procuring necessary supplies and paying stipends would “save immigrants from poverty and hardship.” The Financial Ministry agreed that “agriculture must be facilitated” in Syria, and provided the necessary sum.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the Hama villages were still underfunded, as only six months later the Hama subprovincial treasury appealed to Istanbul for auxiliary funds because it lacked 158,000 *kuruş* to support the North Caucasian settlements.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 65; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 104-5.

<sup>33</sup> BOA İ.DH 640/44541 (14 *şaban* 1288, 29 October 1871).

<sup>34</sup> BOA İ.MMS 50/2155 (15 *şaban* 1291, 27 September 1874).

<sup>35</sup> BOA İ.MMS 51/2235 (5 *safer* 1292, 13 March 1875)

Many refugees refused to settle in some areas. A harsh climate and poor agricultural land were the most common sources of complaints.<sup>36</sup> Thus, 1,500 Circassians who arrived in Latakia in March 1878 would not go to nearby Jableh. Muhajirs claimed that it was ripe with malaria and was too close to Jabal Ansariyya, presumably meaning that they feared a potential conflict with Alawites.<sup>37</sup> Over 3,000 muhajirs that were sent for resettlement in Hama Subprovince abandoned their villages due to a lack of governmental assistance and returned to Tripoli, demanding passage back to Istanbul.<sup>38</sup>

Pre-1878 villages served as a model and core for future villages. Most refugees were directed to the existing North Caucasian villages or settled around them.<sup>39</sup> Thus, a register from October 1879 lists 445 Circassian refugees in five villages in Hama District: Murj al-Durr (Merjidor), Hazab, Selil, Tell ‘Ada, and Deir Shamil, as well as the city of Hama itself. Those muhajirs had previously settled in various locations in the Balkans: the districts of Rusçuk (now Ruse, Bulgaria), Babadağ (Babadag, Romania), Hırsova (Harşova, Romania), Tulça (Tulcea, Romania), and Tirhala (Trikala, Greece).<sup>40</sup> These immigrants joined the existing North Caucasian community living near Hama.

North Caucasian villages in Greater Syria were primarily located in five areas: in the Balqa’ (around Amman), the Golan Heights (around Quneitra), the Damascus area (around Murj al-Sultan), between Homs and Hama, and to the northeast of Aleppo (around

---

<sup>36</sup> See BOA İ.DH 640/44541 (14 *şaban* 1288, 29 October 1871); HH.THR 465/2 (22 February 1888), in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, ed. Gurulkan, vol. 2, 316-17; A.MKT.MHM 527/12 (3 *muharrem* 1325, 16 February 1907).

<sup>37</sup> TNA FO 424/69, conf. 3625, f. 162, no. 279, in Şimşir, *Rumeli’den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, 403.

<sup>38</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 99.

<sup>39</sup> See also Berat Yıldız, “Emigrations from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire,” M.A. dissertation (Bilkent University, 2006), 110.

<sup>40</sup> NBKM 279A/2151 (24 *kanun-ı sani* 1295, 5 February 1880).



Manbij).<sup>41</sup> [See Appendix V.] Although these areas lay at a long distance from each other, one could draw a line through them. This line coincided with the western edge of the Syrian Desert and, broadly speaking, divided sedentary economies from nomadic ones. By the end of the Ottoman period, the overall number of North Caucasian muhajirs in Syria reached 50,000-75,000 people.<sup>42</sup>

After arriving from ports into the Syrian interior, most muhajirs stayed in temporary housing. They were typically hosted by local villagers, while their houses were being built – often by those same villagers or by muhajirs themselves. Provincial officials, at least in some areas, visited resettlement locations to monitor the construction progress, to identify what aid needs to be provided, and to assess communal relations. Thus, in October 1879, a land registry official in Safad District traveled to the villages of Safa, ‘Alma, Qabba‘a, al-Ra’s al-Ahmar, ‘Ayn al-Zaytun, Taytaba, al-Husn, and Biriyya to make sure that the Circassians who had recently arrived in the aforementioned villages were settling in well and did not cause too much trouble to the locals.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> In addition to these areas, Circassians set up villages in northern Transjordan (Jerash) and northern Palestine (Kafr Kama and Rehaniya), and Chechens settled in northern Syria (Ra’s al-‘Ayn) and eastern Syria (around Deir ez-Zor).

<sup>42</sup> Polatkan argues that 25,000 refugees arrived in Greater Syria in the 1860s and that, in 1878, 50,000 more settled in Aleppo Province and Deir ez-Zor Mutasarrifate and 25,000 in Damascus Province; see Salih Polatkan, “Kafkasya’dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğa Yapılan Göçler,” *Kuzey Kafkasya Dergisi* 66-67 (1987): 8, 10. Karpat estimates that about 100,000 Muslim refugees, of them 36,000-38,000 Circassians, arrived in Syria between 1878 and 1906; see “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 671. Natho estimates that, in 1872-1910, more than 60,000 Circassians settled in Greater Syria, including 26,182 refugees for 1878; see Kadir I. Natho, *Circassian History* (New York, 2009), 302, 394-95. The Russian consul in Damascus counted 36,690 Circassians in Damascus Province in 1904; see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 76. Aydemir estimates the number of Circassian refugees to Ottoman Syria at 70,000; see *Göç*, 171. Chochiev also counts 70,000 immigrants in Syria in the 1866-1908 period; “Rasselenie severokavkazskikh immigrantov,” 102-3.

<sup>43</sup> NBKM 280Ar/34 (15 *teşrin-i evvel* 1295, 27 October 1879).

In December 1879, we find 749 North Caucasians, eligible for a monthly allowance, distributed around 30 different villages in Jabal Kalmun District, near Damascus.<sup>44</sup> Most of them had been expecting relocation to permanent settlements around Damascus or in the Golan Heights. In February 1880, 1,305 people, including 300 children, received governmental aid in nine villages in the Golan Heights: Bi'r 'Ajam, Mumsiya, Merkez Khamanira, 'Ayn Ziwan, Mansura, Surman, Khan Arnabe, Burayqa, and Quneitra. Of them, 140 were listed as newly arrived.<sup>45</sup>

The North Caucasians' arrival in 1878 coincided with a change in provincial leadership. Ahmed Şefik Midhat Paşa, the former governor of Danube Province (1864-68), was appointed as new governor of Damascus Province (1878-80).<sup>46</sup> Under his governorship in the 1860s, Danube Province was one of the largest refugee-hosting provinces (see Chapter 1).<sup>47</sup> One of the great reformers of the Tanzimat era and the Grand Vizier during the first Constitutional Era (1876-77), Midhat Paşa was exiled to Europe by Sultan Abdülhamid II. Under British influence, Midhat Paşa was allowed to return and was granted the governorship of Syria.<sup>48</sup> He set an ambitious goal to double the revenues of his new province.<sup>49</sup> Muhajirs, many of whom his administration had previously resettled in the Balkans, would now play a critical role in his economic agenda in the Levant. To boost

---

<sup>44</sup> Villages that hosted the refugees included Jerya, Deir Salman, Berze, Bilaliya, Qisa, Qasmiya, 'Ibada, Haran, Huzrema, Murj Sultan, Bezina, Doma, Kafarin, 'Adra, Ghazlayna, Medire, Sakka, Bahariya, Mid'a, Beit Siva, Nashabiya, Utaya, Ja'idiya, Hadira al-Turkoman, Jewber, as well as suburbs of Damascus, Sham 'Adasi and Sham Ahmediye. NBKM 279A/360 (30 *kanun-ı evvel* 1295, 11 January 1880), 279A/361 (28 *şubat* 1298, 12 March 1883). See *Salname-i Vilayet-i Suriye* (h. 1299, 1882), 298-99.

<sup>45</sup> NBKM 279A/1924 (March 1881).

<sup>46</sup> Najib E. Saliba, "The Achievements of Midhat Pasha as Governor of the Province of Syria, 1878-1880," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, no. 3 (1978): 307-23.

<sup>47</sup> See also Dobрева, "Circassian Colonization"; Koç, "Tuna Vilayeti Göçmenleri ve Midhat Paşa."

<sup>48</sup> Leila Hudson, *Transforming Damascus: Space and Modernity in an Islamic City* (New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008), 26.

<sup>49</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 72.

revenue, Midhat Paşa emphasized agricultural exploitation of the fertile but uncultivated *miri* lands, especially in southern Syria. North Caucasian muhajirs were the exact kind of population that could expand agricultural production in Damascus Province.<sup>50</sup>

To raise funds for refugees, the Damascus provincial government implemented an extraordinary tax of four *kuruş* for every male resident.<sup>51</sup> North Caucasian muhajirs were subjected to the same levy.<sup>52</sup> The Damascus municipal authorities imposed a tax on meat imports, the proceeds from which funded refugee relief efforts.<sup>53</sup> Locally collected taxes typically stayed in the area to fund subsidies for refugee populations. Thus, as early as 1879, little tax (55 *kuruş*) was collected from muhajirs in Tabariyya (Tiberias) and immediately put towards the cost of flour for new refugees settled in the same area.<sup>54</sup> Local communities also gave donations for refugee resettlement. Thus, Hama residents provided 6,000 kg of wheat and 4,000 kg of barley for the Circassian muhajirs' first sowings.<sup>55</sup>

The Syrian provincial and municipal authorities were ill-prepared to deal with the 1878-80 refugee crisis, as they struggled to provide sufficient housing and food to refugees and to get them to inland settlements quickly enough. Crime, epidemics, and the inflation of prices exacerbated relations between coastal residents and North Caucasian muhajirs. The crisis also presented economic opportunities, particularly for grain producers and bread merchants in the Levant. In the aftermath of the refugee crisis, North Caucasian

---

<sup>50</sup> For an overview of Syrian economy in the late Ottoman period, see Owen, *Middle East in the World Economy*, 153-79, 244-72.

<sup>51</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 99.

<sup>52</sup> Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 61.

<sup>53</sup> Chochiev, "Rasselenie severokavkazskikh immigrantov," 104.

<sup>54</sup> NBKM 283Ar/55 (31 *ağustos* 1295, 12 September 1879).

<sup>55</sup> TNA FO 424/73, conf. 3752, f. 66, no. 89/1, in Şimşir, *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri*, vol. 1, p. 542; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 99.

muhajirs founded dozens of villages throughout Greater Syria, specifically in interior parts of the Damascus and Aleppo provinces.

## CHAPTER 2

### **Refugees in the Balqa' Region, 1878-1914: Land, Capital, and the Making of Amman**

In 1912, Gül'azar bin Hamid, along with her six female and two male relatives, sold six shops and a sixteen-room residence, the largest house in Amman at the time, to Yusuf al-Sukkar.<sup>1</sup> Gül'azar bin Hamid came from a wealthy Circassian family, part of the community of muhajirs from the North Caucasus who had emigrated to Ottoman Syria. Having arrived in central Transjordan only a few decades prior, these refugees established agricultural settlements that, with time, proved an economic success; indeed, three out of the four largest cities in modern Jordan – Amman, al-Zarqa', and al-Rusayfa – were founded by muhajirs from the North Caucasus.<sup>2</sup> The buyer, Yusuf al-Sukkar, was a prominent merchant from Salt and an elected Greek Orthodox representative to the Ottoman Assembly. The commercial transaction between the two parties reflected a new chapter in the development of the Amman region, marked by a greater economic engagement between the Circassian refugee community and Levantine merchants.

This chapter examines the settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs in the Balqa' region, in central Transjordan.<sup>3</sup> The first muhajirs to arrive in this interior part of Damascus Province were Circassian refugees fleeing the Balkans during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. They established their first village in Amman, which grew to become the present-day

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Land and Survey (Dairat al-arādi wa-l-masāha, hereafter cited as DLS) Defter 10/1/1, f. 40, #7-20, f. 47, #22, 24-35 (*temmuz - aḡustos* 1328, July - Sep 1912).

<sup>2</sup> Jordan Department of Population Statistics, 2015 Census. <[census.dos.gov.jo/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/04/No\\_of\\_pop\\_depand\\_on\\_gov.pdf](http://census.dos.gov.jo/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2016/04/No_of_pop_depand_on_gov.pdf)> (accessed on 19 June 2017).

<sup>3</sup> See also Hamed-Troyansky, "Circassian Refugees and the Making of Amman, 1878-1914." Parts of the article are reprinted with permission of Cambridge University Press.

capital of Jordan. By the end of Ottoman rule, about 5,000 to 6,500 North Caucasian muhajirs lived in Transjordan.<sup>4</sup> I focus on the development of the real estate market in the Balqa', specifically the registration, sale, and purchase of property by North Caucasian refugees, Levantine merchants, and Transjordanian bedouin between 1878 and 1914. This chapter is based on new types of evidence: judicial records<sup>5</sup> and land registers.<sup>6</sup>

I argue that the village of Amman was transformed into an important economic outpost on the nomadic frontier thanks to the convergence of refugee labor, Syrian and Palestinian capital, Ottoman infrastructure, and access to the bedouin economy. The rapid growth of Amman and its new administrative status as a district center, by 1914, allowed it to be considered a viable option for the Jordanian capital after World War I.<sup>7</sup> This chapter demonstrates that North Caucasian refugees were active players in the real estate market. Muhajirs used the shari'a court and the new land registry to legitimize their economic transactions, accelerating the evolution of a new property regime and economic development of the Balqa' region.

---

<sup>4</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 76n26.

<sup>5</sup> Copies of court records for Salt District are preserved at the Center of Documents and Manuscripts (Markaz al-wathā'iq wa-l-makhtūṭāt, University of Jordan, Amman, hereafter cited as CDM). For the catalogue of court records, see Muhammad 'Adnan Bakhit, *Kashshaf ihṣā'i zamāni li-sijillat al-mahakim al-shar'iyya wa-l-awqaf al-islamiyya fi Bilad al-Sham* (Amman: University of Jordan, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> Ottoman land registers for Salt District are kept at the DLS in Jabal al-Waybdeh, Amman; previously located in Salt. Thank to the research access, granted by the Jordanian Ministry of the Interior, I have a complete database of all recorded property transactions in Amman and the surrounding Circassian and Chechen villages between 1889 and 1913, based on Defters 1/1/1, 1/5/1, 5/1/1, 7/1/1, 9/1/1, 10/1/1, 18/1/1, 19/1/1, 30/1/2, 31/1/2, and 32/1/2. I would like to thank A.B., A.H., and I.B. of DLS for their unreserved hospitality, patience, and goodwill, as well as Eugene L. Rogan and Nora Barakat for their advice in obtaining research access. For the catalogue of land registers, see Hind Abu al-Sha'r, *Sijillat al-aradi fi-l-Urdun, 1876-1960* (Amman: Al-Bayt University, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> See Khayr al-Din Zirikli, *Aman fi 'Amman: mudhakkirat 'amayn fi 'asimat sharq al-Urdun* (Cairo: al-Matba'a al-'Arabiyya, 1925); Eugene L. Rogan, "The Making of a Capital: Amman, 1918-1928," in *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami (Beirut: Cermoc, 1996), 89-107. On Mandate-era Transjordan, see Mary C. Wilson, *King Abdullah, Britain, and the Making of Jordan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Tariq Tell, *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Existing scholarship on Jordanian Circassians often prioritizes demographic and ethnographic analysis. In contrast, I focus on the understudied economic aspect of settlement, of which we know very little. Furthermore, rather than exploring refugee villages within a self-contained refugee world – a staple in historiography – I treat them as part of the economy of the Balqa’ and the broader Ottoman Levant.<sup>8</sup> The historiography of Amman often stresses the Mandate period. In contrast, I explore the emergence of an economically vibrant urban community in the first two decades of the twentieth century. This is among the first studies of Amman to make extensive use of Ottoman land records and to integrate Circassian and Syro-Palestinian lineages in the foundational narrative of the city.<sup>9</sup> It delves into urban and economic history in its exploration of the role of outside capital in the early stages of the making of a city. By looking at refugees as real estate owners, farmers, and entrepreneurs, this chapter moves away from the traditional dynamic

---

<sup>8</sup> See Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 96-123; Raouf Sa’d Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier of Settlement in Transjordan, 1850-1914* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989), 197-216. For Jordanian-Circassian historical accounts, see Haghandoqa, *Circassians*; Nashkhu, *Tarikh al-sharkas (al-adighah) wa al-shishan*; Muhammad Khayr Mamsir Batsaj, *Al-Mawsu‘a al-tarikhiyya li-l-umma al-sharkasiyya “al-adigha”: min al-alf al-‘ashir ma qabla al-milad ila al-alf al-thalith ma b’ada al-milad*, vols. 4 and 5 (Amman: Dar al-Wa’il, 2009). See also Seteney Shami, “Ethnicity and Leadership: the Circassians in Jordan”; idem., “Nineteenth-Century Circassian Settlements in Jordan,” *The History and Archaeology of Jordan*, 4 (1992): 417-21; Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*; idem. “Circassian Diaspora in Jordan: Self-identification, Ideas about Historical Homeland and Impact on North Caucasian Developments,” *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 19 (2003): 23-39.

<sup>9</sup> On prior work with Salt land registers for Transjordanian histories, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*; Fischbach, *State, Society, and Land in Jordan*; Martha Mundy and Richard S. Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007). For a seminal study of Amman that integrates the Ottoman and Mandate periods, see Marwan D. Hanania, “From Colony to Capital: A Socio-Economic and Political History of Amman, 1878–1958,” Ph.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 2010). See also Hind Abu al-Sha‘r and Nufan Hamud, ‘*Amman fi al-‘ahd al-Hashimi*, vol. 1, 1916–1952 (Amman: Greater Amman Municipality, 2004); Nufan Hamud, ‘*Amman wa jiwaruha khilal al-fatra 1864-1921* (Amman: Business Bank Publications, 1996); idem., “‘Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani: dirasa fi tatawwur awdaiha al-idariyya wa-l-ijtima’iyya wa-l-iqtisadiyya,” in *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Hannover and Shami, 72-88; Jane M. Hacker, *Modern ‘Amman: A Social Study* (Durham: Durham Colleges in the University of Durham, 1960), 7-21; Rogan, “The Making of a Capital”; ‘Abd Allah Rashid, *Malamih al-Hayaa al-Sha‘biyya fi Madinat ‘Amman, 1878–1948* (Amman: Wizarat al-Thaqafa, 1983). For published Amman court records, see Salah Yusuf Qazan, ‘*Amman fi matla‘ al-qarn al-‘ashrin: al-sijill al-shar‘i al-awwal li-nahiyat ‘Amman, 1319-1326 H/1902-1908 M, dirasa wa-tahqiq* (Amman: Ministry of Culture, 2002).

of refugees and the state, common in the fields of Ottoman history and refugee studies, focusing instead on refugees and the market. By examining land and court records of several upper-class Circassian individuals, this chapter also provides a rare reconstruction of a refugee family history in the late Ottoman period.

### *Ottoman Transjordan and the Post-1858 Property Regime*

The Ottomans claimed sovereignty over the region to the east of the Jordan River since 1516-17. But, in practice, the Ottoman dynasty had established minimal administrative and military presence in the region and, for centuries, depended on local landowning notables or bedouin tribes that wielded control over a vast region between Damascus and the Hejaz. In the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottomans started integrating their nomadic frontier into the administrative structures of Damascus Province. Ottoman rule in the area was bolstered by two campaigns against the Balqa' bedouin on behalf of an energetic Damascus governor, Mehmed Raşid Paşa.<sup>10</sup>

By the late 1860s, the territory of Transjordan – more commonly understood by contemporary observers as southeastern Syria or eastern Palestine – was divided between the subprovinces of Hawran and Balqa' within Damascus Province. Hawran Subprovince included the district of 'Ajlun, the northernmost region of Transjordan. Balqa' Subprovince was divided into the districts of Salt and Karak, in addition to a few districts in Palestine.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 48-52.

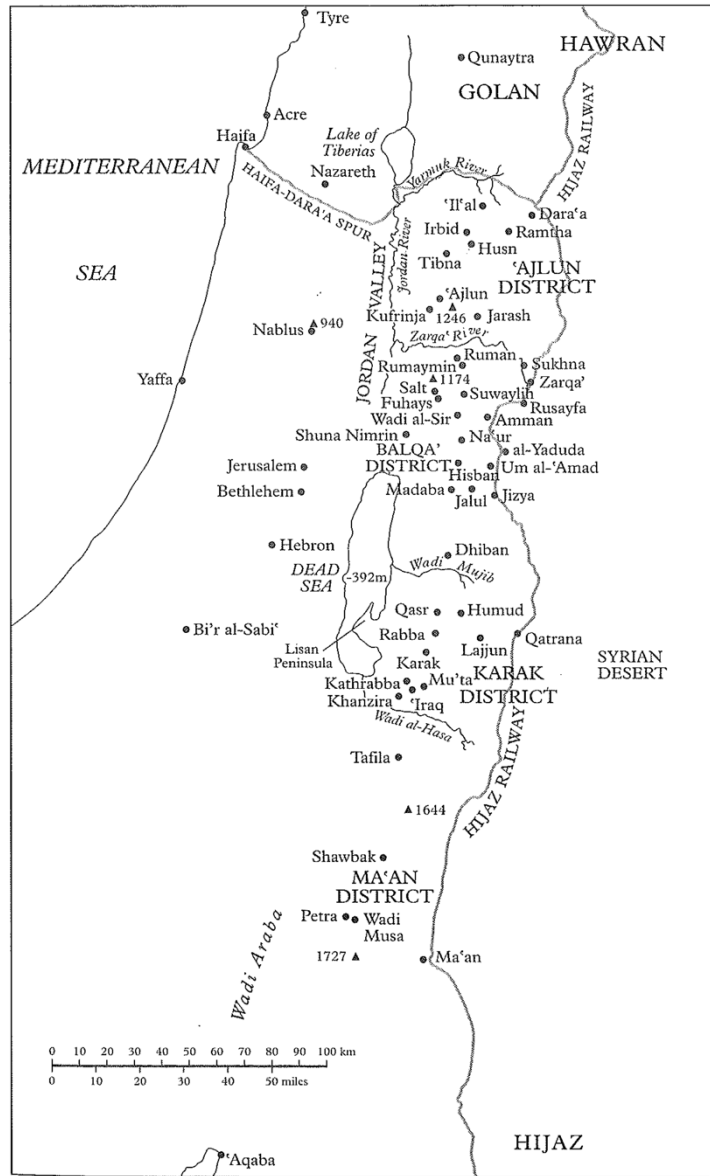
<sup>11</sup> On the Ottoman administration of Transjordan, see Eugene L. Rogan, "Bringing the State Back: The Limits of Ottoman Rule in Transjordan, 1840-1910," in *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, eds. Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell (London: British Academic Press, 1994), 32-57; idem., *Frontiers of the State*, 44-69; Max Gross, "Ottoman Rule in the Province of Damascus, 1860-1909," Ph.D. dissertation (Georgetown University, 1979).



In the second round of administrative reorganization in the mid-1890s, almost the entire territory of Transjordan was included in the mutasarrifate of Karak, except 'Ajlun (part of Hawran Subprovince) and 'Aqaba (part of Hejaz Province).

The Balqa' region, which closely corresponded to the administrative district of Salt, lay in central Transjordan, to the east of the Jordan River. In the north, it is limited by the Zarqa' River, which separates it from Mount 'Ajlun, within the Hawran region. In the south, it extends to Wadi Mujib, beyond which lies the Karak region. To the east of the Balqa', lay the great hajj caravan

Figure 4: Map of Ottoman Transjordan in the early twentieth century



Source: Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, xiv.

road, connecting Aleppo and Damascus with Medina, and the territory (Ar. *dāra*) of the Bani Sakhr tribe. In the early modern period, the economy of the Balqa' was closely tied to Jabal Nablus, whose merchants bought olive oil, livestock, butter, and barilla plant for

soap production from the Balqa' bedouin.<sup>12</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century, the last villages of the Balqa' were abandoned, and Salt became its sole sedentary settlement.<sup>13</sup> Salt merchants served as intermediaries between the Nabulsi market and the bedouin of Balqa' and beyond.<sup>14</sup>

The process of sedentarization on the Transjordanian frontier occurred in several waves.<sup>15</sup> Starting in the 1860s, Christian and Muslim communities set up new villages, as a result of overpopulation and communal strife in their old settlements. In Salt District, prominent new settlements included Madaba, established by Catholic Arabs from Karak, and Fuheis, founded by Orthodox Arabs from Salt.<sup>16</sup> Between 1878 and 1914, several Muslim refugee communities that were displaced from the Balkans and the Caucasus arrived in Ottoman Transjordan. In Salt District, Circassians founded settlements in Amman (1878), Wadi al-Sir (1880), Na'ur (1901), and Rusayfa (1904);<sup>17</sup> Chechens set up the villages of al-Zarqa' (1902), al-Sukhna (1905), and Sweileh (1906);<sup>18</sup> and Turkmens settled in al-Ruman (early 1880s).<sup>19</sup> Outside of the Balqa', Circassians moved to Jerash

---

<sup>12</sup> See Beshara Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 203-05.

<sup>13</sup> On the history of Salt, see Jurj Farid Tarif Dawud, *Al-Salt wa jiwaruha* (Amman: Jordan Press Association, 1994).

<sup>14</sup> The connection between Salt and Nablus remained strong enough for the two towns to be included, in 1867, within the new Balqa' Subprovince; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 51. On the shared history of Jabal Nablus and Balqa', see Ihsan al-Nimr, *Tarikh Jabal Nablus wa Balqa'*, 4 vols. (Damascus and Nablus, 1938-1974).

<sup>15</sup> For the three-wave sedentarization model, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 45-47.

<sup>16</sup> See Muhammad 'Abd al-Qadir Khuraysat, *Al-Masihiyun fi qada' al-Salt: al-Salt, al-Fuhays, Ramimin, 1869-1920* (Amman: Ministry of Culture, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 115-16.

<sup>18</sup> I use dates from Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 116-17; and Abujaber, *Pioneers over Jordan*, 215. Hanania dates the establishment of Sweileh and al-Sukhna to, respectively, 1907 and 1912; "From Colony to Capital," 69-70. Al-Zarqa' and Sweileh became mixed Chechen-Circassian settlements already in the Ottoman period. On al-Zarqa', see Hind Abu al-Sha'r and 'Abd Allah Mutlaq 'Assaf, *Al-Zarqa': al-nash'ah wa-l-tatawwur, 1903-1935* (Amman: Wizarat al-Thaqafa, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> On Turkmen muhajirs, see Eugene L. Rogan, "Turkuman of al-Ruman: An Ottoman Settlement in South-Eastern Syria," *Arabic Historical Review for Ottoman Studies* 1-2 (1990): 91-106.

(1884) in ‘Ajlun District;<sup>20</sup> Chechens settled near Druze refugees in the al-Azraq oasis (1932) to the east;<sup>21</sup> and Turkmens established the southernmost refugee settlement in al-Lajjun (1905) in Karak District.<sup>22</sup> Finally, starting in the 1880s, semi-nomadic bedouin communities established dozens of villages in an attempt to increase their share of cereal production; they also engaged in the “defensive registration” of land to arrest the loss of their territories to refugee settlements.<sup>23</sup>

Middle Eastern historians have long recognized the importance of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code in the economic transformation of the late Ottoman Empire, but their interpretation of it varies. One older school, which generally espoused modernization theory, views the Land Code as the government’s attempt to reverse Ottoman “decline” and regain rights to the land that it had lost over the preceding centuries.<sup>24</sup> Another school, in part inspired by the world-systems theory, sees land ownership reforms as a European-imposed innovation that introduced private property to the Middle East.<sup>25</sup> A third school, better attuned to internal developments within the Ottoman Empire, rejects the notion that

---

<sup>20</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 115. Fischbach mentions 1878 as the foundation date; *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 12.

<sup>21</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 117.

<sup>22</sup> Rogan, “Bringing the State Back,” 46.

<sup>23</sup> On the sedentarization of tribes, see Kasaba, *Moveable Empire*; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, chapters 1, 3, 4, and 7. On the nomadic management of land in the late Ottoman Salt District, see Nora Barakat, “An Empty Land? Nomads and Property Administration in Hamidian Syria,” Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Berkeley, 2015). On the “defensive registration” of land, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 85-92; Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 36-63. The “defensive registration” was not limited to Transjordan. Yücel Terzibaşoğlu writes that, in western Anatolia, “the threat of refugee settlement compelled the local population to cultivate [their claimed but previously uncultivated lands] or turn pastures into fields”; “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 157.

<sup>24</sup> See Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963); Gabriel Baer, “The Evolution of Private Landownership in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent,” in *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, ed. Charles Philip Issawi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 79-90.

<sup>25</sup> For an early response to this approach, see Kenneth Cuno, “The Origins of Private Ownership of Land in Egypt: A Reappraisal,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980): 245-75.

the Land Code was merely an attempt to emulate the western economic order or an imposition of the global market. Instead, it emphasizes the Ottomans' aspiration to increase tax revenue and/or preserve rural stability by legitimizing many existing landholding practices.<sup>26</sup>

I draw on the latter school of thought and utilize a modified version of the framework, constructed by Martha Mundy and Eugene Rogan, who studied the application of the 1858 Land Code in northern and central Transjordan respectively.<sup>27</sup> The Land Code produced drastically different outcomes throughout the empire, Greater Syria, and even within Transjordan, because local communities molded the Land Code to reflect existing socio-economic practices and suit their needs. By focusing on North Caucasian settlements, this study provides a fuller picture of how the 1858 Land Code operated in the context of refugee resettlement in the Ottoman Empire. First, I explore the effects of the arrival of refugees on property regime in the eastern Balqa' – the kind of change in land ownership and tenure that occurred in other parts of Greater Syria and Anatolia, where refugees were resettled, but differed from neighboring areas in Transjordan that did not experience refugee migration.<sup>28</sup> Notably, the areas settled by refugees witnessed an increased contention over land between muhajirs and neighboring communities, high rates of state-sanctioned land registration, and prevalence of communal farming and small land

---

<sup>26</sup> See Quataert, "The Age of Reforms," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. İnalcık and Quataert, vol. 2, 856-61; Huri İslamoğlu, "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858," in *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 3-61.

<sup>27</sup> See Martha Mundy, "The State of Property: Late Ottoman Southern Syria, the Kaza of 'Ajlun (1875-1918)," in *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and West*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 214-47; Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*.

<sup>28</sup> On the effects of refugee settlement on property relations in Western Anatolia, see Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Nomads and Refugees."

ownership. Second, I emphasize that market forces, namely the penetration of non-local capital, drove the registration and sale of land in the region.<sup>29</sup> The confluence of Syrian and Palestinian mercantile capital and Circassian real estate resulted in the growth of commerce and urban development in refugee villages. Arab merchants then consolidated large agricultural estates by buying up bedouin land. Commercial transactions within and outside of refugee settlements stimulated land registration by local Arab and refugee communities, thus entrenching the new Land Code-based property regime.

The transition to a new land regime proceeded slowly in the Balqa', and an Ottoman land registry opened in Salt only in 1891. Prior to that, land transactions in Salt District were recorded through the shari'a court and went untaxed.<sup>30</sup> The Salt registry employed Circassian muhajirs as land registration officials (Ott. Tur. *tapu katibi*). A Circassian clerk would guide members of his community, many of whom could not speak Arabic, through the registration process.<sup>31</sup> The new institution recorded land registration in two types of registers: *yoklama* and *da'imi*. The *yoklama* [roll-call] registration was carried out in villages since the 1870s in order to determine the amount of agricultural land and population to be taxed.<sup>32</sup> In the muhajirs' case, the *yoklama* registration followed the allotment of land. Because the land was given to muhajirs for free, in accordance with the

---

<sup>29</sup> Rogan astutely observes that, unlike in 'Ajlun, "tapu clerks were posted in al-Salt and al-Karak to record those districts' lands more discretely, through control of the real estate market, on a transaction-by-transaction basis"; see Eugene L. Rogan, "Incorporating the Periphery: The Ottoman Extension of Direct Rule over Southeastern Syria (Transjordan), 1867-1914," Ph.D. dissertation (Harvard University, 1991), 307.

<sup>30</sup> The oldest land register for Amman, which is currently available at DLS, is Defter 18/1/1 for 1891-95. Six earlier land registers for Salt District (1879-86), which Rogan mentions, were inaccessible at DLS as of 2014; see Rogan, "Incorporating the Periphery," 314.

<sup>31</sup> Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 64.

<sup>32</sup> On the *yoklama* registration, see Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*, 70.

1857 Immigration Law, they did not pay tax during the registration. In contrast, bedouin tribes and settled Transjordanians were required to pay taxes when registering land.<sup>33</sup>

The land registry recorded transactions on the land that had already been registered in *da'imi* registers. The land registry's assumption of the shari'a court's historical function of land registration constituted, through the "bureaucratization of land," an expansion of state taxation to Transjordan; judges did not tax transactions that were recorded in court, whereas officials at a land registry collected and recorded tax payments for land transactions.<sup>34</sup> The buyer paid a valuation tax (Ott. Tur. *harac mu'tad*) in the amount of three percent of the purchase price of the property, alongside the cost of a title deed, which ranged from four to 7.5 *kuruş*, and an administrative fee (Ott. Tur. *katibiye*) of one *kuruş*.<sup>35</sup> If property was not yet registered, the seller was required to obtain title by registering it through *yoklama* and pay relevant taxes and fees before selling it. In those cases, the land registry imposed a 1.5 percent tax each on a vendor and a buyer.

Land registers for the Balqa' were printed in Ottoman Turkish and filled out by a local clerk. The recorded information included location, including village neighborhood or tribal territory, type of land, size of a land plot, and name of the beneficiary. Agricultural land was registered as *miri*, and urban property, such as houses, gardens, stables, grape orchards, and (in the case of Amman) caves, as *mülk*. Agricultural land was measured in

---

<sup>33</sup> Bedouin were exempt from the valuation tax (*harac mu'tad*) by government orders of 1877; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 86. By the 1890s, however, bedouin paid tax when registering property in the Balqa'.

<sup>34</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 90-91.

<sup>35</sup> *Harac mu'tad* was also charged during registration when cultivators could prove that they had a right to usufruct (*hakk-ı karar*), based on long-standing tenure and payment of tax. Local cultivators who could not verify the record of cultivation in the last ten years, paid a higher-rate *bedel-i misl*. The customary tax was likely not standardized for all regions and communities, as Mundy and Smith cite its rate in 'Ajlun District at five percent; see *Governing Property*, on *hakk-ı karar*, 28-29, 48-49; on *harac mu'tad* and *bedel-i misl*, 68-73, 260n32.

*dönüm* and *evlek*, and urban property in *arşın*.<sup>36</sup> Most entries included a description of estate borders, a transaction date, an estimated value of property at the time of its registration (Ar. *qīmat taḥrīr al-amlāk*), and, in the case of a transfer of ownership, the name of the new owner and the purchase price (Ar. *badal al-farāgh*).

During the sale of *mülk* property, a seller transferred the right of ownership to a buyer. At the sale of *miri* land, one merely transferred the right of usufruct to that land, as the legal title (Ar. *raqāba*) belonged to the state; usufruct rights were private and permanent, as long as the land was cultivated and the tithe paid to the state. Refugees were allowed to sell the right of usufruct to the land that was given to them for free only after twenty years of cultivation. They could, however, use their own means to purchase usufruct rights from other communities and resell them later at any time.

The archive of the Ottoman land registry provides a rare view into the evolution of the real estate market and the property regime in the region, although it has certain limitations. A prerequisite for every transaction entered into a land register was the willingness of a buyer and a seller to place their business on record, which necessarily carried tax consequences. Levantine merchants were more likely than local communities to use the Ottoman land registry because they strove to safeguard their new investments by having their purchases recorded by the state. Furthermore, land registry officials only recorded information conveyed to them, and any nuances of familial share distribution or

---

<sup>36</sup> In Ottoman Syria, including Transjordan, an old *dönüm* (*atik dönüm*) measured 939.9 square meters and was divided into four *evlek* or 1,600 *arşın*. An old *evlek* measured 229.7 square meters, and an old *arşın* 0.57 square meters. In the late Ottoman period, a new system (*mikyas-i cedit*) was adopted for administrative purposes. A new *dönüm* (*cedid dönüm*) measured 2,500 square meters and was divided into 25 *evlek*, with a new *evlek* corresponding to 100 square meters. These numbers are cited by the Ankara-based *Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü*, the department that inherited functions of the Ottoman land registry; see Hayrettin Gültekin, *Osmanlıca tapu terimleri sözlüğü* (2007). The Salt land registry recorded land transactions in both old and new measurement systems, but the former was better understood and preferred by local populations, as evidenced in local court records.

communal shareholding agreement, unless explicitly stated, remain unknown to us. In other words, what the archive reveals is a fraction of the landholding landscape of the Balqa', and it does not take into account the "shadow economy" of Amman's real estate market.

*Amman: A Refugee Colony and Commercial Outpost on the Frontier*

Amman is one of the youngest Middle Eastern and global capital cities. Although it sits atop an ancient Neolithic-Ammonite-Hellenic settlement and a Roman provincial capital, the site was only revived sometime in 1878-79, when Circassian refugees arrived in the area.<sup>37</sup> Since then, Amman became a quintessential refugee city, with its four-million-strong population stemming from successive refugee waves: Circassians until 1912, Armenians in 1915-22, Palestinians in 1948 and 1967, Iraqis since 2003, and Syrians since 2011.

In the absence of archival evidence for the first decade in the history of Amman, European and American travel accounts are invaluable in piecing together the early years of the refugee community.<sup>38</sup> The first written evidence comes from Laurence Oliphant, a

---

<sup>37</sup> Although Amman lacked a permanent settlement by the time the Circassians arrived, it was not uninhabited. The al-Hadid clan of the Balqawiyya tribal confederation long claimed and cultivated some lands around Amman; see Abujaber, *Pioneers over Jordan*, 195, 203–4. The 'Adwan and the Bani Sakhr tribes shared the waters of the Amman springs; by the 1870s, the al-Fayiz clan of the Bani Sakhr camped out by the springs in summer and owned a mill there; see Mustafa B. Hamarneh, "Amman in British Travel Accounts of the 19th Century," in *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Hannoyer and Shami, 66; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 195. By 1872, the Damascus provincial government knew of 200 households tilling the land in Amman; see Hamud, "'Amman fi awakhir al-'ahd al-'uthmani," 85. In 1876, an English traveler confirmed that Salti residents set up farms a few miles from the ruins of Amman; see Charles M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1888), 18.

<sup>38</sup> For a discussion of travel accounts of Ottoman Amman, see Hamarneh, "Amman in British Travel Accounts"; Hanania, "From Colony to Capital," 56-70; Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 64-69.



Victorian traveler who surveyed Palestine in order to promote Jewish settlement there and left a sympathetic account of Circassian refugees.<sup>39</sup> Oliphant believed that the Ottoman government sent Circassian refugees to Amman, a view accepted by many historians.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, at the time, the Ottoman government prioritized colonizing the Balqa' area and even considered creating an "Amman province."<sup>41</sup> The government also confirmed the refugees' settlement and allotment of land in Amman through several decrees on provincial, subprovincial, and district levels.<sup>42</sup> However, we do not have evidence that the Ottoman Refugee Commission sent muhajirs specifically to the site of Amman. Circumstantial oral evidence gives credence to an alternative foundational story – that the Circassians found the location for their village on their own and had the government approve the settlement site afterwards.<sup>43</sup> The establishment of of refugee villages often required protracted negotiations between muhajirs, district and provincial authorities, and

---

<sup>39</sup> Laurence Oliphant, *Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1880), 251-57.

<sup>40</sup> See Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 75; Hanania, "From Colony to Capital," 31-32, 46-50.

<sup>41</sup> See a report produced by Kamil Paşa, an Ottoman official, and dated 6 October 1878 in Halil Sahillioğlu, "A Project for the Creation of Amman Vilayet," in *Studies in Ottoman Economic and Social History*, ed. Halil Sahillioğlu (Istanbul: Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture, 1999), 175–88; and Hanania, "From Colony to Capital," 43, 46–52.

<sup>42</sup> See Rogan, "Incorporating the Periphery," 335n66.

<sup>43</sup> According to one oral recollection, the first settlers were Shapsugh refugees from Ottoman Bulgaria, who, having arrived in Acre, were sent inland to Nablus and its environs for temporary settlement. A group of refugees then moved eastward and, after crossing the Jordan River, sent out scouting expeditions to locate an appropriate location for a permanent settlement. Two horsemen first arrived at the ruins of the Citadel at Jabal al-Qal'a. One of them heard the sound of running water down in the valley and, upon descending down the hill, found the stream, or Sayl 'Amman. The first Circassian settlement in Transjordan was founded on its banks. This recollection belongs to a high-ranking Jordanian-Circassian official who heard it from a family that descended from one of the horsemen; interview in Amman (14 August 2014). Although the veracity of this account cannot be ascertained, archival evidence confirms that following muhajirs' flight from the Balkans and arrival in Haifa and Acre, some temporarily stayed in villages around Nablus, Safed, Tiberius, and Jenin in 1878-79; see NBKM f. 279A, d. 359; f. 280Ar, d. 29, 34; f. 283Ar., d. 54, 55, 56. See also Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 31, 36, although he mentions 1868 as the foundation date of Amman, which was further reproduced in some accounts.

local communities, and refugees sometimes had to “establish facts on the ground,” by settling the area, before securing the government’s authorization.

The chief attraction of Amman for an agricultural settlement was its water resources. The village had two sources of water: the Amman springs, or Ra’s al-‘Ayn, and a stream in the valley, or Sayl ‘Amman, that remained dry during the summer. The stream ran through the village, which grew on its banks.<sup>44</sup> By 1880, only 150 people remained from the original group of 500 refugees.<sup>45</sup> One of the reasons for Amman’s success – as compared to hundreds of refugee villages across the empire that were depopulated due to starvation, disease, and flight in the first years after foundation – was successive migration of new refugees over the years.

Ottoman Amman was far from a homogeneous settlement; it was divided into four districts – Shapsugh, Qabartay, Abzakh, and Muhajirin – founded when different waves of Circassian muhajirs arrived in Amman.<sup>46</sup> The spatial division was reinforced by an ethno-cultural diversity within the Circassian community and the nature of emigration of different groups: some were displaced from the Balkans, others came from generation-old refugee settlements in Anatolia, and many arrived directly from the Caucasus. What further differentiated the four districts were the amount and quality of land that immigrants

---

<sup>44</sup> Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 33, 38. By the 1950s, due to urbanization and overpopulation, the stream resembled open sewers and was encased in a culvert and buried underground. One of the few contemporary reminders of the stream is the name of a popular street in Downtown Amman, *Saqf al-Sayl* (“Ceiling of the Stream”). Hiding a river away under a bustling metropolis is a global practice. The River Fleet in London, the Cheonggyecheon in Seoul, the Neglinnaya River in Moscow, Minetta Brook under New York’s Manhattan, the Tank Stream in Sydney, and the ChangPu River in Beijing are among many rivers that were forced underground over the course of nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a result of pollution and as an urban planning necessity.

<sup>45</sup> In 1880 a second group of 25 families arrived in Amman; Hacker, *Modern ‘Amman*, 10.

<sup>46</sup> Seteney Shami, “The Circassians of Amman: Historical Narratives, Urban Dwelling and the Construction of Identity,” in *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Hannover and Shami, 303–22; Hanania, “From Colony to Capital,” 52–55. Smaller, non-Circassian districts began to form by the end of the Ottoman period; see Hamud, “‘Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani,” 74-75.

received upon their arrival, which shaped the economic development of each community, as well as their relations with each other and with their Arab neighbors.

The first settlers in Amman were of the Shapsugh subgroup of Circassians, who came to Bulgaria from the Caucasus in the 1860s and were expelled from the Balkans during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. They settled among the ruins of the Roman theatre and used its stones in the building of their

first homes.<sup>47</sup> Their settlement, later known as the Shapsugh quarter, stretched from the ruins of the theatre to the foothills of Jabal Qal'a and Jabal Jofeh. They set up their gardens along Sayl 'Amman into the valley and took up pastures to the south and east of the village. In 1890-91, the Shapsugh quarter numbered about 120 households.<sup>48</sup> In 1912, some of the new arrivals settled in the Shapsugh quarter, having received, in accordance with Ottoman guidelines, 70 or 100 *dönüm* of agricultural land.<sup>49</sup>

Figure 5: Photograph of late Ottoman Amman



View of Amman from the Roman theater toward the Qabartay quarter and the markets. American Colony in Jerusalem, Photo Department. Between 1900 and 1920. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. LC-M32-B-361.

<sup>47</sup> Oliphant, *Land of Gilead*, 251-57.

<sup>48</sup> Hamud, “Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani,” 82.

<sup>49</sup> DLS Defter 5/1/1, ff. 274-75, #134-42 (*şubat* 1327, Feb/Mar 1912).

Kabardins and Abzakh, who arrived in 1880-92, formed the next refugee wave. In the Ottoman period, they came to be referred to as *ahl ‘Amman* to differentiate them, the core population of the town, from the earlier Shapsugh and those who came later.<sup>50</sup> The Qabartay quarter, named after the Kabardin population and known as Nafs ‘Amman, constituted the largest quarter in Ottoman Amman. It extended from the old ‘Omari Mosque to the southern slopes of Jabal Qal‘a, and, by 1890-91, included 139 households.<sup>51</sup>

The mass registration of land in the district occurred sometime in the early 1900s, with registration instigated by Mirza Paşa Wasfi, a Circassian commander of the Amman gendarmerie force, on instructions from Damascus. Several dozen Circassian households received allotments of 70, 100, or 130 *dönüm* of land, in one contiguous plot, which was atypical for land distribution in muhajirs’ villages in Transjordan.<sup>52</sup> In 1906, 136 households in the Qabartay quarter benefited from another round of land registration. Almost every family registered a house (190 *arşın*), a garden (400 *arşın*), and 70 *dönüm* of agricultural land, distributed in large plots (between 20 and 50 *dönüm*) in six areas: Murj al-Sikka, Murj al-Hammam, ‘Abdun, Umm Azina, al-Fi’a, and ‘Abd Dirhem.<sup>53</sup> In the final round of Ottoman *yoklama* registration in 1912, 59 households of new Circassian arrivals registered 70, 100, or 130 *dönüm*; despite the well-ordered and equal nature of the allotment, the land registry allowed for some exceptions, with one man having registered 800 *dönüm* of land.<sup>54</sup> The Abzakh quarter of Amman, smaller in size than the Qabartay and

---

<sup>50</sup> Seteney Shami, “Circassians of Amman,” 308.

<sup>51</sup> Hamud, “‘Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani,” 79.

<sup>52</sup> Abujaber relies on his Circassian informant to report that Mirza Paşa Wasfi’s first systematic registration occurred in 1890. However, Mirza Paşa Wasfi’s family only arrived in Amman in the early 1900s, and the *da‘imi* register that recorded land allotments dates from the same period. See Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 213; DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 106-15, #142-93 (1899-1903).

<sup>53</sup> DLS Defter 7/1/1, ff. 1-92, #1-549 (*mart* 1322, Mar/Apr 1906).

<sup>54</sup> DLS Defter 5/1/1, f. 1, #1-12, 143-202 (*şubat* 1327, Feb/Mar 1912).

Shapsugh quarters, extended toward the slopes of Jabal Weibdeh and Wadi al-Haddadeh; by 1890-91, it only had 35 houses.<sup>55</sup>

The youngest Circassian quarter was founded by new Kabardin immigrants who came directly from the Russian Empire around 1902.<sup>56</sup> They settled near the Amman springs, which gave the name to their quarter, Ra's al-'Ayn, although local communities called their neighborhood Hayy al-Muhajirin. The district was located farther away from the rest of the town; one had to cross a forest to come to the springs.<sup>57</sup> The land surrounding the springs was already claimed by the earlier groups of Circassian immigrants from *ahl 'Amman*.<sup>58</sup> Thus, the first registration of property in the quarter occurred in 1893, when 14 households received several plots of land each, to the average of 57.5 *dönüm*.<sup>59</sup> In the second *yoklama* survey in 1896-97, 17 new families claimed contiguous plots of land, to the average of 97 *dönüm*.<sup>60</sup>

The arrival of newcomers, even though they belonged to the same Kabardin ethnic group as the bulk of Amman's Circassians, set in motion a conflict over land within the muhajir community. Some of the new immigrants were ejected from the valley and had to travel to Damascus to complain about their mistreatment to the provincial governor.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, by building their houses around the Amman springs, the new community jeopardized access to water for nearby bedouin clans of two rival confederations, the Bani Sakhr and the Balqawiyya. The springs became a focal point of conflict over the right to

---

<sup>55</sup> Hamud, "Amman fi awakhir al-'ahd al-'uthmani," 77.

<sup>56</sup> Abujaber, *Pioneers over Jordan*, 199.

<sup>57</sup> Shami, "Circassians of Amman," 308-09.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> DLS Defter 18/1/1, ff. 123-30, #25-77 (*teşrin-i sani* 1309, Nov/Dec 1893); Defter 19/1/1, ff. 43-46, #28-44 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1312, Dec 1896/Jan 1897).

<sup>60</sup> DLS Defter 19/1/1, ff. 43-46, #28-44 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1312, Dec 1896/Jan 1897).

<sup>61</sup> Shami, "Circassians of Amman," 310-11.

use water and claims to land in the eastern Balqa’ between Circassian refugees and Bedouin communities.<sup>62</sup>

Table 6: Average purchase price of agricultural land in Amman, *kuruş per dönüm*, 1891-1912

Initially registered by residents of:	1901-03	1904-09	1910-12
Qabartay quarter	33	37	56
Shapsugh quarter	103	186	134*
Abzakh quarter	52	30	53*

All transactions are registered as *da’imi*, i.e. represented a transfer of usufruct rights. Calculations for this table and Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10 are based on Ottoman land records in DLS Defters 5/1/1, 7/1/1, 10/1/1, 18/1/1, 19/1/1, 30/1/2, 31/1/2, and 32/1/2.

\* The number of transactions on record is too low to provide a reliable estimate.

As new immigrants arrived, they occupied the available *miri* land around Amman.

Seteney Shami writes:

The *Shapsoug* farmed land that today comprise Jabal Jofeh, Taj, Hussein, Nuzha, the Sport City and Shmeisani, whereas *ahl ‘Ammân* had what comprises Jabal Webdeh, Ashrafiyya and Jabal Amman till Bayadir Wadi Seer, and the *Muhâjirîn* had scattered lands to the south and southwest, in Abdoun and towards Marj al-Hamam.<sup>63</sup>

The allotment of land was determined through intra-Circassian negotiations and affirmed by community elders. It was then communicated by the muhajir leadership to the Salt land registry, which formalized individuals’ usufruct rights to the land. Circassians set up small gardens, irrigated through Sayl ‘Amman, to grow vegetables and fruit trees, and utilized

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 312-15; Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 44-46.

<sup>63</sup> Shami, “Circassians of Amman,” 309.

large plots of rainfed land for the cultivation of wheat and barley or pasture. Prices for the land sold by Shapsugh residents were notably higher than those for the land in other quarters of Amman. [See Table 6.] The Shapsugh, as the founders and first residents in Amman, had an opportunity to lay claim to the best rainfed fields in the valley.

The village of Amman expanded rapidly, and foreign travelers heaped praise on the growing settlement.<sup>64</sup> An Anglican missionary remarked in 1893 that Amman hosted the population of about 1,000 Circassians. The town had two defined streets, one purely commercial and lined by shops, and “nearly all houses were surrounded by a yard enclosed by a wall of stone.”<sup>65</sup> By 1899, 500 families lived in Amman.<sup>66</sup> Two years later, an American, Frederick Jones Bliss (whose father, Daniel Bliss, founded the Syrian Protestant College, now the American University in Beirut), made a stop in the town and further complimented the orderly look of Amman: “Their [Circassian] houses are built of old materials as well as of mud brick. The town has a neat, thrifty appearance. Every room has a chimney; every house its porch or balcony. The yards are nicely swept.”<sup>67</sup> In 1905, another American traveler highly praised the settlement, saying that her group was “utterly unprepared, after six hours of riding across a lonely tableland, to find an orderly town,” like Amman, “of an aspect so superior to anything we had seen since leaving Jerusalem.”<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>64</sup> Historians disagree on when Amman became a town. Eugene Rogan, for example, calls Amman a “minor Ottoman village” as late as 1918; see “The Making of a Capital,” 92. Through the lens of non-local capital accumulation, I consider Amman to have become a town by the late 1900s and, certainly, by the time of the construction of a postal and telegraph office and a government office (*saray*) in the early 1910s. On the anthropological approach to the emergence of the Circassian urban identity, see Shami, “Circassians of Amman.”

<sup>65</sup> Robinson Lees, “Journey East of Jordan,” *Geographical Journal* 5 (1895): 38-43; quoted in Hacker, *Modern Amman*, 17.

<sup>66</sup> Hamud, “Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani,” 85.

<sup>67</sup> Frederick Jones Bliss, “Narrative of an Expedition to Moab and Gilead in March, 1895,” *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 27, no. 3 (1895): 203-35.

<sup>68</sup> Adela M. Goodrich-Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle* (London: Methuen & Co., 1905), 101-02.

Amman, the largest Circassian settlement in Transjordan, soon attracted Arab investors and was integrated into the Levantine networks of capital. The chief attraction of the Balqa' for regional merchants was cheap grain that they could resell at higher prices in Jerusalem, Nablus, and Damascus. The grain market of the Levant centered around the grain plain of Hawran, to the north of the Balqa'. The production of Hawrani wheat went up in the wake of increased European demand during the Crimean War (1853-56) and poor harvest years in the 1860s. Syrian landowning notables and coastal merchants made a profit from the rising cost of grain on global markets. The end of the U.S. Civil War (1865) and the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) precipitated the arrival of cheaper American, Indian, and Australian grain in Europe. The rise and subsequent fall in the European demand for Syrian grain contributed to the instability in the Hawran in the 1860s.<sup>69</sup> Then came the Long, or Great, Depression, which depressed global prices for grain in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>70</sup> These developments crushed a prior price advantage of Syrian grain for export and lowered prices for cereals on the Ottoman market. By the 1890s, the demand for grain increased again, especially at home: in the booming Levantine ports, such as Jaffa, Haifa, and Beirut, and the interior cities, especially Nablus and Damascus, whose economies grew in the final decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> See Linda S. Schilcher, "The Hauran Conflicts of the 1860s: A Chapter in the Rural History of Modern Syria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 13 (1981): 159-79; idem., "Violence in Rural Syria in the 1880s and 1890s: State Centralization, Rural Integration and the World Market," in *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East*, eds. Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury (Miami, FL: Florida International University Press, 1991), 50-84.

<sup>70</sup> The dates for the Long Depression, in traditional historiography, are 1873-96. Later scholarship, although acknowledging the falling prices for the principal articles of commerce, reassessed the impact of the depression on major global economies; see Forrest Capie and Geoffrey Wood, "Great Depression of 1873-1896," in *Business Cycles and Depressions: An Encyclopedia*, eds. David Glasner and Thomas F. Cooley (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 148-49.

<sup>71</sup> By the late nineteenth century, Nablus turned from an exporter to an importer of wheat; its economy blossomed not least thanks to the expanding soap industry; see Gad G. Gilbar, "Economic and Social Consequences of the Opening of New Markets: The Case of Nablus, 1870-1914," in *The Syrian Land*:



Cereal harvests from the Hawran grain plain had long been accounted for by the leading Damascene landowning families, who derived their wealth from selling grain to the Ottoman state, foreign merchants, and Syrian populace. Merchants operating on a smaller scale had limited opportunities in obtaining a market share in the Hawrani grain trade.<sup>72</sup> A fierce competition in the unfavorable economic climate in the 1870s and 1880s pushed grain merchants to develop new supply chains, especially in the Balqa'. Urban Levantine merchants were previously wary of investing into the Balqa', with its sparse and mostly nomadic population and meager agricultural surplus. It was the expansion of the Ottoman administrative power to Salt, coupled with the establishment of dozens of bedouin villages, North Caucasian and Turkic refugee settlements, and private agricultural estates, that raised the "investment grade" of the Balqa'. Levantine traders soon moved in to secure their dominance over the new market.

An early influx of non-Circassian capital came from within the immediate Balqa' region. The first Arab merchants in Amman came from Salt, from both long-settled Christian and Muslim communities and recently arrived Nabulsis and others, known locally as *aghrāb*.<sup>73</sup> Thus, in the early 1890s, Raghib bin 'Abd al-Qadir Shammut, a Salti merchant, bought four shops in the Shapsugh quarter for 2,300 *kuruş* each.<sup>74</sup> Shammut was

---

*Processes of Integration and Fragmentation: Bilad al-Sham from the 18th to the 20th Century*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Birgit Schaebler (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1998), 281-91.

<sup>72</sup> See Philip S. Khoury, *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 26-28; James Reilly, "Status Groups and Property-Holding in the Damascus Hinterland, 1828-1880," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21 (1989): 517-39; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 100-01. See also Gad G. Gilbar, "The Muslim Big Merchant-Entrepreneurs of the Middle East, 1860-1914," *Die Welt des Islams* 43, no. 1 (2003): 1-36; Linda S. Schilcher, *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1985).

<sup>73</sup> On Salti merchants, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 99-102. On non-Circassian migration to Ottoman Amman, see Hanania, "From Colony to Capital," 75-79.

<sup>74</sup> DLS Defter 18/1/1, ff. 78-79, #13-16 (1891-95).

among the leading moneylenders in Salt and played a part in the Ottoman administration of the Balqa'.<sup>75</sup> Many Saltis made their fortunes and assembled their land portfolios through moneylending to Balqa' villagers and tribes, some of whom eventually defaulted on their obligations and handed over their land. They extended their services to North Caucasian muhajirs. The Salti commerce was linked to the broader networks of capital in eastern and northern Palestine; merchants operating in the Balqa' had benefited from a growing economy of Nablus in the late Ottoman period. In 1903, a religious scholar from Damascus, who visited Amman, claimed that the commerce reached "the highest level of activity," with new residents settling there and constructing new buildings.<sup>76</sup>

Amman's commercial significance increased over the construction of the Hejaz Railway, which connected Damascus to Medina and became operational in central Transjordan in 1903.<sup>77</sup> The southernmost North Caucasian villages in the Ottoman Empire were now connected to the emerging Levantine railway grid. The train would leave Damascus at 8:00 am and arrive in Amman at 9:00 pm. The route that once took several days in a heavily armed caravan could now be completed in one day, with Turkish coffee served on demand.<sup>78</sup> The Hejaz Railway gave a tremendous boost to regional trade and

---

<sup>75</sup> Shammut served on the Education Council of Salt District; see Eugene L. Rogan, "Moneylending and Capital Flows from Nablus, Damascus, and Jerusalem to Qada' al-Salt in the Last Decades of Ottoman Rule," in *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience*, ed. Thomas Philipp (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 251; idem., *Frontiers of the State*, 118.

<sup>76</sup> Jamal al-Din Qasimi in Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 160.

<sup>77</sup> The Damascus-Amman section of the line, with a change in Muzayrib, was opened for traffic in December 1903; TNA FO 195/2144, Richards to O'Connor, #91 (Damascus, 15 December 1903). On the Hejaz Railway, see William Ochsenwald, *The Hijaz Railroad* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1980); Murat Özyüksel, *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014). For the 1900 treatise by a Damascene notable, 'Arif ibn Sa'id al-Munayyir, in support of the Hejaz Railway, see Jacob M. Landau, *The Hejaz Railway and the Muslim Pilgrimage. A Case of Ottoman Political Propaganda* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1971).

<sup>78</sup> In 1903, a fast caravan journey from Damascus to Medina took 28 days; see *Bradshaw's Through Routes to the Capitals of the World and Overland Guide to India, Persia, and the Far East* (London: H. Blacklock,

delivered solid advantages to Amman over the old administrative center in Salt that was not serviced by the railroad. The Balqa' grain and other produce could now be sent directly to Damascus from Amman; an advantage that Salt did not enjoy. From Damascus, through the French-built Syrian railway network, products of the Balqa' could be delivered to Beirut, Homs, Tripoli, and Aleppo. Via a branch of the Hejaz Railway, Amman was linked to Haifa, the fastest growing port in the Eastern Mediterranean.<sup>79</sup> Furthermore, the Hejaz Railway increased the number of Muslim pilgrims going to hajj, serving not only Syrians but also Muslims from Anatolia, Iraq, and the Caucasus. Amman was well-positioned to take full advantage of the economic benefits arising from the increased pilgrim traffic. Salt, a district capital and the Ottoman base in the region, remained a destination of choice for Syrian and Palestinian capital until the end of the Ottoman rule. Amman, however, provided a solid alternative for investment, growing at a faster rate than Salt or other Circassian and Chechen settlements.

Amman offered Levantine merchants relative security in what was still a largely nomadic region, as well as an additional access point to the bedouin's economy. As far as security was concerned, Circassian migrants had several armed clashes with bedouin over land that were resolved – more or less – in favor of refugees (see Chapter 4).<sup>80</sup> By the 1890s, the Circassians established an alliance with the Bani Sakhr, arguably the most powerful tribe in the region.<sup>81</sup> Not only did this alliance deter the prospect of a clash between North Caucasian communities and the Balqawiyya or the 'Adwan tribes, thus

---

1903), 147. For the Syrian and Transjordanian portion of the Pilgrimage Road (*Darb al-ḥājj al-shāmī*), see map in Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 53.

<sup>79</sup> Michael E. Bonine, "The Introduction of Railroads in the Eastern Mediterranean: Economic and Social Impacts," in *The Syrian Land*, eds. Philipp and Schaebler, 53-78.

<sup>80</sup> Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 44-46.

<sup>81</sup> Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 44-45; Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 275-76.

bolstering the security of Amman as a trading post, but it provided new opportunities for trade with the Bani Sakhr, whose territories lay to the east of the railway. Furthermore, the construction, maintenance, and protection of the railway necessitated the arrival of Ottoman troops that were stationed outside of Amman, thus guaranteeing further protection to the town, its inhabitants, and its growing wealth.

Table 7: Shops purchased in Amman, 1891-1912

Buyers	1891-95	1896-99	1900-03	1904-09	1910-12
Circassians		6	2	9	4
Arab merchants, <i>total</i>	4		5	21	15
from Salt	4		5	3	6
from Damascus				13	7
from Nablus				1	2
elsewhere from Palestine				4	
Total:	4	6	7	30	19

All transactions are registered as *da'imi*. All sellers are local Circassians; some of the shops bought by Circassians were resold to Arab merchants in later years. I omitted those *da'imi* transactions that represented transfer of ownership within the family upon the death of the title-holder.

Table 8: Average purchase price of shops in Amman in *kuruş*, 1891-1912

Quarter	1890s	1901-03	1904-09	1910-12
Qabartay	543	1,580	4,086	6,839
Shapsugh	2,300		2,583	
Abzakh			2,950	5,500*

Estimates are based on the *bedel-i faragh* price, i.e. the price of sale. Grey spaces represent the lack of data. The sizes of shops were not identical and ranged between 20 and 50 *arşın*.

\* The number of transactions on record is too low to serve as a reliable estimate.

After the opening of the Hejaz Railway, Amman experienced a boom in the construction and sale of shops to Syrian buyers. [See Table 7 and Table 8.] Between 1904 and 1909, Damascene merchants alone purchased thirteen shops, or 43 percent of all transactions. Before the construction of the Hejaz Railway, commerce in Amman was dominated by Salti merchants and Circassians; after 1904, Damascenes formed the most active group in purchasing shops in Amman's markets; many shops were later resold at a handsome profit.

Notably, Arab merchant families who bought shops and houses in Amman did not belong to the old Syrian and Palestinian political or commercial elites.<sup>82</sup> Families that feature in Amman's land registers represented "new money." Many of them made their wealth in the Hawran grain trade, having benefited from the high prices in the 1850s-60s and the 1858 Ottoman Land Code, which eased their expansion into the southern Hawran

---

<sup>82</sup> On the old Damascene elites, see Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), reprinted in 1981 and 1993; Khoury, *Urban Notables*.

and the Balqa'.<sup>83</sup> Most Syrian merchants came from the Maydan district of Damascus, a premier Levantine marketplace that was oriented towards southern Syrian markets.<sup>84</sup> Damascene merchants, with a wealth of experience in the Hawran and a history of trade with Druze and bedouin communities, regarded Transjordan as an extension of their already existing market of supply and demand.

It was common for Damascene merchants, such as Muhiddin al-Sa'di,<sup>85</sup> Abu al-Khayr, Salih and Muhammad al-Hatakhet, Muhammad Derwish, and Ibrahim and Abu Abdullah al-Qattan, to enter into partnerships when buying shops, houses, and stables.<sup>86</sup> One of the most active Damascene families was the al-Bostanji family.<sup>87</sup> It purchased three shops in the Shapsugh quarter, pooled resources with others to acquire two large shops and two houses in the Qabartay quarter, as well as to buy out a stake in a 9,550-*dönüm* plot of land in Umm Qusayr, south of Amman.<sup>88</sup> Other Syrian mercantile families included al-Humsi (originally from Homs, via Damascus), al-Shami, al-Wahhab, al-Sahadi, al-Raghib, and Habib. The arrival of Syrian capital and an increase in general security in the area accelerated an influx of capital from elsewhere. The al-Qabsiya<sup>89</sup> and al-Mushrish<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> Khoury, *Urban Notables*, 26-27; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 99-112; Gilbar, "The Case of Nablus."

<sup>84</sup> Khoury, *Urban Notables*, 21.

<sup>85</sup> The Sa'di family were among the early Syrian merchants trading on the Transjordanian nomadic frontier. Muhammad Khayru al-Sa'di, from the Maydan area of Damascus, came to Transjordan in the 1860s, trading in cattle and then selling clothing to bedouin for wool and butter; see Abla M. Amawi, "The Transjordanian State and the Enterprising Merchants of Amman," in *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Hannover and Shami, 112.

<sup>86</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 235-38, #25, 28-30, ff. 283-84, #7; 32/1/2, ff. 57-58, #44-45, ff. 81-82, #4-5.

<sup>87</sup> Bostanji, or Bostancı, was a traditional title for the guards of the Ottoman palace in Istanbul. In the mid-eighteenth century, Hüseyin Paşa Bostancı was a governor of Damascus.

<sup>88</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 283-84, #9-11, ff. 332-33, #32-34 (1909-10), 32/1/2, ff. 53-54, #23 (*teşrin-i sani* 1324, Nov/Dec 1908); 10/1/1, f. 33, #9 (*mart* 1326, Mar/Apr 1910).

<sup>89</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 23-24, #154 (*mart* 1326, Mar/Apr 1910).

<sup>90</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 375-76, #60-61 (1903-10).

families from Salt, al-Saymani<sup>91</sup> and ‘Asfurs<sup>92</sup> from Nablus, and al-Samadi<sup>93</sup> from Fuheis bought shops in Amman in the 1900s.

The purchase of Circassian real estate by Arab buyers was part of the broader phenomenon of the expansion of Syrian and Palestinian capital in Transjordan. Thus, in 1910, the Abujabers, Orthodox Christians from Nablus (via Salt), who already owned the largest grain-producing estate in the country, registered thousands of *dönüm* of land around Amman.<sup>94</sup> Hanna Efendi bin Fransis Batatu, a Jerusalemite Catholic merchant, purchased a share in the 12,500-*dönüm* plot of land in the Bani Sakhr village of Tunayb, in the vicinity of Amman, from Jamila, a daughter of Ibrahim Abujaber, for 15,000 *kuruş*.<sup>95</sup> She made a 445 percent profit. Batatu engaged in moneylending across the Balqa’, providing his services to the Bani Sakhr shaykh Rumayh ibn Fayiz, which resulted in Batatu’s gradual obtaining of land in the Bani Sakhr territories.<sup>96</sup> These and other families were part of the Syro-Palestinian landowning class that by the early twentieth century already came to dominate the economic life in Salt, Irbid, and ‘Ajlun.<sup>97</sup> Their economic power often translated into political power in the Ottoman administration, and vice versa, cementing their position at the helm of an emerging Transjordanian society.<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>91</sup> DLS Defter 10/1/1, f. 4, #34 (1910-12).

<sup>92</sup> The ‘Asfurs established a prominent mercantile dynasty. Yusuf ‘Asfur was the first president of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, established in 1923. Later, Mithqal ‘Asfur co-founded the Jordanian cigarette industry; see Abla M. Amawi, “The Consolidation of the Merchant Class in Transjordan During the Second World War,” in *Village, Steppe and State*, eds. Rogan and Tell, 179. DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 237-38, #31 (1908-09); 32/1/2, ff. 125-26, #28, ff. 153-54, #34 (1910-12); 10/1/1, f. 40, #67 (1912); Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 280n21, 108.

<sup>93</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 332-33, #35 (1903-10).

<sup>94</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 27-28, #176-79 (*mart* 1326, Mar/Apr 1910). On the history of the Abujaber family, see Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 134-62; idem., *Qissat ‘a’ilat Abu Jabir (al-Jawabira) fi-l-Nasira wa-Nablus wa-l-Salt wa-l-Yaduda wa-l-Jaweida wa-Qurayyat Nafi’* (Amman, 2004).

<sup>95</sup> One out of 24 shares. The government-estimated value of the entire agricultural estate was 66,000 *kuruş*. DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 315-16, #40, ff. 341-42, #78 (*eylül* 1328, Sep/Oct 1912).

<sup>96</sup> Fischbach, *State, Society, and Land in Jordan*, 57.

<sup>97</sup> Amawi, “The Consolidation of the Merchant Class,” 165.

<sup>98</sup> Fischbach, *State, Society, and Land in Jordan*, 54-59; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 116-20.

Table 9: Houses purchased in Amman, 1889-1912

Buyer	Seller	1889-94	1895-99	1900-03	1904-09	1910-12	Profit rate*
Circassian	Circassian			4	2	4	0.28
Arab	Circassian	2	2	1	8	11	0.43
Arab	Arab			2	2	3	0.53
Total:		2	2	7	12	18	

\* The profit rate is the difference between the final sale price (*bedel-i faragh*) and the estimated property cost (*tahrir-i emlak kimati*). For example, when a house that is evaluated, through *yoklama*, at 1,000 *kuruş* is sold for 1,280 *kuruş*, the profit rate is 0.28.

Many Arab families purchased houses from Circassians to establish a base for business in the eastern Balqa'. [See Table 9.] For most, Amman was but another location in their commercial enterprise that they managed from Damascus or elsewhere, but some merchants from less prominent families relocated to an up-and-coming Circassian town on the desert frontier. As might be expected, Circassians who sold houses to Arabs generally made a better profit (43 percent on average) than when selling houses to fellow Circassians (28 percent on average). Of course, the idea of profit is arbitrary, considering that Circassians received the land for free; the evaluation price of their houses was determined by the Salt land registry and existed only on paper. By the 1900s, Arab merchants started speculating in real estate, reselling houses to Syrian newcomers at an average profit of 53 percent. Before the construction of the Hejaz Railway, houses in Amman rarely sold for more than two thousand *kuruş*. By the early 1910s, the leading Damascene and Salti families, such as Hatakhet, Darwish, al-Sahadi, Dawud, al-Sukkar, and 'Asfur, paid 10,000



*kuruş* and more for their family residences.<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, some bedouin tribal leaders purchased houses in the booming settlement, most likely, as guest houses (Ar. *madāfa*) for their tribal members who would visit Amman for business. Thus, in 1912, Shaykh Idris Efendi, son of Shaykh Rajab Efendi, bought a property in the Abzakh quarter for 5,430 *kuruş*.<sup>100</sup>

In Amman, part of the commercial success of Levantine merchants could be attributed to their having formed a close-knit community, based on a shared cultural background and commercial experience that set them apart from resident Circassians, who were, in all respects, outsiders in the region. Syrian and Palestinian merchants would consolidate as a social class and dominate commerce in Amman during the Mandate. The influential Amman Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1923, consisted almost entirely of merchants of Syrian and Palestinian descent, some of whom invested in Amman shortly after the construction of the Hejaz Railway.<sup>101</sup>

Circassian muhajirs were active in not only selling their original land allotments but also in building up capital to purchase more real estate, some of it for further resale. Ahmed bin Yaqub Lukhud, a Circassian, for example, registered a series of houses, shops, gardens, and a cave in his name; he sold three shops to the Bostanji family and a house to the Habib family from Damascus.<sup>102</sup> The Ottoman period witnessed an emergence of a

---

<sup>99</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 283-84, #7 (1905); 32/1/2, ff. 129-30, #1 (1907), ff. 65-66, #43 (1910); 10/1/1, f. 40, #7-8, f. 47, #22 (1912), f. 40, #67 (1912).

<sup>100</sup> The 684-*arşin* size of the property, too large for a regular house, is suggestive of its use as a guest house. DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 345-46, #91 (*teşrin-i sani* 1328, Nov/Dec 1912).

<sup>101</sup> On the Amman Chamber of Commerce, see Pete W. Moore, *Doing Business in the Middle East: Politics and Economic Crisis in Jordan and Kuwait* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 57-81; Amawi, "The Consolidation of the Merchant Class."

<sup>102</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 326-27, #1-3 (*temmuz* 1309, July/Aug 1893); ff. 332-33, #31-33 (1909-10); Defter 32/1/2, ff. 221-22, #162-63 (*temmuz* 1309, July/Aug 1893), ff. 246-47, #20-22 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1327 - *mart* 1328, Dec 1911 - Mar 1912); Defter 10/1/1, f. 37, #20-22 (*şubat* 1327, Feb/Mar 1912).

nascent Circassian bourgeoisie, such as the Khurmas,<sup>103</sup> the Qurshas,<sup>104</sup> and the Matekris,<sup>105</sup> that invested in shops and houses and conducted business with Arab merchants. As early as 1895, Emruz Bey Binbaşı bin Qumaq Bey, a Circassian, bought into a business with several Transjordanian Arabs to purchase four mills near Amman.<sup>106</sup> The mills, constructed prior to refugees' arrival, served the Circassian and bedouin wheat-producing communities. Entrepreneurial Circassian families usually belonged to the early Shapsugh refugee wave, who received the best land, or were Kabardin newcomers, who had an advantage of a starting capital for investment. Some Circassian families brought their wealth from Russia, whereas others established advantageous marital alliances with other Circassians in older refugee settlements in the Golan Heights<sup>107</sup> or Muslim Arabs in the Balqa'.<sup>108</sup>

Why then did North Caucasian immigrants, who were often successful in agriculture and husbandry, not become thriving merchants in Transjordan? The prevailing view in scholarship, which has been internalized in the diaspora, is that muhajirs were not interested in trade.<sup>109</sup> One of the reasons why muhajirs found it hard to occupy a

---

<sup>103</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 275-76, #40, ff. 341-44, #82, 95 (1903-10); Defter 32/1/2, ff. 55-56, #33 (1910-12).

<sup>104</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 127-28, #41-51 (*temmuz* 1309, July/Aug 1893, *kanun-ı evvel* 1326, Dec 1910/Jan 1911), ff. 271-74, #47-50 (*nisan* 1328, Apr/May 1912)

<sup>105</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 95-98, #1-9 (1903-10); 32/1/2, ff. 119-20, #26-28 (Oct/Nov 1910), ff. 125-26, #28 (*teşrin-i sani* 1326, Nov/Dec 1910).

<sup>106</sup> DLS Defter 18/1/1, ff. 98-101, #69-85, ff. 142-43, #83-98 (1894-95). Eugene L. Rogan argues that water mills were usually held in joint ownership in Salt District because they required significant investment; see "Reconstructing Water Mills in Late Ottoman Transjordan," *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 5 (1992): 753.

<sup>107</sup> See, for example, CDM Defter Salt 7, #198 (10 *receb* 1320, 13 October 1902).

<sup>108</sup> One of the earliest available Salt court cases involving a Circassian refugee is a marriage registration between a Circassian woman and a bedouin shaykh of a mosque in Salt; CDM Defter Salt 4, #11 (3 *şevval* 1308, 12 May 1891).

<sup>109</sup> Abujaber, based on oral testimony, mentions that the first Circassian merchant set up shop in Amman only in the 1930s; *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 203.

commercial niche is that they lacked financial and social capital for the establishment of successful trading operations. Merchants from neighboring Salt, Nablus, and Damascus moved into Amman not long after its foundation and commanded sizeable cash resources and access to established markets in Palestine and Syria. Well into the Mandate period, Levantine merchants maintained shops across the British- and French-drawn borders and could reinforce their capital in Amman with cash from elsewhere.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, Circassian tradesmen, who were not well-integrated into regional economic networks, could not deliver manufactured goods to the Balqa' market as easily as Syrian and Palestinian merchants. Nor were they in a position to engage directly with the largest grain buyers in Damascus, Beirut, or Haifa. Soon enough, they were priced out of the most coveted marketplaces in Amman.

Nevertheless, Circassian immigrants did engage in local and regional trade. These vendors remain largely invisible in the historical record because they served local refugee villages, rarely conducted long-distance and bulk trade, and had little interaction with the state. A large part of their trade was artisanal. Circassians introduced oxen-drawn wheel carts, and had advanced skills in jewellery, carpentry, and metalwork. European travelers in the late nineteenth century commonly praised Circassians' artisanal skills, especially when compared to those of Transjordanian and Palestinian peasants.<sup>111</sup> Some of the shops that Circassians built and did not sell to Syrian and Palestinian merchants remained in the hands of Circassian artisans.

---

<sup>110</sup> See Amawi, "The Enterprising Merchants of Amman."

<sup>111</sup> See George Adam Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, Especially in Relation to the History of Israel and of the Early Church*, 10th ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903), 19-20, 668; Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, 104-05; Nikodim P. Kondakov, *Arkheologicheskoe puteshestvie po Sirii i Palestine* (Saint Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1904), 123-24.

Circassians also established a profitable trade in timber. Upon their arrival, forests of pine and oak tree grew around Amman and Wadi al-Sir. Muhajirs used timber in the construction of their houses, apparently, to the point of denuding the hills around Amman in a matter of two decades.<sup>112</sup> They sold timber and coal as far away as Jerusalem.<sup>113</sup>

Circassian Amman gradually became a regionally important marketplace for agricultural produce. By the 1910s, Circassian settlements in Amman and Wadi al-Sir already produced a surplus of grain for sale.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, Circassians served as intermediaries who marketed the bedouin agricultural or artisanal production for export. The Bani Sakhr, for example, stored their grain harvest in the Circassian village of Wadi al-Sir.<sup>115</sup> Circassians also bought cattle from the Bani Sakhr and wheat from semi-settled bedouin tribes in the Balqa'.<sup>116</sup> A British traveler to Amman wrote that in 1893 "most of the corn of the Balqa [was] brought here and afterwards sent in charge of Circassians to Jerusalem."<sup>117</sup> Oral history confirms that local Circassians established direct trade links with buyers in Jerusalem and traveled there for business to trade in wheat and barley; those ties survived into the Mandate period.<sup>118</sup> By the early twentieth century, Circassian

---

<sup>112</sup> Freer, *In a Syrian Saddle*, 105.

<sup>113</sup> Suleiman Mousa, "Jordan: Towards the End of the Ottoman Empire 1841-1918," in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, ed. Adnan Hadid (Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1982), 385-91; interview in Amman (17 August 2014).

<sup>114</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 100; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 108.

<sup>115</sup> See Musa 'Ali Janib, *Muwatin sharkasi yatahaddath 'an masqat ra'sihi* (Amman: al-Mu'allif, 2006); interview with Janib in Wadi al-Sir (11 August 2014).

<sup>116</sup> The purchase of wheat by Circassians from bedouin "tent-dwellers," most likely of the Hamida tribe from around Salt, is attested in court documents. The bedouin were represented in court by a member of the al-Sahadi family, Damascene grain merchants, who moved to Salt and bought houses in Amman. See CDM Defter Salt 7, #19, 53; Salt 11, ff. 53-54 (August-October 1903); DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 129-30, #1 (1907); ff. 173-74, #36 (1910).

<sup>117</sup> The "corn" may have referred to wheat or barley in this period. See Lees, "Journey East of Jordan," cited in Hacker, *Modern 'Amman*, 17; see also Khalil al-Khatib in Hanania, "From Colony to Capital," 76.

<sup>118</sup> Interview at the Circassian Charitable Association, Amman (14 August 2014).

muhajirs, Syrian and Palestinian merchants, and bedouin forged a mutually beneficial economic relationship, which turned Amman and its environs into a sedentary-nomadic marketplace of growing importance for the expanding Transjordanian, Palestinian, and Syrian economy.

By 1908, Amman had about 800 houses and also hosted a government office (*saray*), a postal and telegraph station, a textile factory, and a number of mosques.<sup>119</sup> The following year, the first formal municipal council was established in Amman. The first

three council headmen were all Circassians: Ismail Babuq, Ahmad al-Khatib, and As‘ad Khamdukh.<sup>120</sup> By the outbreak of World War I, Amman was an administrative district center and an Ottoman frontier outpost of growing strategic and commercial significance.

Figure 6: Photograph of Amman in the interwar period



American Colony in Jerusalem, Photo Department. Between 1920 and 1933. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. LC-M3201-3335.

<sup>119</sup> Hamud, “Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani,” 80-83.

<sup>120</sup> Hanania, “From Colony to Capital,” 106.

*Amman's Hinterland: Circassian Villages,  
Transjordanian Merchants, and Bedouin Land*

Circassian muhajirs established all their Transjordanian villages, with the exception of Jerash, around Amman. The economic development of these villages mirrored that of Amman in many regards: muhajirs received land for free and engaged primarily in agriculture. The notable difference lay, first, in a closer relationship between the “satellite” muhajir villages and bedouin, especially when it came to land registration and sales. Second, Syrian and Palestinian capital did not play a defining role in the evolution of smaller villages as it did for Amman. The natural trading partners for these settlements were Amman and the surrounding bedouin tribes. I will explore the early economic history of the smaller villages of Wadi al-Sir, Rusayfa, and Na‘ur, based on previously unstudied land records, and will place them in the context of the political economy of the Balqa’.

***Wadi al-Sir***

Wadi al-Sir is the second largest and oldest North Caucasian settlement in Salt District.<sup>121</sup> In 1880, Circassians of, mostly, the Bzhedugh ethnic subgroup founded the villages by the springs in a forested area, to the west of Amman. The history of muhajirs’ real estate in Wadi al-Sir is closely tied to bedouin’s registration of land. Through the 1893 *yoklama*, the earliest available on record, bedouin tribes, especially the Abbadis, registered

---

<sup>121</sup> For a history of Wadi al-Sir and its inhabitants, from a local perspective, see Janib, *Muwāṭin sharkasī yatahaddath ‘an masqaṭ ra’sihi*.

a massive amount of land around the young Wadi al-Sir settlement.<sup>122</sup> In 1897, a group of Abbadi bedouin (each owning about 1/24 share) sold two mills in Wadi al-Sir to Circassians for 5,068 and 10,132 *kuruş*.<sup>123</sup> That same year, the sons of Sattam al-Fayiz, of the Bani Sakhr tribe, registered an extensive

Figure 7: Photograph of Wadi al-Sir in 1905



Bernhard Moritz. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1916.  
Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.  
Lot 3704, no. 14. LC-DIG-ppmsca-38101.

plot of land, to the size of 12,420 *dönüm*, in the vicinity of Wadi al-Sir.<sup>124</sup> They subsequently sold half of their shares, via their legal representative Farah Efendi bin Salih Abujaber, to an Orthodox resident of Madaba, Hatta bin Fara.<sup>125</sup> Their father, Sattam al-Fayiz, a leader of the most powerful clan of the Bani Sakhr, struck an alliance with the Ottoman authorities and moved to secure large tracts of fertile land through Ottoman registration in the 1880s, when much of his tribe was still nomadic.<sup>126</sup> The al-Fayiz clan in

---

<sup>122</sup> See DLS Defter 1/1/1.

<sup>123</sup> DLS Defter 19/1/1, ff. 5-6, #1-4 (19 *nisan* 1313, 1 May 1897).

<sup>124</sup> The government-estimated value of the plot was 621,000 *kuruş*; DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 348-49, #13 (*teşrin-i evvel* 1313, Oct/Nov 1897). The sons of Sattam al-Fayiz further registered arable land and houses in Um al-‘Amad, Qastal, Jiziya, Zubayir, and Sufa; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 87. On Mithqal al-Fayiz, see Yoav Alon, *The Shaykh of Shaykhs: Mithqal al-Fayiz and Tribal Leadership in Modern Jordan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016).

<sup>125</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 348-49, #15 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1328, Dec 1912/Jan 1913).

<sup>126</sup> The al-Fayiz clan emerged as the landholding elite in the Balqa’ as early as the 1860s, having consolidated its hold on the sale of Balqa’ wheat across the Jordan River to Jerusalem; see Tariq Tell, “Guns, Gold, and Grain: War and Food Supply in the Making of Transjordan,” in *War, Institutions, and Social Change in the Middle East*, ed. Steven Heydemann (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press,

fact had a prior history of tensions with Madaba residents. Sattam al-Fayiz unsuccessfully contested the land of Madaba, a historical territory of the Bani Sakhr, that was taken up by an immigrant Christian community from Karak. In 1880, the Ottoman administration ruled against the Bani Sakhr, setting a precedent for Transjordan, whereby sedentary cultivators' claims to the land on which they paid taxes, in accordance with the 1858 Land Code, trumped nomads' claims to uncultivated land on which they paid no taxes.<sup>127</sup>

In later years, some of the land that nomadic and sedentary communities registered around Wadi al-Sir was resold to Circassians. Thus, in 1909, Sultan 'Abdullah bin Muhammad al-Huseyn sold 50 *dönüm* of land that he had registered in 1899 to seven men from four Circassian families for 10,800 *kuruş*, having realized a 440 percent profit on his investment.<sup>128</sup> At the turn of the century, Shukri bin Ibrahim Qa'war<sup>129</sup> sold 160 *dönüm* of land that he had registered in 1879, before the establishment of Wadi al-Sir, to Ibrahim and Mahmud, sons of Hajj Jidaq, for 18,000 *kuruş*, a staggering amount at the time.<sup>130</sup>

Wadi al-Sir, soon after its inception, was divided into two quarters, each named after an ethnic subgroup of the Circassians: Bzhedugh and Abzakh. Each quarter had its own mosque, with a Bzhedugh and Abzakh imam, respectively. The older and larger Bzhedugh quarter witnessed several small waves of immigration, with people registering their agricultural land in groups shortly after their arrival. In the 1908 *yoklama* registration,

---

2000), 37. On Sattam al-Fayiz, see Alon, *Shaykh of Shaykhs*, 7-22; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 177-96; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 79-81, 85-87.

<sup>127</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 77-82.

<sup>128</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 365-66, #1-2 (*ağustos* 1909, Aug/Sep 1909, *yoklama* in *kanun-ı sani* 1314, Jan/Feb 1899).

<sup>129</sup> The Qa'war family were among the landowning families that actively took advantage of the 1858 Land Code and bought up the bedouin land; they purchased half of Qurayya Salim; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 111. In the twentieth century, they would become one of the most prominent Jordanian commercial dynasties, after having founded Jordan's first and only phosphate company in Rusayfa in 1935.

<sup>130</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 45-46, #6 (*yoklama* in *eylül* 1295, Sep/Oct 1879; *da'imi* in 1899-1903).



15 households registered houses and *miri* land, with an average amount of 82.6 *dönüm* per household.<sup>131</sup> In 1909-10, 35 households registered houses and *miri* land, with an average amount of 84.8 *dönüm* per household.<sup>132</sup> In 1910-12, several more families registered land for the first time, but most transactions from that period were of Circassians buying each other's land.<sup>133</sup> In the Abzakh quarter, the first plots were registered through *yoklama* in 1893-94, with most registrations having occurred in the post-1909 period.<sup>134</sup> Much of the land distributed to Circassians lay in Bayader ("threshing grounds") between Wadi al-Sir and Amman. As the area became part of Greater Amman towards the late twentieth century, the cost of land in Bayader skyrocketed.<sup>135</sup>

Similar to Amman, some Circassian families emerged as a new economic elite of the Wadi al-Sir community, having engaged in real estate speculation. For example, two brothers of the al-Qas family (sometimes recorded as Tatar), Ahmed and Hasan, registered up to 223.75 *dönüm* of *miri* land and 14 *dönüm* of garden *mülk* land. They participated in the purchase of a 50-*dönüm* plot from the bedouin al-Huseyn family and then sold their share to other Circassians for profit.<sup>136</sup> The brothers also opened a bakery (95 *arşın*), estimated at 10,000 *kuruş*, and two shops (70 *arşın*), worth 2,000 *kuruş* each.<sup>137</sup> Another Circassian family of eight siblings, seven brothers and a sister, listed as children of Shurukh Kokh, registered about 1,013 *dönüm* and bought 103 *dönüm* from others in the 1909-12 period. Members of the family set up four shops and a bakery.<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> DLS Defter 9/1/1, ff. 138-383 (*şubat* 1325, Feb/Mar 1910).

<sup>132</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 85-88, #8-20, ff. 324-25, #14-18 (13 Aug 1909); 32/1/2, ff. 105-371 (1909-10).

<sup>133</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2 (1910-12).

<sup>134</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 367-70, #17-20 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1309, Dec 1893/Jan 1894).

<sup>135</sup> Interview in Wadi al-Sir (11 August 2014).

<sup>136</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 161-62, #27 (*kanun-ı sani* 1325, Jan/Feb 1910).

<sup>137</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 229-30, #3-4 (17 *temmuz* 1324, 30 July 1908).

<sup>138</sup> DLS Defter 9/1/1, ff. 246-49, #1452-56 (*şubat* 1325, Feb/Mar 1910).

Wadi al-Sir also attracted investment from Salt. Several Muslim Saltis bought agricultural land.<sup>139</sup> Some Greek Orthodox Saltis purchased urban property: for example, Yusuf bin ‘Aisa Abu al-Batab‘a registered a 20-*dönüm* garden.<sup>140</sup> Nevertheless, unlike in Amman, there is no indication that Arab merchants dominated trade in Wadi al-Sir. All shops that were entered into property registers had been in the hands of Circassians, and most land sales remained an internal Circassian affair, at least, into the early 1910s.

Trade in Wadi al-Sir was localized, and an economic partnership with the surrounding bedouin tribes was crucial to the survival of the village. Circassians bought cattle from the Bani Sakhr, and the Bani Sakhr stored their grain in Wadi al-Sir.<sup>141</sup> A Russian traveler wrote that the Wadi al-Sir’s “broad plateau, from one end to another, as far as our eyes could see, was sown with wheat that Circassians cultivated.”<sup>142</sup> Wadi al-Sir’s Circassians, in a pattern that was similar to that of other small muhajir villages, sold their surplus of grain and purchased sugar and other foodstuffs from Syria and Palestine, either via traveling Arab merchants or Circassian merchants in Amman.<sup>143</sup>

### ***al-Rusayfa***

Another Circassian settlement was in al-Rusayfa, conveniently located between Amman and al-Zarqa’. It is known as the home of Jordan’s phosphate industry. Al-Rusayfa’s population exploded after the influx of the 1948 refugees from Palestine, and it

---

<sup>139</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 85-86, #19, ff. 147-48, #57-58, ff. 165-66, #4 (1909-11).

<sup>140</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 33-34, #219-20 (*27 şubat* 1325, 12 March 1910).

<sup>141</sup> According to a local Circassian historian, Musa ‘Ali Janib, Circassians and the Bani Sakhr forged a mutually beneficial economic partnership, and the Bani Sakhr came to regard Circassians as “cousins”; see Janib, *Muwatin sharkasi*, 9. The statement is reflective of both the contemporary politics of the Circassian community in Jordan and the unspoken orthodoxy in the Jordanian historiography to describe interethnic relations in positive terms.

<sup>142</sup> Kondakov, *Arkheologicheskoe puteshestvie po Sirii i Palestine*, 124.

<sup>143</sup> Interview in Wadi al-Sir (11 August 2014).

is now the fourth largest city in Jordan. Al-Rusayfa was founded in 1903 by Circassian immigrants from Kabarda, most of whom arrived directly from the Russian Empire. The settlement, similar to Amman and al-Zarqa', benefited from its position on the Hejaz Railway. Two *yoklama* surveys were carried out soon after its establishment, in December 1903 and July 1904.<sup>144</sup> Although separated only by seven months, the two surveys present a stark contrast in land registration practices. In late 1903, only seven Circassian households registered land. They were assigned two large plots of land each, totalling 100 or 130 *dönüm* per household, very much in line with how much land was generally promised to muhajirs in Transjordan by the Ottoman government.<sup>145</sup> In July 1904, 32 Circassian households registered agricultural land and houses. They received, on average, 2.45 plots of land each, totaling only 19.4 *dönüm* per household.

The disparity in allotted land could be interpreted in several ways. It may be that different numbers in the two surveys reflect social inequality. The first seven families either were of a higher social status or simply laid claim to the land first, which is why they registered the largest plots of land in the area, whereas later immigrants claimed whatever remained. Land registers may also be viewed as a product of internal politics and negotiations within a village community. Circassian farmers could have agreed to commonly use some of the registered land for pasture; after all, land-sharing was part of the Circassian agricultural tradition.<sup>146</sup> Accordingly, under this view, the early registration of land constituted an advance claim to the land that would later form a communal pasture

---

<sup>144</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 7-10, #2-15 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1319, Dec 1903/Jan 1904), ff. 21-52 (*temmuz* 1320, July/Aug 1904); Defter 32/1/2, ff. 97-98, #9-16 (*temmuz* 1320, July/Aug 1904).

<sup>145</sup> See, for example, Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 213.

<sup>146</sup> See Kумыков, *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie otnosheniia*; Teimuraz D. Botsvadze, *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie otnosheniia v Kabarde v pervoi polovine XIX veka* (Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1965).

or threshing grounds. It could also be that refugees agreed to communally till some of the land or use it for pasture, while acknowledging that families of a higher social status would receive Ottoman-confirmed usufruct rights for the largest plots of land. Land registration by muhajir communities (and others) often reflected an internal power struggle, even if its precise dynamic remains obscured.

### *Na'ur*

Another example of Circassian-bedouin coexistence and economic cooperation underlies the history of Na'ur, a village to the southwest of Amman. Na'ur now hosts a 50,000-strong community of Circassians, Christian and Muslim Jordanians, and Palestinians. Regarded as the best preserved Circassian town

Figure 8: Aerial photograph of Na'ur in 1918



Bavarian State Archive, BayHStA, BS-Palästina 1158.  
1 May 1918.

in Jordan, Na'ur largely avoided the post-1948 population explosion that transformed Amman, al-Zarqa', al-Rusayfa, and Jerash and, distant enough from the capital, did not (yet) become a suburb of Amman, unlike Sweileh and Wadi al-Sir. It hosts an annual Circassian fair, and its downtown, still very much a Circassian quarter, maintains remnants

of its early twentieth-century landscape; one can see original Circassian fruit gardens, stone wells, drinking fountains, and an old mosque.

The village of Na‘ur was founded in 1900. Oral history records that Na‘ur’s Circassian founders came from Shapsugh, Ubykh, and Bzhedugh communities and set off from western Circassia/Kuban Province in 1898. They traveled to Istanbul by sea and from there by land, across much of Anatolia and Syria, to Salt, where they waited for nine months to find a good location for their village.<sup>147</sup> It is likely that their representatives vetted the area of Na‘ur and then, joined by a few Kabardin families, negotiated it as a settlement with the Salt authorities. Upon their arrival, muhajirs built their houses around the Na‘ur springs, set up gardens in their vicinity, and sowed their first harvest.<sup>148</sup>

The first *yoklama* survey in the village occurred shortly after its foundation, sometime before March 1902. The allotment of land in Na‘ur, on paper at least, seems to have been a paragon of orderly distribution. 60 households registered a house and three plots of land, with each family receiving either 70, 100, or 130 *dönüm*, or 105.8 *dönüm* on average.<sup>149</sup> Circassians received land in the areas of Bedih, Beyt Zira‘a, Bi‘l‘as, Um ‘Aliqa, and some in Murj al-Hammam and the land adjacent to the hajj caravan road. The second *yoklama* survey occurred in 1909 to register land for new Circassian arrivals. 19 households received three plots each totalling 70 *dönüm* per family.<sup>150</sup>

---

<sup>147</sup> Interview with the Circassian elders’ council in Na‘ur (31 August 2014).

<sup>148</sup> The first settlers constructed an irrigation system around the springs. They set up a stone pool around the springs to use for drinking; a stream then fed into a larger pool, from which farm animals drank; the rest of the water was channelled into canals that irrigated people’s fruit gardens. Interview with the Circassian elders’ council in Na‘ur (31 August 2014).

<sup>149</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/1, ff. 126-65, #42-271 (1316 - *mart* 1318, 1900 - Mar/Apr 1902).

<sup>150</sup> DLS Defter 1/5/1, ff. 1-2, #1-73 (1909).

The land of Na‘ur was a historical territory of the ‘Afashat branch of the ‘Ajarma tribe.<sup>151</sup> Notably, land transactions between Circassians and the ‘Afashat bedouin began immediately after the foundation of the settlement, underlying a collaborative relationship between the two communities; this also serves as indirect evidence that North Caucasian immigrants negotiated the location of their new village with the tribe in advance, having been, no doubt, aware of Circassians’ prior land conflicts with bedouin over land near Amman and Wadi al-Sir (more in Chapter 4). In fact, the first land registration in Na‘ur, in 1901, when Circassians already tilled the land, was conducted by the ‘Afashat bedouin.<sup>152</sup> The ‘Afashat also registered a few houses, as *mülk* property, within the Circassian settlement. Between 1901 and 1909, the ‘Afashat routinely sold their land plots to Circassians, usually for the same price as estimated by the Salt land registry, or at a slightly higher rate. In 1910-12, perhaps reflecting the declining fortunes of the tribe, Circassians acquired land plots for well below their government-estimated value.<sup>153</sup>

The early Circassian community in Na‘ur relied on the limited cash capital that they brought from Russia and aid from the state and private benefactors.<sup>154</sup> The first imam in Na‘ur was a Circassian, Shaykh Barakat Bazadogh (in Ottoman documents, Barakat Efendi) who was educated in Crimea. Crimean madrasas were an important part of a religious landscape for educated Circassians, some of whom also went to study in Istanbul

---

<sup>151</sup> The ‘Ajarma was one of the smaller tribes of the Balqawiyya tribal alliance, which also included ‘Adwan, Balqawiyya, Bani Hasan, Bani Hamida, Da‘ja, al-Hadid, Saltiyya, and others. The ‘Ajarma were semi-settled and cultivated some land already by the eighteenth century; see Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 68.

<sup>152</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/1, ff. 310-11, #2-3 (1901). The ‘Ajarma tribe registered land in Salt District as early as 1879-85. See Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 86.

<sup>153</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 174-75, #3, 5-6, ff. 194-95, #5, 11-12, ff. 310-11, #2-3 (1902-09); Defter 32/1/2, ff. 173-74, #45-46 (1910-12), ff. 392-93, #169 (*kanun-ı sani* 1328, Jan/Feb 1913). Also, see CDM Defter Salt 8, f. 18 (24 *şevval* 1330, 6 October 1912).

<sup>154</sup> BOA DH.MKT 2714/66 (28 *zilhicce* 1326, 21 January 1909); İ.DH. 1397/28 (28 *safer* 1320, 6 June 1910); DH. TMIK.S 36/48 (11 *zilkade* 1319, 19 February 1902); ŞD 2294/35 (7 *safer* 1320, 16 May 1902).

and Cairo, both before and after their migration to the Ottoman state. According to popular memory, back in Russia, Shaykh Barakat was an ardent proponent of emigration to the Ottoman Empire. When in Transjordan, Shaykh Barakat personally went to Palestine and Egypt to solicit donations for the construction of the first mosque in Na‘ur. In Egypt, he reportedly found sponsors among the Turko-Circassian elites, a remnant of the Mamluk era, who served as benefactors of their ethnic brethren in Transjordan.<sup>155</sup> The mosque construction began in 1904 and was completed in 1908.

As a new settlement in a strategic location by the springs and in the vicinity of an up-and-coming Amman, Na‘ur was an attractive location for Greek Orthodox merchants from nearby Salt. Land sales between Circassians and Christian merchants began soon after the establishment of the village. In March 1902, two Greek Orthodox Christians from Salt, Faraj bin Ibrahim al-Sahaq and Najib Efendi al-Ibrahim, purchased usufruct rights to the plots previously registered by Circassians.<sup>156</sup> Faraj bin Ibrahim, a merchant, settled in the village, and, in later years, bought two houses from the ‘Afashat bedouin, built new houses, and purchased a plot of land from the Circassian imam, Shaykh Barakat.<sup>157</sup> In 1910-12, merchants of the al-Mutri and al-Mu‘ashir families registered houses and land that they purchased from the ‘Afashat or other Christians.<sup>158</sup> Salim al-Nai al-Musa, a Greek Orthodox Christian, registered 381 *dönüm* of agricultural land for 36,375 *kuruş*.<sup>159</sup> These

---

<sup>155</sup> Interview with the Circassian elders’ council in Na‘ur (31 August 2014).

<sup>156</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 118-19, #1; Defter 32/1/2, ff. 161-62, #26, ff. 267-268, #6 (*mart* 1318, Mar/Apr 1902).

<sup>157</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 118-19, #1; Defter 32/1/2, ff. 161-62, #26, ff. 267-268, #6 (*mart* 1318, Mar/Apr 1902); CDM Defter Salt 10, f. 302 (29 *şevval* 1329, 23 October 1911).

<sup>158</sup> The Mu‘ashir family was one of the leading Christian families in Salt; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 118. DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 113-14, #105, ff. 392-93, #170 (1910-12).

<sup>159</sup> Al-Musa also paid 1,865 *kuruş*, or over five percent of property value, in tax upon registering his six large plots of land that were located all around Na‘ur. DLS Defter 10/1/1, f. 18, #39-44; Defter 32/1/2, ff. 185-86, #39-44 (1910-12).

Greek Orthodox merchants lay the foundation of Na‘ur’s Christian community that established its own district to the north of the Circassian quarter. Prominent Muslim merchants, like Suleyman Efendi Tuqan, a scion of the Tuqan political dynasty of Nablus, also purchased land, houses, and stables from Circassians.<sup>160</sup> Over the course of the twentieth century, many ‘Afashat families settled down in Na‘ur, having founded their own quarters.

The sale of the government-issued land by the Na‘ur Circassians demonstrates that muhajirs did not always comply with the twenty-year ban on transferring their usufruct rights, and the Ottoman land registry exercised discretion in approving those transactions. The objective of the Ottoman administration was to entrench a new property regime in the Balqa’. This is why the land registration officials may have been willing to allow those land sales between muhajirs and merchants, as long as the land remained in cultivation and all parties paid their respective taxes. The government’s objective also meant that many Bedouin faced an uphill battle in proving their rights to the land that had been uncultivated and was claimed by sedentary newcomers.<sup>161</sup>

In 1901-03, Ottoman land registration officials recorded the price of land around Na‘ur to be between 18 and 38 *kuruş* per *dönüm*, depending on the quality of land and its proximity to the springs.<sup>162</sup> In 1910-12, the value of land was estimated to be between 76 and 137 *kuruş* per *dönüm*.<sup>163</sup> Na‘ur became increasingly attractive to investors for its secure

---

<sup>160</sup> Suleyman Efendi was a son of Dawud Efendi who moved to Salt from Nablus and made a fortune by selling manufactured Palestinian products, providing moneylending services, and buying up agricultural and pastoral products for resale in Palestine; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 95-98; CDM Defter Salt 8, f. 35 (29 *şevval* 1331, 1 October 1913). For the Nabulsi Tuqans, see Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*, 37-39, 42-44; Mustafa al-Abbasi, *Tarih al-Tuqan fi Jabal Nablus* (Shefa-‘Amr: Dar al-Mashriq, 1990).

<sup>161</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 76-82; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 206-10.

<sup>162</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2.

<sup>163</sup> DLS Defters 1/5/1, 10/1/1, and 32/1/2.



position in the interior of the Balqa', thanks to a collaborative relationship between Na'ur's residents and the 'Ajarma bedouin. The village was also conveniently located on the road between Madaba and Salt, and Madaba and Amman.

Table 10: Average price of agricultural land in Circassian villages in the Balqa', *kuruş* per *dönüm*, 1891-1912

Initially registered by residents of:	1890s, <i>yoklama</i>	1901-03, <i>yoklama</i>	1904-09, <i>yoklama</i>	1910-12, <i>yoklama</i>	1910-12, <i>da'imi</i>
Amman, Qabartay quarter	60	42	64	84	56
Amman, Shapsugh quarter	72	53	174	281	134*
Wadi al-Sir, Bzhedugh quarter	40*	51	56	61	53*
Wadi al-Sir, Abzakh quarter	67	49	63	72	48
Na'ur	N/A	34	53	101*	61

The *yoklama* prices are government-estimated prices at the time of the initial registration of land. The *da'imi* prices are dictated by the market and represent monetary transactions.

\* The number of transactions on record is too low to serve as a reliable estimate.

Within one generation, prices of agricultural land increased in muhajir villages throughout the Balqa'. [See Table 10.] Market prices did not, however, catch up with the government's inflated projections. Thus, in the early 1910s, the average sales prices of land lagged behind the average *yoklama* price by 33 percent for the residents of Amman's Qabartay quarter and Wadi al-Sir's Abzakh quarter, 52 percent for Amman's Shapsugh quarter, and 13 percent at Wadi al-Sir's Bzhedugh quarter. The prices of land and urban property in Circassian villages, despite a considerable hike over a few decades, were low for regional and Ottoman standards. Thus, shortly before World War I, agricultural land in

the neighboring Palestine cost, on average, 300 francs (1,320 *kuruş*) per *dönüm*.<sup>164</sup> That was almost ten times the average selling price of the best agricultural land around Amman that belonged to residents of Amman's Shapsugh quarter in 1910-12. The low prices further stimulated an influx of the Syrian and Palestinian capital to the Balqa'.

In the 1878-1914 period, North Caucasian muhajirs transformed the economy of the Balqa' region. They excelled in carpentry and the blacksmith craft, cultivated wheat and barley, and built houses, shops, and windmills within closely connected agricultural settlements. They gradually increased their participation in local and regional trade by forging ties to settled and nomadic Transjordanian communities. As their settlements grew larger and the security of the area increased, partially due to the construction of the Hejaz Railway, muhajirs found themselves atop a lucrative market in rural and semi-urban real estate. An increasing economic stature of the muhajir community necessitated its closer engagement with Ottoman institutions in the Balqa'.

### *Refugees and the Court: An Economic Instrument and a Dual System of Justice*

The shari'a court in Salt, presided over by an Ottoman-appointed judge, was among the most prominent symbols of Ottoman rule in the region. It was also one of the main dispute resolution mechanisms available to sedentary and nomadic communities in central Transjordan.<sup>165</sup> As a result of judicial reforms during the Tanzimat, shari'a courts, based

---

<sup>164</sup> Ruth Kark, "The Contribution of the Ottoman Regime to the Development of Jerusalem and Jaffa, 1840-1917," in *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social, and Economic Transformation*, ed. David Kushner (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1986), 49.

<sup>165</sup> For a foray into the historiography of Ottoman justice system, see Leslie P. Peirce, *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003); Iris

on Islamic law, were complemented by *nizamiye*, or civil law, courts.<sup>166</sup> Although the lines between the two court systems were not clear-cut, shari‘a courts adjudicated cases falling within the domain of family law, whereas *nizamiye* courts addressed penal and commercial law, including real estate transactions. In practice, *nizamiye* courts were not set up everywhere. Salt District lacked a *nizamiye* court, and all matters of law were decided in a shari‘a court. Even after the Ottoman land registry took over the court’s historical function of registering land, local residents in the Balqa’ continued to regard the court as a legitimate record-keeper of their real estate history and often registered changes in ownership and transfer of land in both the shari‘a court and the land registry.

The muhajirs’ participation in the Ottoman judicial system is yet to attract serious historical attention. North Caucasian refugees begin appearing in the registers of the Salt court around 1890-91.<sup>167</sup> The settlements in Amman and Wadi al-Sir existed for about a decade by then. It is possible that Circassian immigrants, although many of them had prior experience with Ottoman rule in the Balkans, were wary of the institution of the court at first. In their first years of going to court, Circassians primarily attended to the business of marriage. The shari‘a court affirmed their matrimonies in a way familiar to muhajirs from

---

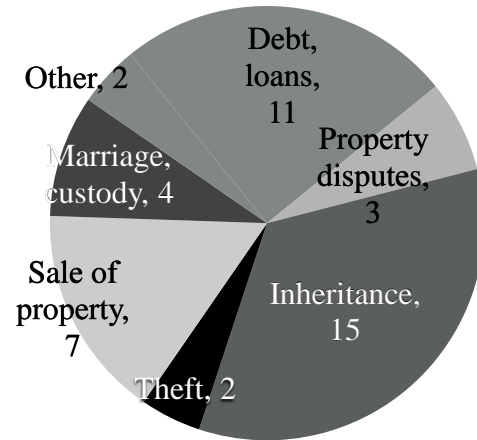
Agmon, *Family and Court: Legal Culture and Modernity in Late Ottoman Palestine* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006).

<sup>166</sup> The Ottoman civil code (1869-76), or *Mecelle*, laid the basis for the civil law in modern Jordan. On the *nizamiye* justice system, see Avi Rubin, *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

<sup>167</sup> See CDM Defter Salt 4, #11, 26, 36. North Caucasian refugees can be identified in registers by either their description as muhajirs, their ethnic designation (pl. *Cherākisa* or *Shīshān*), their village, or sometimes their names.

their days in the Balkans or parts of the Caucasus. In that early stage, muhajirs rarely registered business transactions in court or brought monetary lawsuits against each other. Lawsuits that came to the attention of the court often involved a Circassian muhajir and a non-Circassian party, usually a Salti merchant. In many ways, the Salt court was the site of interaction and contestation between various communities in the Balqa' region. Refugees engaged in a legal and social dialogue with others to contest movable and immovable property and, by doing this, negotiated their position as an equal partner and part of the socio-economic fabric of the Balqa'.

Figure 9: Court cases involving Circassian muhajirs in the Balqa', 1901-03



The estimate is based on 44 cases recorded in CDM Defters Salt 6 and 7. Overall, 28 cases are from Amman and 16 are from Wadi al-Sir.

With time, North Caucasian refugees developed a keen appreciation for the institution of the court as an instrument of legitimizing their economic transactions, be they the transfer of usufruct rights to the land, disputes over the sale of farm animals, or contestation over inheritance and dower [payment by the groom to the bride at the time of marriage that becomes her property]. Thus, in 1901-03, 34 percent of all cases in Circassian settlements concerned inheritance, 25 percent – the repayment of loans, and 23 percent –

the sale or dispute over property.<sup>168</sup> [See Figure 9.] By the early twentieth century, dozens of lawsuits, involving North Caucasian muhajirs, as either plaintiffs or defendants, were pending in the Salt court every year. Muhajirs began to appear as witnesses in legal affairs between their Arab neighbors, once their settlements attracted non-Circassian residents and they achieved a greater social standing in the Balqa’.

North Caucasian women often brought cases to court, especially to address financial complications arising from a divorce or the death of a spouse. In 1912, for example, Denukh bint ‘Aisa and Basha bint Salih, two Circassian women from Sweileh, a muhajir village to the north of Amman, appeared before the judge. Their legal representative, also a Circassian and a brother of the first woman, Janbut bin ‘Aisa, was absent from the proceedings because he was visiting his ancestral village in Nalchik District in the Russian Empire. Denukh wanted the Ottoman shari‘a court to authorize her sale and cession (Ar. *bay’ wa farāgh*) of the land and movable and immovable property that she inherited from her father in the Russian Kabarda. The second woman, Basha, filed a lawsuit against her husband, who also left Transjordan for the Caucasus. Because he failed to provide adequate spousal support, she demanded a divorce, either *ṭalāq* (initiated by husband) or *khul‘a* (initiated by wife), so that she could be free and “have all rights associated with marriage [restored to her].”<sup>169</sup>

Defining the power of the court through legal jurisdiction, with which the state endowed it, is a historiographical pitfall, stemming from our own highly structured, elaborate, and powerful judicial systems. The functions of an Ottoman district court and

---

<sup>168</sup> I handpicked CDM Defters Salt 6 and 7 for analysis because the period that they cover (Aug 1901 - Feb 1903) witnessed an increase in refugees’ litigation in court. Court registers for prior years feature fewer cases involving North Caucasian refugees.

<sup>169</sup> CDM Defter Salt 17, #148 (13 *cemaziyelahir* 1330, 9 June 1912).

the scope of its activity were negotiated by the communities and individuals who chose to use the institution. This perspective helps to understand the limitations of the judicial archive. Notably, the court in Salt registered few, if any, instances of sexual transgression and/or violence within the Circassian community. The social life of the refugee community remained a jealously guarded domain, rarely exposed to “outsiders,” including the Ottoman court.

North Caucasian immigrants instituted internal dispute resolution mechanisms in their villages. The socio-political life of muhajirs was guided by village councils, a part of the Circassian communal life back in the Caucasus and an Ottoman-sanctioned semi-formal institution in the wake of the 1864 Vilayet Law. Those councils consisted of an elected village headman, an imam, and representatives of prominent families in the community. Although the role of village councils differed throughout the empire, these institutions wielded significant power because they served as an intermediary between their communities and the state. Muhajir village councils often took upon themselves the policing of social mores. To resolve conflicts and dispense justice within their communities, they applied ‘adat [customary law] that North Caucasians had practiced for centuries.<sup>170</sup> A criminal incident, such as theft, that had occurred within the muhajir community would appear in a court register only if internal dispute resolution mechanisms failed, and one or several parties resorted to appealing to the state to redress injustice.

---

<sup>170</sup> For the ‘adat law in the Caucasus, see Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, *Musul'mane Severnogo Kavkaza: obychai, pravo, nasilie* (Moscow: IV RAN, 2002); Michael Kemper, “‘Adat Against Shari‘a: Russian Approaches Towards Daghestani ‘Customary Law’ in the 19th Century,” *Ab Imperio* 3 (2005): 147-74. For published sources, see Fedor I. Leontovich, *Adaty Kavkazskikh gortsev: materialy po obychnomu pravu Severnago i Vostochnago Kavkaza*, 2 vols. (Odessa: Tipografiia P.A. Zelenogo, 1882-83).

The Salt court also rarely adjudicated any conflicts over land between refugees and bedouin. An altercation between the two had serious repercussions for the safety of both communities and the social stability in the Balqa', and those conflicts were resolved, at times through violence and at other times not, by the opposing parties and their mediators. The Ottoman court, whether due to the perceived weakness of its enforcement mechanisms or its insufficient authority, was typically shunned out of bedouin-muhajir relations.

The Ottoman judicial system, based on the flexibly applied Islamic law, therefore, coexisted with an internal and informal judicial system, rooted in customary law.<sup>171</sup> The latter remains, mostly, hidden from public record, and its existence can be ascertained from diasporic oral history, the legacy of 'adat in the Caucasus, and speculations on what is missing in Ottoman shari'a records.<sup>172</sup>

### *Writing a Muhajir Family History*

Family histories are difficult to come by in late Ottoman historiography because of the scarcity of original sources.<sup>173</sup> In the literature on Ottoman migration, few accounts of

---

<sup>171</sup> On the flexibility of Ottoman Islamic law, see, for example, Judith E. Tucker, *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

<sup>172</sup> An internal system of justice was not unique to muhajir communities. Transjordanian bedouin relied on customary law. In the Hashemite Jordan, in the interests of social stability, the monarchy formalized and, in some respects, empowered the institution of a bedouin "tribal council." To amplify their communal bargaining position, descendants of North Caucasian muhajirs adopted the "tribal" designation and formed, in 1969, a Circassian Tribal Council and, in 1979, a Circassian-Chechen Tribal Council; see Joseph A. Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of a National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 67. See also, Ahmed Saleh Suleiman Owidi, "Bedouin Justice in Jordan: The Customary Legal System of the Tribes and Its Integration into the Framework of State Policy from 1921 Onwards," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Cambridge, 1982).

<sup>173</sup> See Beshara Doumani, ed., *Family History in the Middle East: Household, Property, and Gender* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003); Edmund Burke III, ed., *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993).

immigrant families exist, although good studies on individual experiences of migration exist.<sup>174</sup> On the basis of Ottoman court and land records from Salt, I reconstruct an economic family history of an upper-class muhajir family in Amman between the mid-1890s and 1912. The story of this family begins with their lawyer.

Jawad Bey bin Ismail bin Muhammad Bey, a Circassian muhajir, was an attorney who played a prominent role in facilitating Circassians' engagement with the shari'a court in Salt. Upon emigration from Russia, his Kabardin family of noble descent resided in Aziziye, the center of the Circassian colonies in central Anatolia. He obtained an education in Istanbul, and then moved his family to Amman in search of better economic opportunities.<sup>175</sup> Jawad Bey relocated to Amman sometime in 1896, and, at the end of that year, he registered 120 *dönüm* of agricultural land as a resident of the Qabartay Jadid neighborhood.<sup>176</sup> He also happened to be the brother of Fuat Bey Khutatzade, who sent him dozens of letters from Istanbul that present a unique insight into the life of an upper middle-class Ottoman Circassian family at the turn of the century (see Chapter 5).

Knowledgeable about Ottoman law and proficient in Ottoman Turkish, Jawad Bey offered legal counsel and representation to members of Amman's Circassian community. In the late Ottoman period, he was one of the few local Circassians with a formal Ottoman education. One of his early appearances in court was, on his own behalf, as a claimant

---

<sup>174</sup> Scholars of late Ottoman slavery have been particularly efficient in excavating individuals' experiences; see Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent*; idem., "Slave Dealers, Women, Pregnancy, and Abortion: The Story of a Circassian Slave-Girl in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Cairo," *Slavery and Abolition* 2, no. 1 (1981): 53-68; Eve M. Troutt Powell, *Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan and the Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

<sup>175</sup> Interview with S. Khutat in Amman (15 September 2014).

<sup>176</sup> DLS 19/1/1, ff. 43-44, #29 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1312, Dec 1896/Jan 1897).



alleging that his two buffalos were stolen by another Circassian.<sup>177</sup> The court ruled in his favor.

In the early 1900s, Jawad Bey became involved in litigation for the family of the late Hajj Islam bin Muhammad Efendi. The family, whose Circassian surname the court did not record, resided in the Qabartay quarter and was among the wealthiest families of Amman and the eastern Balqa'. In 1901, the patriarch of the family, Hajj Islam bin Muhammad bin 'Abdullah, died. He fathered two children: a daughter, Khadija, and a son, Hamid. The latter predeceased his father and was survived by his widow, Sayetkhan, and their two underage children, a five-year-old girl, Gül'azar, and a two-year-old boy, 'Azir.

The two deaths – of Hajj Islam and his son Hajj Hamid – sparked a series of lawsuits that involved the leadership of Amman's muhajir community and required intervention from the Anatolian branch of the family. In 1901, 'Amr Efendi, a family representative, sued Sayetkhan, the widow of the late Hamid. He claimed that she concealed a number of things from the inventory of her husband's remaining property (Ar. *matrūkāt*) that was performed shortly after his death. She reportedly hid 20 French liras,<sup>178</sup> 500 *kile* of barley, two wool mattresses, a prayer rug, three carpets, a sewing machine, a harness, and a cow. He accused her of intentionally lowering the amount of inheritance that would be doled out to Hamid's heirs, namely her own children. Sayetkhan's lawyer, Jawad Bey, insisted that his client was innocent. He claimed that the property in question had, indeed, remained in her house, but that she had not known that it was concealed from the inventory until the

---

<sup>177</sup> CDM Defter Salt 5, #31 (15 *şaban* 1315, 9 January 1898). Jawad Bey [Cevat Bey] mentioned this incident in his correspondence with his brother; Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 40, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (9 July 1898).

<sup>178</sup> In Ottoman Transjordan, French gold liras were a currency of choice, especially in land transactions in and around Amman; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 167; see also Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "Ownership of Real Property by Foreigners in Syria, 1869-1873," in *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 210-11.

day she was summoned to court. He noted that Sayetkhan, a grieving widow, put ‘Amr Efendi in charge of conducting an inventory, and he was in a better position to explain the inconsistencies. He also accused ‘Amr Efendi of collecting rent from the seven shops of the late Hamid for two and a half years, which he did not record or turn over to his widow. The court reviewed an earlier judgement that stripped Sayetkhan of her guardianship rights over her children upon finding that she had acted in bad faith towards the children’s inheritance by concealing property. It issued another holding against her, ordering her to turn over all property that had not been surveyed and that had remained in her house.<sup>179</sup>

‘Amr Efendi was then appointed as a legal guardian of Sayetkhan’s two underage children, Gül‘azar and ‘Azir. In what must have been his attempt to reclaim all outstanding debts to the family, he initiated a lawsuit against the local Circassian imam, Hajj Sha‘b Efendi bin Tahir bin Duruq. ‘Amr Efendi claimed that the late Hajj Islam, the children’s grandfather, gave the imam 60 Ottoman liras and 20 French liras as zakat to distribute the money to the people in need. ‘Amr Efendi claimed that the late family patriarch was insane (Ar. *ma‘tūh*), and therefore the transaction should be considered invalid and the money must be returned. The imam testified that he had already distributed the money and denied that the community’s benefactor was mentally incapacitated. ‘Amr Efendi called forward two witnesses, whose sole role was to put in doubt the sanity of the late Hajj Islam. They both recalled how “the late Hajj Ismail entered the running stream, by his village, naked. People who were passing by, old and young, told him that it was shameful. He replied to them that it was not shameful.”<sup>180</sup> Upon hearing this curious incident, the judge requested the two most prominent members of the Circassian community, the muhtar [village

---

<sup>179</sup> CDM Defter Salt 6, ff. 6-8 (26 *rebiülahir* 1319, 12 August 1901).

<sup>180</sup> CDM Defter Salt 6, ff. 49-50 (2 *şaban* 1319, 14 November 1901).

headman] and the imam of Amman, to vouch for the trustworthiness of the two witnesses. They reported that the two witnesses should not be trusted. The judge then dismissed the unflattering testimonies and ruled that the plaintiff had no right to claim money from the defendant. The fact that this scandalous lawsuit, reclaiming zakat from the imam and accusing a prominent deceased member of the community of skinny-dipping, reached the Ottoman court at all hints at a failure to reach an internal resolution on a sensitive matter. This lawsuit may have exposed a rift between one of Amman’s wealthiest families and its administrative elite.

The following day, the family was back in court. The late Hajj Islam’s will was read out to the family in the presence of two men: Jawad Bey, the attorney, and Muhammad Agha, a cousin of the late Hamid who arrived to the Balqa’ from Anatolia to take care of the family business. The patriarch’s daughter, Khadija, and two grandchildren, Gül‘azar and ‘Azir, inherited all his property. All household items, recent harvest, farm animals, and debts owed were painstakingly counted in a detailed inventory written in Arabic. The inventory, the abridged summary of which appears below, provides a rare insight into the household of an upper-class Circassian family in a semi-urban setting.<sup>181</sup>

Table 11: Inventory of Hajj Islam’s inheritance in 1901

Amount	Article	Value in <i>kuruş</i>	Amount	Article	Value in <i>kuruş</i>
1. Furniture and household items			2. Agricultural products and farm animals		
14	Carpets	1,874	2 <i>şā‘</i>	Barley	1,000
1	Copper tray	81	5 <i>şā‘</i>	Wheat	7,650
2	Silk-adorned blanket	74	3.5 <i>şā‘</i>	Barley	5,102.5

<sup>181</sup> CDM Defter Salt 6, f. 53 (3 *şaban* 1901, 15 November 1901).

1	Sewing machine	435	0.5 <i>ṣā'</i> 1 <i>ṣā'</i> 1 <i>ṣā'</i>	Wheat Barley Burghul	1,018
1	Dye	16		Wheat, barley	82
2	Wooden bridge (?)	120	4 <i>ṣā'</i>	Cheese	292
1	Mirror	13	1	Calf	106
33 5 7	Pillows Mattresses Blankets	628	2 2	Oxen Cows	1,360
2 8 6	Carpets Tea cups Spoons	250	2 1	Donkeys Agricultural cart	192
1 5 7	Copper tray Copper dishes Tin dishes	90	3. Financial articles		
4 2 2	Chinese-style pots Copper cooking pots Frying pan	87	8 5	Cash in Ottoman lira Cash in French lira	1,607.5
1 1 3	Copper pitcher Tin pitcher Copper cauldron	180		Loan I due	96.5
2 2 4	Dining table Wooden chest Arabic ? (عرب عدول)	144		Loan II due (in wheat and barley)	357
2 1 2 6	Copper jug Copper pitcher Bowls Spoons	50	4. Slave girl		
1 23	Iron chain Glass beads	15		Tekne (تكنة) bint 'Abdullah	180
1	Plough with handle	110	Total:		
1 2	Clock Qaradagh roses (?)	500	25,581*		
1	Circassian harness with saddle	720	<p>A <i>ṣā'</i> is a unit of volume equal to about a gallon.</p> <p>*All articles come to the total value of 25,583 <i>kuruş</i> 20 <i>para</i>, but the inventory lists the total value as 25,581 <i>kuruş</i>.</p>		
1 1	Silver dagger Circassian belt	720			
6 2	Curtains Oil lamp	95			
1	Birdcage chair	48			
6	Arabic ? (عرب عدول)	290			

Notably, a large proportion of the inheritance, or 58 percent of the total value of 25,581 *kuruş*, was in the stored harvest of wheat, barley, and burghul. Despite its upper-class status, this family, like most North Caucasian immigrants in Transjordan, derived much of its income from agriculture, the surplus of which it exported. The presence of a slave girl (Ar. *jāriya*) in the inventory is unusual; although Circassian communities, particularly the Kabardins, often held slaves in villages in Anatolia and the Balkans, the practice was rare in Ottoman Transjordan. The remarkably low price of a slave girl suggests that the family may have only had a partial stake in the cost of her labor.<sup>182</sup>

Records of the Salt land registry complement those of the shari‘a court, thus allowing us a fuller view of the family’s financial planning. The two underage heirs, Gül‘azar and ‘Azir, came into inheritance of a large land portfolio upon the death of their father, Hajj Hamid, sometime in 1896-97. They inherited four plots of land around Amman, to the total size of 100 *dönüm* and the government-estimated value of 10,370 *kuruş*, as well as half of the shares in seven more plots of land totalling 1,158 *dönüm*, with their shares estimated at 20,120 *kuruş*.<sup>183</sup> Circassian muhajirs did not receive that much land from the government for free. In all likelihood, the family bought these plots of land directly from bedouin using the cash capital that they brought to Transjordan from the Russian Kabarda.

The management of the family finances became more complicated when Muhammad Agha, the aforementioned Circassian from Anatolia, had married Sayetkhan bint Qurash bin Qoghuluq, the widow of his late cousin. We can only speculate what happened. She could have been married off by the behind-the-curtains family members, or

---

<sup>182</sup> For a sample of currencies, prices, and salaries in the neighboring Palestine, see Johann Bussow, *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem, 1872-1908* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 563-64n.

<sup>183</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 353-54, #50-60 (*şubat* 1312 - *nisan* 1313, Feb/Mar 1897 - Apr/May 1898).

she could have chosen to marry someone from the Anatolian branch of the family to find a new footing in her late husband's family. They could have also gotten married because they fell in love. Sayetkhan reclaimed her guardianship over her two children, which she shared with her new husband, but it was Muhammad Agha whom the judge had appointed as the sole custodian of the children's wealth. Muhammad Agha swore to manage their affairs soundly and in the best interests of his stepchildren: "to preserve what ought to be preserved and to sell what it is feared may be damaged."<sup>184</sup>

Muhammad Agha certainly acted quickly in investing the liquid capital from his stepchildren's inheritance. Only a month after the original will was announced, he loaned almost the entire amount of cash that the children inherited (27,798 *kuruş* 30 *para*) to two men: Sa'id bin Khayr bin 'Ali Abu Qura, a Damascene merchant and moneylender who resided in Salt, and his partner, Hajj 'Amr Efendi, a Circassian from Amman.<sup>185</sup> They were obliged to repay the loan, with interest, within nine months, and another member of the wealthy al-Khayr family served as a guarantor of the loan.<sup>186</sup>

Shortly thereafter, Sayetkhan sued Muhammad Agha, her new husband, over the dower from her first marriage.<sup>187</sup> She was represented by her old Circassian attorney, Jawad Bey. Sayetkhan likely came from the Circassian community in the Golan Heights, because her marriage to Hajj Hamid was registered in the Quneitra shari'a court. It was common for Jordanian Circassians to seek a bride in the Golan Heights well into the

---

<sup>184</sup> CDM Defter Salt 7, #54 (28 *zilkade* 1319, 8 March 1902).

<sup>185</sup> CDM Defter Salt 6, f. 70 (24 *şaban* 1319, 6 December 1901).

<sup>186</sup> The Khayr family of Damascus established itself in Salt, when Muhammad Khayr Abu Qura, father of the buyer, bought shares of the Balqawiyya tribal lands in al-Rajib and Abu 'Alinda in 1883; see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 111n50. Said Efendi Khayr was one of the largest moneylenders in Salt; see Michael J. Reimer, "Control of Urban Waqfs in al-Salt, Transjordan," in *Held in Trust: Waqf in the Islamic World*, ed. Pascale Gazaleh (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2011), 112.

<sup>187</sup> CDM Defter Salt 7, #198 (10 *receb* 1320, 13 October 1902).

twentieth century.<sup>188</sup> Sayetkhan's dower, promised to her by the late Hajj Hamid, constituted 240 Ottoman liras, including an advance (Ar. *mahr mu'ajjal* or *muqaddam*) and post-wedding (Ar. *mahr mu'ajjal* or *mu'akhhkar*) payments. Sayetkhan resorted to a lawsuit to reclaim that value, in movable and immovable property, out of the total inheritance.<sup>189</sup> This type of lawsuit was the most common one involving Circassian women in the Balqa'. In both Islamic law and Circassian customary law, the dower belonged exclusively to the wife and was required to be separated from the shared inheritance, which did not always happen in practice. Muhammad Agha, who was in charge of Sayetkhan's first husband's inheritance, argued that an advance dower was a "Circassian custom" and that it "could not be imagined that any of it remained [unpaid to the wife] until the death of the husband," as for the post-wedding payment, he did not know whether Sayetkhan received it or not.<sup>190</sup>

The burden of proof was placed on the claimant. Sayetkhan provided a copy of the statement by the Quneitra court validating her marriage. It transpired that she previously sued Muhammad Agha in Quneitra for a small sum of 25 *kuruş* that her late husband had lent him out of her dower and that the Quneitra court obliged Muhammad Agha to repay her. This time, Sayetkhan's attorney brought forward five witnesses: two Circassians from Amman who witnessed the trial back in Quneitra and three Circassians from the Golan Heights who were present at the signing of a marriage contract back in Quneitra and confirmed her late husband's pledge of 240 Ottoman liras. Jawad Bey provided sufficient evidence that Sayetkhan was promised her dower, and in the absence of evidence that she

---

<sup>188</sup> Interview at the Circassian Charitable Association, Amman (14 August 2014).

<sup>189</sup> CDM Defter Salt 6, ff. 118-19 (10 *receb* 1320, 13 October 1902).

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

ever received the money, the court ordered Muhammad Agha to pay the dower to his new wife out of her first husband's estate.<sup>191</sup>

Jawad Bey, the attorney, soon established a new kind of relationship with the family that he represented in court. He borrowed money from Muhammad Agha, who took the cash out of the two children's inheritance. Muhammad Agha lent Jawad Bey 6,500 *kuruş* and also sold him a house for 2,925 *kuruş*, although Jawad Bey did not pay anything and added the sum to his overall debt to the family.<sup>192</sup> As a collateral, Jawad Bey mortgaged his four shops that lay in the Qabartay quarter of Amman, near the mosque. The term of his loan was two years and seven months, and if the money was not paid back in full, Muhammad Agha reserved the right to sell his shops at a fair cost to any buyer and extract Jawad Bey's debt from it.<sup>193</sup> There was a tacit acknowledgement that the price of the four shops was higher than the loan; this further underscores the entrepreneurial acumen of Jawad Bey, who, as land records reveal, bought the four shops only four to five years prior for 563 *kuruş* each.<sup>194</sup> It is likely that Jawad Bey, a newcomer to Amman, borrowed the cash to invest in more property, sensing the lucrative opportunities that would arise with the opening of a direct railway link to Damascus later that year. He must have repaid his debt to Muhammad Agha because the land registry has no record of the auctioning of his shops.

Meanwhile, the family of Sayetkhan and Muhammad Agha continued re-registering their shares in both the shari'a court and the land registry in Salt. Sometime in

---

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> CDM Defter Salt 9, f. 159 (12 *zilkade* 1320, 10 February 1903); Salt 7, #237 (21 *zilkade* 1320, 19 February 1903).

<sup>193</sup> Known as *bay' bi-l-wafā'*.

<sup>194</sup> DLS Defter 19/1/1, ff. 361-62, #98-101 (1898-99).



the first decade of the twentieth century, young ‘Azir passed away, and his mother, Sayetkhan, inherited all his shares in an agricultural estate of 1,259 *dönüm*.<sup>195</sup> Shortly thereafter, Sayetkhan passed away as well, and all her shares were divided equally between her only surviving child, Gül‘azar, and her half-sister Najiya.<sup>196</sup> Those transfers of usufruct rights were described in detail by the Salt land registry because, in 1909-10, the two young women made sure to properly re-register the land in their names and had the government re-evaluate the cost of their properties, which had not been evaluated since 1893.<sup>197</sup> Most of their land was estimated at a price of over 100 *kuruş* per *dönüm*, which in the Amman real estate market corresponded to prices for some of the best rainfed land in the valley. Gül‘azar, at this point, was one of the richest women in Amman, and her agricultural estate was the largest, on record, of any North Caucasian muhajir in the Balqa’.

The final chapter in this story comes with yet another round of inheritance and the entrance of Palestinian/Transjordanian capital in what until now was mostly a Circassian story. In 1912, ‘Abd al-Majid (Abdülmecit), from another branch of the family, passed away, and the urban property that he wholly or partially owned, was re-registered by nine heirs, seven of whom were women, including Gül‘azar, who received over two thirds of everything.<sup>198</sup> The joint property included a sixteen-room house – the largest house on record in Ottoman Amman – valued at 12,500 *kuruş*, and six shops, estimated at 3,000 to 5,000 *kuruş* each. The properties lay in the Qabartay quarter of Amman, or more specifically in the area known as “Sultani,” adjacent to the main road connecting Damascus

---

<sup>195</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 355-58, #61-71 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1325, Dec 1909/Jan 1910).

<sup>196</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 357-60, #72-82 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1325, Dec 1909/Jan 1910).

<sup>197</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 359-66, #83-120 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1325, Dec 1909/Jan 1910). The third owner of the shared property was Hajj ‘Amr Efendi.

<sup>198</sup> Gül‘azar owned 2,210 shares out 3,240; other heirs include Najiya, ‘Ali Mirza, Devlet Mirza, Fatima, Kheyriya, Zakiya, Amina, and Kushanay. DLS Defter 10/1/1, ff. 46-47, #15-21 (*temmuz* 1328, July/Aug 1912).

to the Hejaz, or *al-ṭarīq al-sultāni* (now known as King's Highway). The nine heirs ordered formal re-registration of these expensive properties, with a detailed distribution of shares and records of prior court-sanctioned transactions, because they wanted to establish a legally traceable history of succession before they could sell the properties to a potential buyer.<sup>199</sup>

The buyer was Yusuf al-Sukkar, a scion of the al-Sukkar house, an elite family of Salt that was well-established in both commerce and politics. After the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908, Yusuf al-Sukkar was elected to the lower house (Ott. Tur. *Meclis-i Mebusân*) of the Ottoman Assembly (*Meclis-i Umumi*) as a Greek Orthodox representative.<sup>200</sup> Al-Sukkar must have appreciated the strategic importance and economic potential of Amman, which was still several times smaller than Salt, and moved in to secure prime real estate in the up-and-coming town.<sup>201</sup> He already owned 130 *dönüm* of agricultural land around Amman that he had purchased during an earlier wave of the expansion of Salti capital in the eastern Balqa'.<sup>202</sup> He bought the sixteen-room house and six shops from Gül'azar's family for an exceedingly high price at the time: he paid 9,000 to 15,000 *kuruş* for the shops, triple their original value, and about 32,340 *kuruş* for the house, over two and a half times its original value.<sup>203</sup>

Most tourists to Amman are familiar with the Husseini Mosque, at the heart of Downtown. To the east of the mosque lies Suq al-Sukkar. With dozens of fruit and

---

<sup>199</sup> The house and shops were surrounded by property owned by other Circassians, which is a good indication that, at the time, the prime real estate in *Nafs Amman* was still in the hands of muhajirs.

<sup>200</sup> Atallah Mansour, *Narrow Gate Churches: The Christian Presence in the Holy Land Under Muslim and Jewish Rule* (Pasadena, CA: Hope, 2004), 195.

<sup>201</sup> On Yusuf al-Sukkar's spectacular residence in Salt, located beside the building of the Ottoman administration, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 118-19.

<sup>202</sup> DLS Defter 30/1/2, ff. 118-19, #10 (1899-1903).

<sup>203</sup> DLS Defter 10/1/1, f. 40, #7-20, f. 47, #22, 24-35 (*temmuz - ağustos* 1328, July - Sep 1912).

vegetable stalls, it is among the more colorful markets (suqs) of Amman, and its name is often translated as “sugar market”; *sukkar* means sugar in Arabic. The market is, in fact, named after the al-Sukkar family, who owned it; the family possibly derived its name from trading in sugar in the preceding centuries. The al-Sukkar family’s starting investment in that market was the six shops that it purchased from Gül‘azar and her eight relatives in 1912.

Financial and legal transactions of Gül‘azar’s family underscore the local and regional character of muhajirs’ economic activities, which centered around agriculture. Wealthier families engaged in real estate speculation and moneylending at interest, despite nominal shari‘a prohibition of the latter. The state played an increasingly important role in regulating economic activity, through its shari‘a court and land registry. Records reveal minimal foreign presence in the Balqa’, unlike in other parts of Ottoman Syria. Speculation over property in the nomadic Balqa’ was an almost exclusively Levantine affair. Records of a shari‘a court and a land registry also put spotlight on the agency of muhajir women. Gül‘azar and her female relatives, operating within the constraints of a male-dominated social environment, were active participants on the real estate market and stood at the helm of one of the wealthiest families in Amman.

Gül‘azar’s family history is not a typical refugee story. Neither is it atypical, as dozens of Circassian refugee families prospered during the economic rise of Ottoman Amman, similar to other muhajir families across the country that, through land registration and real estate speculation, managed to forge a fortune in the final decades of imperial rule. The narrative of private accumulation of wealth, such as this one, exemplifies the experience of refugee elites, whose social and economic capital and expertise proved

invaluable for navigating their communities through the formative years of the post-Ottoman successor states.

*Conclusion: Refugees, Capital, and the Empire*

Traditional historiography often considers Ottoman-era refugees – rightfully so – as victims of nationalism, sectarianism, and colonialism. One scholar recently suggested an additional lens: viewing Ottoman refugees as victims of globalization and capitalism.<sup>204</sup> Indeed, the transformation of local property regimes, changes in the economic relations between the coast and the interior, and the rise of new elites put in motion destructive processes that turned hundreds of thousands of people into refugees in the late Ottoman period. I have demonstrated that refugees could also serve as facilitators of the expansion of Ottoman networks of capital. Muhajirs increased cereal production, created new markets of supply and demand, and were intermediaries for bedouin produce in the Balqa'. Their settlement prompted “defensive registration” and resale of land by local communities. The town of Amman attracted Transjordanian, Palestinian, and Syrian merchants, who invested their capital in commerce and set up cash-oriented agricultural estates in the area. Muhajir settlements accelerated the commodification of land and the evolution of a new property regime in the Balqa' and, by extension, modern Jordan.

Muslim refugees have all too often been portrayed as “imperial pawns” or instruments of Ottoman centralization. The empire certainly benefited from having a sedentary, industrious, and loyal population in central Transjordan. Moreover, in the first

---

<sup>204</sup> Blumi, *Ottoman Refugees*, esp. 17-42.

two decades of the twentieth century, the Circassians did the lion's share of Ottoman tax-collecting and policing in the area. The agency of the state, however, should not be overstated. The imperial administration, namely the Ottoman Refugee Commission, played a minor role in settling refugees in Transjordan, especially when compared to its major efforts to move refugees to specific areas in the Balkans and Anatolia.<sup>205</sup> The state was also hardly physically present in the region, save for a shari'a court, a land registry, and a small military garrison. The government, nevertheless, was crucial to refugees' success because it created the legal-economic framework and institutions that allowed an emerging capitalist market in real estate and agricultural goods to flourish. The 1857 Immigration Law confirmed privileges and exemptions for refugee villages, and the 1858 Land Code gradually opened up the Balqa' region for foreign investment and agricultural development. The construction of the Hejaz Railway, the single most important footprint of the state in Transjordan, was instrumental in bringing Levantine capital to Amman and ensuring security in the area. In other words, refugees were successful in the Balqa' region because, through their agricultural and artisanal labor and real estate management, they tapped into the needs of the Levantine market and because the empire enabled them to do so.

The history of North Caucasian muhajirs in the Balqa' is a story of the expansion of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code and of mercantile networks of capital in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The narrative outlined in this chapter is unique to Transjordan, especially due to the impact of the Hejaz Railway, but similar economic processes unfolded throughout the empire. In the steppes of Dobruja, the marshes of Çukurova, and the

---

<sup>205</sup> See Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 165-213.

plateaus of Uzunyayla, North Caucasian refugees established settlements on the land granted to them by the government. Their villages, whether they succeeded financially or not, altered the economies of host regions within the Ottoman Empire.

## CHAPTER 3

### **Refugees in the Uzunyayla Region, 1860-1914: Reconstructing the Caucasus in the Anatolian Heartland**

Between 1860 and 1862, several thousand Circassian muhajirs arrived in the Ottoman ports of Trabzon, Samsun, and Sinop on the Black Sea. Upon disembarking on the Ottoman shore, many of these immigrants requested government officials from the newly formed Ottoman Refugee Commission to send them to a place called Uzunyayla.<sup>1</sup> Uzunyayla, meaning “long plateau” in Turkish, is a remote highland in central Anatolia, about three hundred miles away from the Black Sea coast. Many Ottoman officials probably first learned of Uzunyayla from those Muslims from Russia, most of whom spoke no Turkish but were intent on reaching that hidden mountainous valley, where they could start building a new Caucasus.

This chapter examines the settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs in Uzunyayla, part of Sivas Province, between 1860 and 1914. One may think of Uzunyayla as a buckle on a belt of refugee settlements that went through the geographic center of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>2</sup> This belt comprised, from north to south, the provinces of Trabzon, Sivas, Adana, Aleppo, and Damascus. Uzunyayla lay in the middle of an imaginary line of North Caucasian settlements – several hundred in total – running from the Black Sea coast deep into the Syrian desert. By the early twentieth century, Uzunyayla was a region with one of

---

<sup>1</sup> See BOA A.MKT.NZD 384/80 (10 *cemaziyelahir* 1278, 13 December 1861). For other studies of North Caucasian muhajirs in Uzunyayla, see Ömer Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları ve Karşılaştıkları Sorunlar (H. 1277-1287/M. 1860-1870),” Ph.D. dissertation (Ege Üniversitesi, 2012); Selma Yel and Ahmet Gündüz, “XIX. Yüzyılda Çarlık Rusyası’nın Çerkesleri Sürgün Etmesi ve Uzunyaylaya Yerleştirilmeleri (1860-1865),” *Turkish Studies* 3, no. 4 (2008): 949-83; Miyazawa, “Memory Politics.”

<sup>2</sup> For this idea, see also Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 17.

the largest North Caucasian populations in the Ottoman Empire, totaling about 40,000 people.<sup>3</sup> It was also one of the most ethnically diverse areas of refugee resettlement, with approximately 77 villages hosting Circassian (western and eastern), Abazin, Chechen, Ossetian, and Karachay communities.<sup>4</sup> [See a full list in Appendix VIII.] These muhajirs recreated their version of the North Caucasus in this Anatolian plateau. The isolation and near-absence of settled population in Uzunyayla provided muhajirs with an opportunity for compact settlement, which many preferred over being dispersed across the empire. Yet Uzunyayla's distance from major urban centers and a lack of imperial infrastructure, investment, and interest also meant that muhajir settlements had few opportunities to advance.

This microhistory weaves together stories of slavery, brigandage, and pastoral nomadism in late Ottoman Anatolia. It contributes to scholarship on central Anatolia, a region that has received less historical attention than Anatolia's coastal regions or Armenian and Kurdish areas farther east. Yet Sivas Province, lying in the center of Anatolia and sharing borders with seven provinces, found itself involved in almost every regional crisis and was fundamental to Ottoman control over its Anatolian core. Sivas Province held some of the earliest refugee resettlement areas and, eventually, one of the largest refugee populations; whatever happened to the settlement of muhajirs in Sivas reverberated across the empire. The story of Uzunyayla should also be of interest to scholars of diasporas and migration as an example of a compact settlement of

---

<sup>3</sup> Yel and Gündüz estimate that 40,200 North Caucasian immigrants moved to Uzunyayla in 1860-65; "Uzunyaylaya Yerleştirilmeleri," 965.

<sup>4</sup> The exact number of villages differs slightly in historiography, reflective of the shifting ethnic demographics in the twentieth century and an open interpretation of Uzunyayla's borders. Counting extant villages, Yel and Gündüz identify 74 villages (2008: 972-73); Miyazawa – 71 villages (2004: 17); and Karataş – 73 villages (2012: 264-71).



heterogeneous immigrant groups who rebuilt parts of their lost homeland abroad. This process is more commonly associated with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century settler societies in the Americas than with Muslim refugees in the Ottoman Middle East. What sets Uzunyayla apart is that muhajirs built a new community on their isolated plateau, as the world of others – nomadic Muslims and settled Christians – was crumbling around them, while Uzunyayla itself had become both a “refugee valley” and a “slave valley.”

### *Geography of Uzunyayla*

What allowed Uzunyayla to become the second “homeland” for many North Caucasian muhajirs is its remarkable geography. The Uzunyayla plateau lies at 1,550-1,630 meters (5,085-5,348 feet) above sea level, surrounded by mountains reaching 1,800 to 2,700 meters (5,906-8,858 feet) on all four sides.<sup>5</sup> In the southeast, the plateau is limited by the Tahtalı Mountains, which constitute the northern extension of the great Taurus mountain chain of southern Anatolia. In the west lies the Hınzır Mountain, and, in the north and east, the foothills of Tecer and Yama mountain chains. The surrounding mountains turn Uzunyayla into a narrow, high-altitude basin, which is about 50 km wide. The Zamantı River, one of Turkey’s best rivers for rafting, finds its source in western Uzunyayla. The river leaves the plateau via an opening at Pınarbaşı, which served as a historical entrance to the plateau and where Circassians would found the town of Aziziye, in the foothills of the Şirvan Mountain. The Zamantı River then snakes its way south, to the west of the Tahtalı Mountains and to the east of the Ala Dağları, before joining the Seyhan River,

---

<sup>5</sup> Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 16-17; Reşat İzbirak, “Uzunyayla’da Coğrafya Araştırmaları,” in *Uzunyayla: Rapor ve Belgeleri*, ed. Muhittin Ünal (Ankara: Kaf-Dav, 2008), vol. 2, 74-93.

Turkey's longest river. The Seyhan River carries Zamantı's waters through the city of Adana and the fertile region of Çukurova, or "hollow plain" in Turkish, into the Mediterranean Sea. The stunning geographic contrast between the "hollow plain" of Çukurova, the inhospitable Taurus Mountains to its north, and the well-hidden "long plateau" of Uzunyayla within the mountains created a web of migratory routes followed by nomadic populations. The story of North Caucasian resettlement in Uzunyayla is a history of transformation of some centuries-old migratory patterns in central and southern Anatolia.<sup>6</sup>

The climate of Uzunyaya is harsh, which partially explains why the region lacked a substantial settled population by the mid-nineteenth century. Summers in Uzunyayla are cool, and winters are severe, with temperatures below zero for several months. In winter, heavy snow cuts off communication between villages across the vast plateau, making Uzunyayla virtually impenetrable for outsiders and also hardly traversable for locals – whether in the late Ottoman period or today.<sup>7</sup> According to communal histories, North Caucasian muhajirs favored resettlement in Uzunyayla precisely because the area mirrored climatic conditions in their homeland.<sup>8</sup> The climate and terrain are, indeed, similar to those of the plateaus of Kabarda in the Northcentral Caucasus. Western Circassian and Abazin muhajirs, from valleys and foothills on the eastern Black Sea coast, must have had a more difficult time getting used to unforgiving Uzunyayla winters.

---

<sup>6</sup> For an environmental and social history of the Çukurova delta plain and its northern mountains, see Chris Gratien, "The Mountains Are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956," Ph.D. dissertation (Georgetown University, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Interview in Karakuyu Köyü, Pınarbaşı District, Turkey (25 July 2017).

<sup>8</sup> See Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 69; Madina M. Pashtova, "Fol'klor v cherkesskoi diaspore Turtsii: funktsional'nye i regional'no-lokal'nye osobennosti," in *Fol'kloristika i kul'turnaia antropologiya segodnia*, eds. Aleksandra S. Arkhipova et al. (Moscow: RGGU, 2012), 420.



bordered the provinces of Adana and Aleppo. Aziziye was the only town in the area. The closest large city was Kaiseri, just under a hundred miles west in the neighboring province. The provincial center of Sivas was over a hundred miles away to the north, across the rugged mountainous terrain. In the early twentieth century, a journey from Uzunyayla to Sivas took three days.<sup>9</sup>

### *North Caucasian Resettlement in Uzunyayla*

The first North Caucasians started arriving in Uzunyayla sometime in 1859.<sup>10</sup> At the time, the plateau hosted a small sedentary community and had sufficient land to accommodate thousands of potential muhajirs.<sup>11</sup> As we have seen in previous chapters, most of the land allocated to immigrants in Dobruja and the Balqa' was *miri*. In central and southern Anatolia, uncultivated land was categorized as *miri*, *mevat*, and *vakıf*. For example, in Ankara Subprovince, 75 percent of all land allocated to muhajirs had been formally registered as *vakıf* land.<sup>12</sup> Much of Uzunyayla's land constituted part of large charitable endowments, particularly the Mekka and Medina *vakıf* and the Atik Valide Sultan *vakıf*.<sup>13</sup> Yet the administrators of these endowments were in the imperial capital,

---

<sup>9</sup> Milo A. Jewett (Sivas, 15 October 1900), in *Commercial Relations of the United States with Foreign Countries During the Year 1900* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), vol. 1, 1140.

<sup>10</sup> See BOA A.MKT.UM 365/56 (15 *safer* 1276, 13 September 1859); 386/8 (24 *cemaziyelevvel* 1276, 19 December 1859); see also Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 167. Oral histories suggest that some villages were founded as early as 1835 and 1853, which is unlikely; see Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 71-72.

<sup>11</sup> An Ottoman document from 1854 mentions nomadic raids by Afşars, Çelikanlıs, and others on "people of Uzunyayla" (Ott. Tur. *Uzunyayla ahalisi*), which suggests a settled population; BOA A.MKT.MHM 60/1 (4 *safer* 1271, 27 October 1854).

<sup>12</sup> Hasan Yüksel, "Kafkas Göçmen Vakıfları," *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 5 (1994): 119.

<sup>13</sup> BOA A.MKT.MVL 131/13 (14 *safer* 1278, 21 August 1861); İ.MVL 452/20210 (22 *safer* 1278, 29 August 1861); see also Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 19-20; Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 167.

and, in practice, the land was freely used by nomadic communities who came to Uzunyayla to graze their herds of horses in summer. From the perspective of the state, the settlement of Uzunyayla presented a rare opportunity to find enough cultivable land without disturbing other settled communities, while also “reclaiming” the land from nomads. The resettlement of muhajirs in Uzunyayla was also part of the state’s larger campaign to promote sedentary lifestyle and agricultural cultivation. As much as nine-tenths of the cultivated land in interior Anatolia was only settled since 1860.<sup>14</sup>

By 1860, hundreds of North Caucasian muhajirs had been arriving by sea and sent for resettlement in Uzunyayla. For example, in July 1860, Ottoman authorities registered 547 Circassians and four Daghestanis who disembarked in the ports of Trabzon and Samsun and proceeded to Sivas Province for resettlement.<sup>15</sup> In May 1861, 415 Circassians landed in Trabzon and were sent to Sivas Province.<sup>16</sup> Over the next two months, 1,649 Daghestani, Chechen, Circassian, Nogai Tatar, and Abazin muhajirs arrived in Samsun. They spent winter in the districts of Bafra, Kavak, and Amasya, all near Samsun, awaiting their relocation for permanent settlement in Sivas.<sup>17</sup>

In August 1860, the Sivas authorities sent an urgent telegram to the newly formed Refugee Commission (calling it the “Commission for Circassian Refugees” or *Muhacirin-i Çerakise Komisyonu*).<sup>18</sup> The authorities acknowledged that every muhajir household should receive a couple of oxen, a cart, a plow, seeds for their first harvest, and daily

---

<sup>14</sup> Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth, “The Influence of Social Structure on Land Division and Settlement in Inner Anatolia,” in *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives*, eds. Peter Benedict et al. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), 21; cited in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. İnalcık and Quataert, vol. 1, 160.

<sup>15</sup> BOA MAD.d 23110 (29 *zilhicce* 1276, 18 July 1860).

<sup>16</sup> BOA MAD.d 23113 (6 *zilkade* 1277, 16 May 1861).

<sup>17</sup> BOA MAD.d 23112 (29 *zilhicce* 1277, 8 July 1861).

<sup>18</sup> BOA A.MKT.NZD 321/94 (1 *safer* 1277, 19 August 1860).

rations. That aid, however, had not been delivered to muhajirs in Sivas, and winter was approaching. The Sivas officials warned the Refugee Commission that, should aid not arrive, muhajirs would starve to death. Moreover, the Sivas government lacked funds to pay for oxen and carts to move many muhajirs from their temporary villages to Uzunyayla.<sup>19</sup>

A few months later, the Sivas authorities, who still experienced a shortfall in funding, attempted to frame refugee resettlement in terms of regional and imperial security, perhaps astutely anticipating future challenges. Ahmed Hamdi, the Sivas governor, wrote to Istanbul that the Baghdad road (*Bağdat caddesi*), a historic route from Istanbul to Baghdad, went in the vicinity of Uzunyayla, which should be an additional stimulus for the government to ensure that the settlement of muhajirs proceeds orderly and enough funding is sent to his province, so that public order prevails in this strategic area.<sup>20</sup>

In his work on the first decade of Circassian resettlement, Ömer Karataş argues that the transportation of a large number of muhajirs from the Black Sea ports, or transit interior locations, to Uzunyayla required a tremendous expense and logistical cooperation between different imperial and provincial authorities.<sup>21</sup> According to available Ottoman evidence, in the fall of 1862, the government spent 1,023,834 *kuruş* and 14 *para* on houses, oxen, agricultural tools, and seeds for 1,547 households, or 9,073 people, in Sivas Subprovince.<sup>22</sup> In the same time period and likely for the same muhajirs, the authorities bought 87,642 *kile*

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 435/43 (25 *rebiülahir* 1277, 10 November 1860); reprinted in *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, ed. Gurulkan, vol. 2, 46.

<sup>21</sup> See Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 59-93, 111-20. See also, for example, BOA A.MKT.UM 403/86 (12 *şevval* 1276, 3 May 1860); 456/38 (10 *şaban* 1277, 21 February 1861).

<sup>22</sup> BOA ML.MSF.d 16636 (17 *rebiülevvel* 1279, 12 September 1862).

of bread for 58,797 *kuruş*.<sup>23</sup> For the winter of 1862-63, 425 households of Circassian and Chechen muhajirs in Aziziye were given five Istanbul *kile* (about 128 kg in total) of wheat each. The total cost was 29,642 *kuruş* 20 *para*, and the Kayseri subprovincial treasury covered the expenses.<sup>24</sup> In addition to these figures, the government allocated separate funds for muhajirs' houses and transportation. In the early 1860s, the yearly costs of settling muhajirs in Uzunyayla must have run into several million *kuruş*.

The government declared that the imperial treasury could not cover all expenses of settling muhajirs in Sivas.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the authorities relegated part of the burden on local populations, which was the same policy that they applied in the Balkans (see Chapter 1). Many communities throughout Anatolia were expected to contribute their labor, products, and living space to the settlement of muhajirs. Their contributions, depending on local circumstances, were either acts of charity, public work to be reimbursed later, or coerced uncompensated labor.

By one estimate, between 1860 and 1864, residents of at least nineteen Sivas districts contributed aid to the total value of 425,715 *kuruş*.<sup>26</sup> Communities in the district of Veray provided free-of-charge transportation for muhajirs from Samsun to Amasya and Sivas.<sup>27</sup> Residents of Konya villages provided transportation for Daghestani muhajirs from Konya to Sivas.<sup>28</sup> Local populations in the surrounding districts of Alucra, Tonus (Altınyayla), Aşudi (Günpınar), Kangal, Yıldızeli, and Gedikçik temporarily hosted

---

<sup>23</sup> BOA ML.MSF.d 16633 (7 *rebiülevvel* 1279, 2 September 1862).

<sup>24</sup> BOA ML.MSF.d 16116 (5 *şaban* 1279, 26 January 1863).

<sup>25</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 193/94 (17 *safer* 1277, 4 September 1860).

<sup>26</sup> See Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 99-102.

<sup>27</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 459/90 (23 *şaban* 1277, 6 March 1861).

<sup>28</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 520/4 (23 *cemaziyelevvel* 1278, 26 November 1861).

muhajirs and built houses for them.<sup>29</sup> For example, in September 1860, the Gedikçik district governor sent a petition, co-signed by the district mufti and 100 villagers, to have the people of Gedikçik reimbursed for building 32 houses for Circassian muhajirs in 18 different villages in Uzunyayla.<sup>30</sup>

The government also made early arrangements to set up a religious infrastructure in Uzunyayla. Muhajirs often arrived with religious leaders in their midst. Ottoman authorities regularly conferred upon the North Caucasian ‘ulama positions of imams of newly built mosques in immigrant villages, thus reinforcing their social standing within their communities. The Ottomans took pains to preserve this social group, not only because of the state’s dire need for educated ‘ulama but also because they were seen as communal representatives whom the Ottomans could integrate into their provincial elites.<sup>31</sup> The ‘ulama were likely to be among few people in the village who could read and write in Arabic or Ottoman Turkish and therefore served the role of petitioners on behalf of their communities and the authorities’ points of contact in their communication with refugees. By 1861, the government funded the construction of seven mosques in Uzunyayla and appointed imams from among the muhajirs’ ‘ulama.<sup>32</sup> Communities from the district of Hafik also donated their labor to build a mosque and a primary school for muhajirs.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 200/76 (11 *cemaziyelevvel* 1277, 25 November 1860); 202/24 (27 *cemaziyelevvel* 1277, 11 December 1860); 202/99 (4 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 18 December 1860); 211/58 (23 *şaban* 1277, 6 March 1861); A.MKT.UM 430/11 (17 *rebiülevvel* 1277, 3 October 1860), 453/8 (23 *receb* 1277, 4 February 1861); A.MKT.NZD 335/65 (4 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 18 December 1860).

<sup>30</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 430/11 (27 *safer* 1277, 14 September 1860). For more petitions from local populations, see A.MKT.UM 435/43 (*rebiülevvel-rebiülahir* 1277, September-November 1860).

<sup>31</sup> On Ottoman policies towards muhajirs’ leadership, see Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 127-64.

<sup>32</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 204/85 (24 *cemaziyelahir* 1277, 7 January 1861); 213/74 (19 *ramazan* 1277, 31 March 1861); A.MKT.NZD 348/63 (4 *şevval* 1277, 15 April 1861). On Uzunyayla Circassians’ religious leadership in the twentieth century, see Hamit Yüksel, “Uzunyayla Çerkeslerinde Din-Gelenek Oydışmasında Adamey Hafız Ali Efendi’nin Rolü,” in *Geçmişten Geleceğe Çerkesler: Kültür, Kimlik ve Siyaset*, eds. Sevda Alankuş and Esra Oktay Arı (Ankara: Kafdav Yayınları, 2014), 293-308.

<sup>33</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 215/88 (12 *şevval* 1277, 23 April 1861).



By the early 1860s, Uzunyayla emerged as one of the main destinations for North Caucasian immigrants in the Ottoman Empire. The rumors of a hidden plateau in the center of Anatolia – with abundant land and a familiar climate – traveled quickly among muhajirs. As a result, many muhajirs who had been settled elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire and were unsatisfied with their locations considered moving to Uzunyayla.

In their petitions to the state, many muhajirs who sought relocation to Uzunyayla described the hardships they faced in other locations. In April 1861, Mir Hüseyin, a Circassian notable, wrote the following petition to local Ottoman officials:

I come from the Hatuqwai tribe and, twenty months ago, with 56 members of my tribe, I arrived in Istanbul. We were temporarily settled in Kuzugüdenli and Sarioğlan districts in Kayseri Subprovince, Ankara Province. We did not receive help from local Turkmens and other tribes, and five-six of our people died of hunger there. Some members of our tribe had previously settled in Uzunyayla, and [from them we know that] Uzunyayla has available *miri* land in the areas of Pınarbaşı and Punarkışlak.<sup>34</sup>

This group of Circassian muhajirs had the support of local authorities, who endorsed their relocation to Uzunyayla in a letter to the Ankara provincial governor, describing muhajirs as destitute and deserving of support from the state and charity from local communities.<sup>35</sup>

In another petition, sent in June 1861, a group of 96 muhajirs, of the Altıkeseke tribe, requested to move from Bursa Subprovince to Uzunyayla due to hunger. They lamented that the daily wages to which they were entitled were not paid promptly. “One day we would be given wages and for five days we would not be given anything, then we would

---

<sup>34</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 464/71, f. 2 (20 *ramazan* 1277, 1 April 1861).

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 1 (26 *ramazan*, 1277, 7 April 1861).

receive wages for two days and nothing for ten days,” wrote three Circassian representatives, İshak, Mehmed, and Ademi, on behalf of their community.<sup>36</sup>

The following table, based on Ottoman archival data, demonstrates the popular appeal of Uzunyayla as a place of ingathering of North Caucasians from all over Anatolia.

Table 12: North Caucasians who moved to Uzunyayla after being settled elsewhere, 1860-62

Households	Population	Ethnic group	Prior place of settlement	Date*	Archival code
57	257	Abazin (Altikesekek)	Varna Subprovince	05/15/1860	A.MKT.UM 405/51
	500	Chechens	Canik Subprovince, Bafra District	01/20/1861	A.MKT.MHM 206/60, 209/64, 210/55
1	9	Circassians	Hüdavendigâr Subprovince, Mihaliç District	03/19/1861	MVL 367/38
57		Circassians	Kayseri Subprovince	04/07/1861	A.MKT.UM 464/71
		Circassians and Nogai Tatars	Bolu Subprovince	05/17/1861	A.MKT.NZD 352/92
214	1,400	Circassians	Kastamonu Subprovince	05/18/1861	A.MKT.MHM 219/53, A.MKT.MHM 228/22
170	1,314	Circassians and Tatars	Bozok Subprovince	05/19/1861	A.MKT.NZD 353/12
10	112	Abazin (Altikesekek)	Ertuğrul Subprovince, Bilecik District	05/28/1861	A.MKT.NZD 353/100
260		Circassians (Hatuqwai)	Kayseri Subprovince	06/09/1861	A.MKT.MHM 222/5

<sup>36</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 477/67 (25 *zilkade* 1277, 4 June 1861). The petitioners refer to themselves as Circassians. The Altikesekek tribe would later be categorized as part of the Abazin ethnic group. Abazins are an ethnic group closely related to Circassians and Abkhaz.

200		Chechens	Aydın Subprovince	06/09/1861	A.MKT.MHM 222/9
13	96	Abazin (Altıkesekek)	Kütahya Subprovince, Karacaşehir District	06/12/1861	A.MKT.MHM 222/55, A.MKT.UM 477/67
7	30	Kumyks	Kütahya Subprovince	07/04/1861	A.MKT.UM 481/17
		Circassians (Kabardins)	Bolu Subprovince, Gümüşabad District	07/08/1861	A.MKT.UM 481/98
	400	Circassians	Amasya Subprovince	07/24/1861	A.MKT.MHM 227/51
	36	Daghestanis	Kastamonu Subprovince	08/18/1861	A.MKT.MHM 231/57, 233/15, A.MKT.NZD 363/98
240		Nogai Tatars	Çankırı Subprovince	08/24/1861	A.MKT.MHM 232/32
200		Nogai Tatars	Karahisar-ı Sahib Subprovince	10/22/1861	A.MKT.UM 509/18
32		Circassians	Saruhan Subprovince, Güzelhisar District	01/01/1862	A.MKT.UM 529/37, 530/71

\* Dates of governmental correspondence about each relocation.

All archival sources are from BOA. For similar estimates, see Karataş 2012: 53-57.

As the multi-ethnic and almost exclusively North Caucasian population of Uzunyayla increased, so did Uzunyayla's appeal as a region that could become the "little Caucasus."<sup>37</sup> By early 1862, over 10,000 muhajirs were present in Uzunyayla.<sup>38</sup> Muhajirs streamed in Uzunyayla from different directions. Most arrived by boat from the Northwest

<sup>37</sup> See Eiji Miyazawa, "Reconstruction of the Landscape of Homeland Among Circassians in the Uzunyayla Plateau," *Bulletin of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan* 50, no. 1 (2007): 128-55; Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 15; Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 2.

<sup>38</sup> Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 169.

Caucasus via northern Anatolia; many came from the Northcentral Caucasus by land; and some relocated from other Ottoman settlements. Among the latter group, some muhajirs relocated from nearby, making their way from malarial marshes of Çukurova for the cooler climates of Uzunyayla.<sup>39</sup> Others came from far afield. Even in Dobruja muhajirs have heard of Uzunyayla. In 1866, chiefs of the Circassian Hatuqwai community, whose people had arrived in Varna for settlement in the Ottoman Balkans, petitioned the Refugee Commission to instead be sent to Sivas.<sup>40</sup>

Muhajirs who had arrived early, in 1859-62, were often better off than those who came during the Circassian refugee crisis in 1863-64. The former chose to emigrate when it was becoming clear that Russia would eventually annex all Circassian territories. The Circassian, Abazin, and Nogai Tatar notables among them had an opportunity to sell their estates prior to entering the Ottoman Empire. Their experiences were different from the latter group, consisting of thousands of penniless North Caucasian peasants fleeing ethnic cleansing in 1863-64. The earlier waves of muhajirs transferred part of their wealth into Uzunyayla. For example, in 1860, ‘Ali Bey, a Circassian notable who had settled in Sivas Province, appointed a representative in the Russian Empire to collect a sum equivalent to 94,400 *kuruş* left from the sale of his estate.<sup>41</sup> According to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry’s documentation, prior to emigrating from Circassia, ‘Ali Bey sold two slave men, several dozen horses, a few oxen, over a thousand sheep and goats, and a firearm to three buyers, two of them Russian generals and one an Abkhaz notable. ‘Ali Bey likely sold his property

---

<sup>39</sup> Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 69; Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 88-90. See also the story of the Khutatzades in Chapter 5.

<sup>40</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 337/2 (1 *safer* 1282, 26 June 1865).

<sup>41</sup> BOA HR.MKT 365/70, f. 3 (25 *cemaziyelevvel* 1277, 9 December 1860).

in a hurry and did not collect the full payment, which he now tried to reclaim in Russia, with the full support of the Ottoman government.

Uzunyayla's muhajir communities often petitioned authorities to allow their family members in the Russian Caucasus to join them in the Ottoman Empire. After a series of Russian administrative reforms aiming to curb mass Muslim exodus, legal emigration to the Ottoman Empire was administratively and financially cumbersome for many families (see Chapter 6). Families on both sides of the Russo-Ottoman frontier were aware of this. Many muhajirs, who had become Ottoman subjects, petitioned the Porte to grant a request for their families, who were still in the Caucasus and were Russian subjects, to immigrate in the Ottoman Empire. If that request was approved, the Ottoman Foreign Ministry would convey its invitation for a specific Muslim family to immigrate to the Russian authorities, which could potentially speed up the process of receiving the Russian approval for that family to emigrate. North Caucasian muhajirs, hailing from different ethnic groups and villages in Uzunyayla, repeatedly petitioned the government to achieve family reunification.<sup>42</sup>

The Ottoman government directed muhajirs to the general area of Uzunyayla, but it is likely that, upon their arrival in the region, muhajirs exercised some control in choosing a place for their new villages – in relation to natural landmarks, such as rivers and springs, but also to other North Caucasian villages.<sup>43</sup> Today, some members of the North Caucasian diaspora in Uzunyayla believe that “the way Circassians founded villages in Uzunyayla is

---

<sup>42</sup> See BOA HR.İD 4/10 (1872), 4/59 (1873), 12/5 (1888), 7/4 (1894), 12/43 (1902), 12/46 (1903); HR.SFR.1 37/86 (1873).

<sup>43</sup> For a breakdown of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla depending on the nature of muhajirs' arrival – by land or by sea – see Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları,” 39-47.

exactly the same as the locations of the villages in [Kabarda].”<sup>44</sup> This diasporic perception is based on the fact that many Uzunyayla villages were set up in clusters to mimic the social organization of communities in the North Caucasus. For example, seven villages in the middle of Uzunyayla were settled by muhajirs from Kundet-ey, a region in Great Kabarda; that cluster of villages is known by muhajirs as “Kundet-ey Seven Villages.”<sup>45</sup> The North Caucasian communities often gave their new villages the names of their old villages in the Caucasus.<sup>46</sup>

Muhajirs divided the Uzunyayla plateau into several ethnic and sub-ethnic sections, some of them with specific economic characteristics. Eiji Miyazawa, an anthropologist who studied and lived among the Circassian community in Uzunyayla, identifies four culturally and economically distinct regions within modern Uzunyayla:

Uzunyayla proper is a plain almost co-extensive with Örenşehir sub-district in the north-east of Pınarbaşı, where villages featured vast but unirrigated lands used for growing cereals and pasturing livestock; “*Boğurbaşı*” was the name given to the cluster of smaller villages in the Central (*Merkez*) sub-district around the town, which people in Uzunyayla proper also called “Potato Villages,” because smaller areas of irrigated land were used to grow fruit and vegetables; Sörümşek Valley was the site of a group of villages in Kaynar sub-district, stretching along the southern skirt of Hunzur Mountain (2641m), where vegetables were grown. Uzunyayla proper contained mostly Kabardian villages, while Sörümşek Valley had both Hatukoy and Abzekh villages and *Boğurbaşı* included both Kabardian and Abaza villages. Also, there was a small ethnic enclave of several Abaza villages among Kabardians at the north edge of Uzunyayla on the boundary between Pınarbaşı and Şarkışla.<sup>47</sup>

The establishment of several dozen villages in Uzunyayla allowed North Caucasians, chiefly Circassians, to not only preserve many cultural traditions from the Caucasus but to also create new ones. Over the decades, Uzunyayla became a center for

---

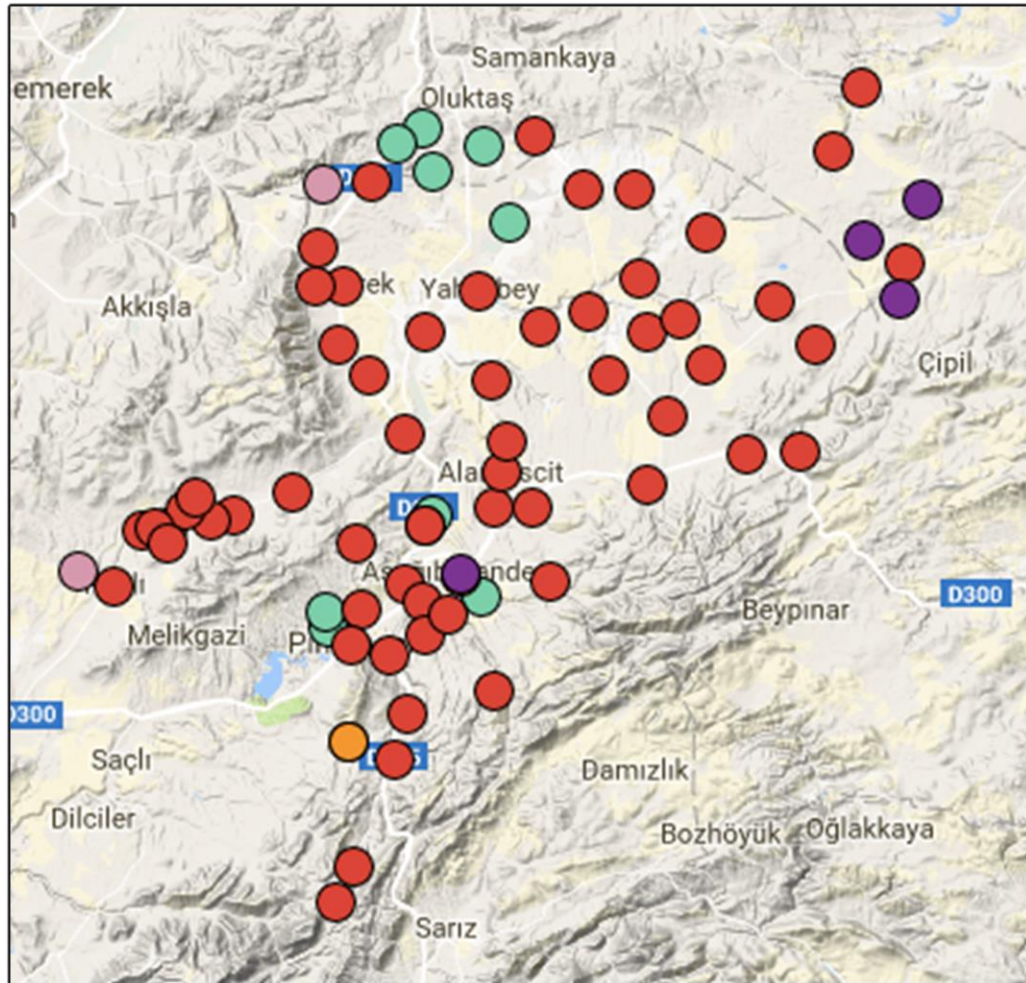
<sup>44</sup> Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 75.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21, 130-31.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-90.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-77.

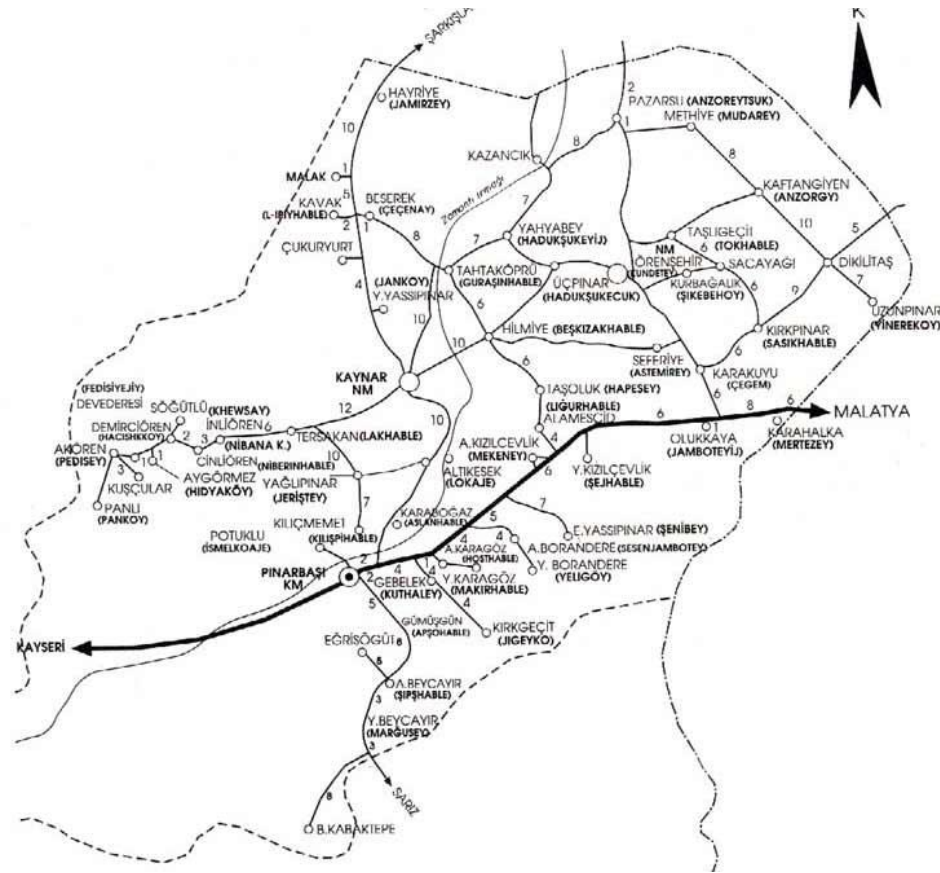
Figure 11: Map of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla



77 villages. The map is color coded for ethnic origins of village inhabitants: red – Circassians; green – Abazins; purple – Chechens; pink – Ossetians; orange – Karachays. This visualization is part of my digital database of North Caucasian muhajir villages in the Ottoman Empire. For a complete map, see **Error! Reference source not found.** I would like to thank Murat Paşu for generously sharing his data on North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla.

oral cultural production in its own right. Its residents created new variations of their old songs and composed new songs; wrote new tales about old folk heroes as if they had been living with them in Anatolia; and reproduced some playful stereotypes about different

Figure 12: Road map of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla



Source: *KafkasEvi*, <[www.kafkasevi.com/uploads/uzunyayla-harita.jpg](http://www.kafkasevi.com/uploads/uzunyayla-harita.jpg)> (accessed on 7 March 2018).

Circassian tribes, based on their new experiences in Uzunyayla. Circassians elsewhere in Anatolia have been using Uzunyayla as a diasporic cultural marker, referring to Uzunyayla-style wedding dance parties, “word battles,” and folk tales.<sup>48</sup> The idea of Uzunyayla as a

<sup>48</sup> Madina M. Pashtova, “K probleme opisaniia lokal’nykh fol’klornykh traditsii: cherkesy Uzun-Iaily (Turtsiia),” *Vestnik Adygeiskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 2 (2011): 29-35; “Subetnonimicheskii tekst-markirovka v adygskei fol’klornoii kul’ture,” *Vestnik nauki* (Maikop: ARIGI) 1 (2011): 162-75.



“little motherland,” as it is expressed in the Kabardin language, is still alive in the Turkish-based Circassian diaspora.<sup>49</sup>

Today, Uzunyayla hosts villages of North Caucasians, Turks (including Afşars and Bulgarian Turks), and Kurds. In the late Ottoman period, the Uzunyayla plateau was almost exclusively a North Caucasian territory. Its core was taken up by villages of eastern Circassians (Kabardins), western Circassians (Hatuqwai and Abzakh), and Abazins. Chechen, Ossetian, and Karachay villages lay on the margins of Uzunyayla. [See Figure 11 and Figure 12.]

In 1861, the authorities overseeing the resettlement of refugees in Uzunyayla enthusiastically endorsed establishing a town near the plateau.<sup>50</sup> The chosen area, called Pınarbaşı, lay at the entrance to Uzunyayla. At the time, thousands of muhajirs had arrived in Uzunyayla from other provinces, and newly set up villages could not accommodate everyone. The families who had been awaiting housing, over 500 in total, became the founders of the new town.

The town was named Aziziye, in honor of Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861-76), who ascended to the throne a few months prior and during whose reign most North Caucasians would arrive in the Ottoman Empire. It was the first place in the empire to bear the new sultan’s name.<sup>51</sup> The name of Aziziye later became a popular choice for muhajir settlements, rivaled perhaps only by the name of Hamidiye, given to many villages that

---

<sup>49</sup> Madina M. Pashtova, “Kavkazskaia voina v ‘klassicheskikh’ formakh fol’klora i sovremennom sotsiokul’turnom diskurse cherkesskoi diaspory,” *Kavkazskaia voina: sobytiia, fakty, uroki*, eds. Kasbulat F. Dzamikhov et al. (Nalchik: KBIGI, 2015), 160-61.

<sup>50</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 233/23 (21 safer 1278, 28 August 1861).

<sup>51</sup> Rhoads Murphey, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800* (London: Continuum, 2008), 12, 282n27.

were established during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909). The eight chiefs of Hatuqway and Kabardin Circassians wrote a statement, affirming the economic potential of the new settlement.<sup>52</sup> They asserted that the area of Pınarbaşı, lying on the Zamantı River, had “vast grassy and watery lands” to facilitate muhajirs’ agriculture. Even more importantly, sitting in the foothills of the Şirvan Mountain, it was within a one-hour ride from the forest. Uzunyayla was devoid of trees, making Aziziye crucial for muhajirs’ access to a secure supply of precious timber for the construction of their houses and stables. The new town would also serve as a regional marketplace, where Uzunyayla’s North Caucasian farmers and pastoralists would come to trade with each other and with communities living outside of Uzunyayla.<sup>53</sup>

Table 13: First muhajir population in Aziziye, Sivas Province in 1861

Households	Ethnic group	Area traveling from
214	Circassians (Kabardins)	Kastamonu
100	Circassians (Kabardins)	Kütahya
135	Daghestanis, Chechens, Kumyks [sic]	Kütahya (?)
27	Circassians (Kabardins)	Trabzon
60	Circassians (Hatuqwai)	Yozgat
Total: 536		

Source: BOA A.MKT.UM 491/43, f. 2 (15 *muharrem* 1278, 23 July 1861).  
Based on another source, Karataş provides a list of 929 households; see Karataş 2012: 110.

<sup>52</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 491/43, f. 1 (7 *safer* 1278, 14 August 1861).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. See also Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 107-09.

The town of Aziziye, in addition to accommodating several thousand muhajirs and setting an economic foundation for the development of the Uzunyayla villages, also served administrative and security objectives. From the administrative perspective, the Sivas provincial authorities must have preferred Uzunyayla to be governed from an easily accessible town, which would be close to Uzunyayla but not on the plateau itself. In 1861, Aziziye became a center of its own district; in 1862 – a subprovince; and since 1865 – a district again.<sup>54</sup> The security function of Aziziye was related to the escalating conflict between North Caucasian muhajirs and the Afşar tribe.

### *The Conflict with the Afşars in the 1860s*

The Turkish term *yayla*, often translated as “plateau” or “highland,” is related to the term *yaylak*, which denotes summer highland pastures. That term implies a claim to the land by nomadic or settled communities who use the area seasonally. The Uzunyayla plateau was a summer pasture for the Afşars, a Turkic-speaking community of pastoralists that migrated between their winter pastures, or *kışlak*, in Çukurova, in the south, and their summer pastures in plateaus of the Taurus Mountains, in the north.<sup>55</sup> The Afşars were the largest nomadic community in this part of Anatolia, counting about 3,000 tents and owning 40,000 sheep, 3,000 goats, 40,000 heads of cattle, and 9,000 camels in Adana Province alone.<sup>56</sup> The Afşars would spend winters, tending to their numerous herds of horses and

---

<sup>54</sup> Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 110.

<sup>55</sup> See Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 45.

<sup>56</sup> Data from Victor Langlois, *Voyage dans la Cilicie et dans les montagnes du Taurus: exécuté pendant les années 1852-1853* (Paris, 1861); cited in Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 64.

flocks of sheep in the foothills of Adana Province and, in summer, move to the cooler climate of Uzunyayla.<sup>57</sup>

For Afşars, the settlement of North Caucasians in Uzunyayla represented yet another development in a long history of the state's encroachment on their territory and assault on their ways of life. Beginning in the 1830s, the Ottoman government embarked on a renewed campaign to sedentarize nomadic communities, as part of the broader processes of increasing the tax base, promoting agriculture, bolstering military recruitment, and "pacifying" far-flung regions of the empire.<sup>58</sup> The government particularly targeted the Afşars, as the strongest nomadic community in this strategic region linking central Anatolia with the Mediterranean coast and the Levant. In the 1840s and 1850s, Afşar members were dispersed, mixed with other tribes, and permanently settled against their will.<sup>59</sup> In the years preceding muhajirs' arrival, the Afşars found their geography and dominance in this part of Anatolia constricting.

North Caucasian muhajirs and Afşars clashed shortly after the first Circassians stepped foot on the plateau.<sup>60</sup> Already in 1860, one of the first Circassian immigrant groups in Uzunyayla complained that it was unable to settle in the area due to the hostility of the Afşars.<sup>61</sup> The following year, multiple groups of muhajirs arrived in Uzunyayla from other

---

<sup>57</sup> For a nuanced discussion of two different climates in Çukurova's marshes and foothills, and a history of seasonal migrations by Çukurova's settled and nomadic populations, see Gratien, "The Mountains Are Ours," 50-70.

<sup>58</sup> Kasaba, *Moveable Empire*, 99-108.

<sup>59</sup> Kasaba, *Moveable Empire*, 100, 105; see also Andrew Gordon Gould, "Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885," Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 1973).

<sup>60</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the Afşar-muhajir conflict, see Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 202-51. See also Habiçoğlu, *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*, 167-69; Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 174-78.

<sup>61</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 403/86 (12 şevval 1276; 3 May 1860).

regions of Anatolia. Many of them settled around the springs or by the Zamantı River, where the Afşars typically set up their camps.<sup>62</sup> When the Afşars returned to Uzunyayla for the summer, they found thousands of refugees and their horses on their historical pastures.

Muhajirs and Afşars clashed over the right to the land and water sources at several locations across Uzunyayla.<sup>63</sup> One of the more serious confrontations started in June with an Afşar raid on a muhajir village, which led to the Circassians' pursuit of Afşar horsemen and escalated to a series of communal revenge attacks on each other. Several North Caucasian villages pulled their forces to fight Afşar tribesmen. The Afşars' losses are unknown. Among the muhajirs' eighteen dead and wounded were members of Hatuqwai, Kabardin, Besleney, Ubykh, and Abazin (Altıkesekek) communities, indicative of a joint muhajir effort in Uzunyayla – an experience that must have further forged a sense of unity among Uzunyayla's North Caucasians.<sup>64</sup>

The Afşars, in alliance with other nomadic communities, planned to assemble a joint force of about 5,000 men to contest Uzunyayla.<sup>65</sup> The muhajirs sent telegrams to the government asking for immediate military backing. The young refugee town of Aziziye at the time served as additional protection against Afşar attacks.<sup>66</sup> The town guarded one of the entrances into Uzunyayla, and many villages lay beyond the town.

---

<sup>62</sup> Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 208-10.

<sup>63</sup> See Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 211-20; Yel and Gündüz, "Uzunyaylaya Yerleştirilmeleri," 966-68; BOA İ.MVL 464/20949 (23 şaban 1278, 23 February 1862); reprinted in Fethi Güngör, "Çerkeslerin Uzunyayla'da İskanı – Kaynar Mahallesi Örneği," *Yeni Türkiye* 74 (2015): 737-40.

<sup>64</sup> Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 214-18.

<sup>65</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 483/67 (5 muharrem 1278, 13 July 1861); Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 213, 218.

<sup>66</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 491/32, f. 2 (15 muharrem 1278, 23 July 1861).

In 1861-62, it looked like the two communities were heading for an all-out war. Initially, the Ottoman government hoped that a conflict could be avoided. The authorities launched an investigation into why the lands claimed by the Afşars were distributed to muhajirs and why some muhajirs occupied the Afşars' tents.<sup>67</sup> In the same year, the government even negotiated a deal with the Afşars, whereby the Afşars would leave their tents for muhajirs to use in lieu of their unpaid taxes to the government.<sup>68</sup> But soon enough, the authorities were pushed into making a choice about how it would respond to the escalating conflict. For the Ottoman government, the settlement of muhajirs in Uzunyayla represented a significant investment. It was one of the largest refugee resettlement areas, and the state had already poured several million *kuruş* into setting up villages and transporting refugees. The confrontation with the Afşars provoked an early flight from muhajir villages. For example, as early as June 1861, 360 Circassian households, initially settled in Sivas Province, moved further east to Maraş Province; and 30 Nogai Tatar and Daghestani households left for Mamuret-ül-Aziz Province.<sup>69</sup> In spring 1863, a group of Kabardin muhajirs petitioned the government for relocation toward Kars and Erzurum, explicitly citing the danger of living near the Afşars.<sup>70</sup> The symbolic status that Uzunyayla came to enjoy among Circassians across the empire put further spotlight on how the Ottoman government would handle the situation and whether it would back muhajirs' rights to the land that it promised them. The Ottoman government had committed to supporting the muhajirs' cause.

---

<sup>67</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 500/86 (17 *rebiülevvel* 1278, 22 September 1861); 514/51 (5 *cemaziyelevvel* 1278, 8 November 1861).

<sup>68</sup> Karataş, "Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla'ya İskanları," 20.

<sup>69</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 475/75 (25 *zilkade* 1277, 4 June 1861); 760/109 (7 *zilhicce* 1277, 16 June 1861).

<sup>70</sup> BOA MVL 416/88 (2 *zilkade* 1279, 21 April 1863).

The Sivas provincial authorities requested military assistance from neighboring provinces – Konya, Adana, Maraş, Mamuret-ül-Aziz, Ankara, and Aleppo – in apprehending Afşar “bandits” (Ott. Tur. *eşkiya*) and sending reinforcements to Aziziye.<sup>71</sup> The situation was deemed serious enough that, in 1862, the governor of Sivas Province, Zeki Paşa, personally arrived in Uzunyayla. He forced the two sides into negotiations.<sup>72</sup> Most likely, the government exerted pressure on the Afşars to cede their claims to the land in exchange for tax relief. Both sides eventually concluded a peace agreement, whereby the Afşars accepted the settlement of muhajirs in Uzunyayla. In order to prevent further clashes between the two communities, some Afşar leaders were expelled.<sup>73</sup> The Afşars had to find summer pastures elsewhere, and many of them were settled in the nearby Sarız valley, to the south of Aziziye, and along the Zamantı River, to the west of Aziziye.<sup>74</sup> The government established a separate administrative unit (Sadabad) to ensure that the Afşars’ affairs were administered separately from the “Circassian” Aziziye District.<sup>75</sup>

Localized skirmishes over the use of meadows and springs continued between muhajirs and Afşars over the next couple of years.<sup>76</sup> The truce was fragile and depended on goodwill from many communities and local leaders. Throughout the 1860s, the Sivas authorities monitored the situation in case auxiliary troops were needed in Aziziye.<sup>77</sup> At

---

<sup>71</sup> See BOA A.MKT.NZD 350/95 (24 *şevval* 1277, 5 May 1861); 362/93 (11 *safer* 1278, 18 August 1861); A.MKT.UM 471/82 and 471/84 (2 *zilkade* 1277, 12 May 1861); 497/48 (19 *zilhicce* 1277, 28 June 1861); 489/8 (22 *muharrem* 1278, 30 July 1861); 492/93 (12 *safer* 1278, 19 August 1861).

<sup>72</sup> See Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 220-22; BOA MVL 640/6 (10 *cemaziyelevvel* 1279, 3 November 1862).

<sup>73</sup> NBKM Varna 1/16, #1 (16 *mart* 1279, 28 March 1863); BOA MVL 640/18 (22 *rebiülahir* 1279, 17 October 1862)

<sup>74</sup> BOA MVL 712/104 (11 *rebiülahir* 1282, 3 September 1865). See also Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 45-46.

<sup>75</sup> Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 238, 208n658.

<sup>76</sup> BOA MVL 645/58 (9 *zilkade* 1279, 28 April 1863); 649/96 (3 *zilhicce* 1279, 22 May 1863); 648/39 (5 *zilhicce* 1279, 24 May 1863); A.MKT.MHM 271/9 and 271/15 (9 *safer* 1280, 26 July 1863).

<sup>77</sup> See Karataş, “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları,” 225-30.

some point, after yet another clash between the two communities, the government considered bringing soldiers from Köstence (now Constanța, Romania), by boat, to Samsun and from there to Aziziye.<sup>78</sup> The fact that this was even discussed suggests how few law enforcement officers were available in central and southern Anatolia at the time.

The Afşars' loss of their historical pastures in Uzunyayla must have increased economic pressure on this nomadic community, which led to its brigandage in parts of southern Anatolia. Local settled communities issued complaints about roaming Afşar bandits and protested against any permanent settlement of nomads in their vicinity. Thus, in 1864, representatives of settled Muslim and Armenian communities from the Kozan Mountains in Aleppo Province (since 1869, Adana) sent joint petitions to the governor of their neighboring province of Sivas. The villagers complained about Afşar bandits who were coming to Çukurova from Sivas Province, invading their mountains, killing their people, and seizing their possessions.<sup>79</sup> The confrontation between muhajirs and Afşars in Uzunyayla and its effects on the Afşar economy had transregional repercussions.

The conflict between Circassians and Afşars and its resolution through governmental intervention were formative in communal histories of those communities. It was also re-interpreted to fit certain imagined narratives. One such interpretation, recorded in the Circassian community, features a more peaceful and gendered version of what transpired in Uzunyayla in the 1860s:

During the early period after Circassians were sent to Central Anatolia to settle, an Avşar bey fell in love with a Circassian girl. He asked her father, a Circassian bey, for the girl. The father demanded Uzunyayla in exchange for the girl. The Avşar bey accepted the proposal, and Circassians settled in Uzunyayla. The girl died young. The large plain was left for Circassians.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 304/63 (27 *muharrem* 1281, 2 July 1864).

<sup>79</sup> BOA MVL 694/66, f. 1 (*cemaziyelahir* 1281, November 1864), f. 2 (21 *cemaziyelahir* 1281, 21 November 1864).

<sup>80</sup> Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 47.



This fanciful story about an intercommunal relationship that might or might not have taken place captures two important elements. It elevates the critical agency of “beys,” or muhajir and tribal leadership. At this early stage of North Caucasian migrations, for example, the Ottomans recorded every emigrating/immigrating party in Uzunyayla by the names of their leaders. These people, typically of princely or aristocratic descent, made major decisions about the sites of settlement and relations with other communities. This oral history also indicates that the settlement of muhajirs stemmed from negotiations with the Afşars, and it might very well have been so. It is likely that the two communities negotiated the terms of their truce and final settlement, exercising an agency far greater than the one we would know from documents that position the Ottoman troops as the central actor in the story.

The relations between North Caucasian muhajirs and Afşars remained frosty since the 1860s. In subsequent decades, some Afşars founded villages on the margins of Uzunyayla. Members of the two communities occasionally clashed, usually over isolated acts of theft of cattle or seizure of land, but their leadership, with occasional intercession from local authorities, resolved those transgressions before they could escalate to a larger conflict.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, BOA MVL 736/77 (19 *rebiülevvel* 1284, 21 July 1867); HR.SYS 2941/87 (23 September 1878). Because of the broader repercussions of the Uzunyayla conflict, many negotiators were involved. For example, in 1865, the Kastamonu governor purchased gifts to leaders of both Afşars and Circassians in Aziziye Subprovince; see MVL 713/100 (27 *rebiülahir* 1282, 19 September 1865).

## *Slavery in Uzunyayla*

Refugee resettlement in Uzunyayla was also notable for a large number of slaves. Uzunyayla provided a particularly fitting environment for Circassian agricultural slavery to survive.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, some believed it to be a region with the largest number of slaves in the Ottoman Empire by the early twentieth century.<sup>83</sup> The British estimated the number of slaves at two thousand in Aziziye District by 1881.<sup>84</sup> Local Circassians claimed that 1,407 slaves lived in the district by 1911.<sup>85</sup>

In Uzunyayla, hereditary bondage within muhajir communities lingered with little interference from outsiders. More than half of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla were Kabardin. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Kabardin society maintained the most rigid social hierarchy among Circassian communities, characterized by commonplace slave ownership, a practice that was, by then, abandoned in many western Circassian communities.<sup>86</sup> Uzunyayla, with its abundant land, attracted many Kabardin notables who had been emigrating from Russia of their volition throughout the 1860s. Those well-off muhajirs were more likely than others to own slaves. In many respects, Uzunyayla was a diasporic extension of Kabarda because the founding families of each village attempted to reconstruct social relations as they knew them back in the old country. Slaves, attached to their masters' households, were an important part of that socio-economic structure.

---

<sup>82</sup> On slavery in Uzunyayla, see Miyazawa, "Memory Politics"; idem., "The Past as a Resource for the Slave Descendants of Circassians in Turkey," in *The Past as a Resource in the Turkic Speaking World*, ed. Ildikó Bellér-Hann (Würzburg: Ergon-Verl., 2008), 59-84.

<sup>83</sup> "Kölelik Aleyhinde," *Ğuaze* 2 (10 April 1911), f. 6; reprinted in Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 255.

<sup>84</sup> British Parliamentary Papers, 1881, Turkey no. 6, 6; cited in Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 73n53.

<sup>85</sup> "Kölelik Aleyhinde," *Ğuaze* 7 (18 May 1911), f. 1; cited in Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 79.

<sup>86</sup> On Kabardin social hierarchy, see Amjad Jaimoukha, *The Circassians: A Handbook* (Richmond: Curzon, 2001), 157-60; Gardanov, *Obshchestvennyi stroi adygskich narodov*.

On March 18, 1872, the Ottoman Embassy in Saint Petersburg relayed a memorable petition, in French, to the Russian authorities. The petition came from 13 Kabardin families, formerly Russian subjects and now Ottoman subjects who were resident in Uzunyayla. These high-status families, when emigrating to the Ottoman Empire, left their slaves in Kabarda (Terek Province). The families, represented by one Hajj Arslan Bey of the Anzurzade (Anzorov) family, collectively claimed to have left 108 male and female slaves in Russia and asked the Russian government for 16,867 rubles to “recover their debts.”<sup>87</sup>

Slavery in Kabarda was legally discontinued in 1866.<sup>88</sup> What must have happened is that notable Kabardin families were promised compensation by the Russian government for liberating their slaves as part of the 1866 abolitionist reform. Russia took a gradual approach to abolitionism in the North Caucasus. New cases of enslavement were outlawed, but existing slave ownership remained temporarily in place. Slave owners were required to liberate every slave they had after a certain number of years in servitude. They were also incentivized to free their slaves sooner of their own volition, in exchange for state compensation.<sup>89</sup>

The families that filed the petition must have set their slaves free before emigrating to the Ottoman Empire and did not collect their payment. We do not know whether the Russian government responded to, let alone paid, the Uzunyayla notables. What matters is that these notables expected Russia to pay and thought that they had legal ground to demand a payment, and to that effect sent a bill, with a detailed breakdown of prices for

---

<sup>87</sup> BOA HR.SFR.1 32/38 (18 March 1872).

<sup>88</sup> For abolitionist legislation in Kabarda, see SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 122 (1866), d. 321-23 (1863).

<sup>89</sup> For slave emancipation deals in different parts of the North Caucasus, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 25, ll. 14-25 (1862), 56-63 (1864); f. 545, op. 1, d. 422, ll. 85-98, 212-15 (1870).

human beings they once owned. These notables also had enough political capital to ensure that the Sivas provincial authorities sign off on their petition, which was then transmitted to Russia on the letterhead of the Ottoman Foreign Ministry. The Ottomans relayed other petitions from former Russian subjects, requesting to be reimbursed for liberating and/or leaving their slaves behind. Thus, in 1874, a group of Circassian muhajirs in Maraş Province requested an even greater sum of 53,720 rubles as compensation for their former slaves.<sup>90</sup>

For the Ottoman government, Circassian agricultural slavery presented a challenge. Before the 1860s, Circassian slavery in the empire had primarily been urban household slavery, and agricultural slavery on a mass scale was not common. Agricultural slavery hindered Ottoman efforts to boost military conscription because Circassian slave owners would not let their slaves enlist in the army, which was the main reason the government wished to end agricultural slavery.<sup>91</sup> On paper, Circassian slave trade in the Ottoman Empire was banned in 1854-55.<sup>92</sup> Slave ownership, on the other hand, remained legal until the end of the empire, with many regional and imperial powerholders personally invested in keeping it that way. The government, seeking to phase out agricultural slavery, proceeded cautiously in order not to antagonize slave owners. The Ottoman Council of Ministers discussed how to deal with Circassian agricultural slavery in 1867 and 1882. The 1882 deliberations occurred after the Sivas military authorities attempted to register

---

<sup>90</sup> BOA HR.SFR.1 53/44 (10 December 1874).

<sup>91</sup> Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 81-111; Elbruz Umut Aksoy, "White Slaves and Circassian Slavery from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic," M.A. dissertation (Istanbul Bilgi University, 2017), 31, 76-77.

<sup>92</sup> Toledano, *Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression*, 115-23; Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*, 102-07.

muhajir slaves in the draft lists, which was vehemently opposed by Circassian slaveholding freemen.<sup>93</sup> The government settled on a compromise, whereby it honored hereditary agricultural slavery among Circassians, but encouraged slaveholders to free slaves through *mükatebe* [contract of manumission] and offered slaveholders land as a manumission fee.<sup>94</sup> This compromise may sound similar to the gradual abolitionist approach in the Russian Caucasus in the 1860s, but it was not. The Ottomans did not outlaw lifelong slavery, and children could still be born into slavery.

Few first-person accounts by slaves from Uzunyayla are available to us. One remarkable story has been preserved in British consular archives. In late April of 1899, a man knocked on the door of the British vice-consul in Sivas. This man from Uzunyayla was ordered to stay in Sivas by the provincial court, which was deliberating his appeal for manumission. Not expecting to receive justice in court, the man sought intercession of a foreign power as his last resort. He made the following statement to the British vice-consul:

My name is Taka Oghlou Daoud, and I am a Chechen. I was as a child taken into the service of a Circassian of the village of Chamoush in the Kaza of Azizie and, on the death of my master, became the servant of his son Medjid, but have never been a slave. I married and had two daughters, who were sold as slaves by Medjid for £135. I cried and protested in vain, and was hung up for three days with my toes just touching the ground. Later I had five more children, four sons and a daughter. A short time ago, my master said he intended to sell them also. I then went to Azizie and lodged a complaint in court against Medjid.<sup>95</sup>

The judge in Aziziye, reportedly being “terrorized by the Circassians,” ruled against Taka, who then appealed to a higher court in Istanbul, which vacated the sentence from Aziziye and sent the case to the provincial court in Sivas. Taka complained that the judicial system was stacked against people like him. He claimed:

---

<sup>93</sup> Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 102-06.

<sup>94</sup> Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 110-11.

<sup>95</sup> TNA FO 195/2059, Anderson to O’Conor, #1 (Sivas, 4 May 1899), ff. 195-96r.

I wish to employ an advocate, but am not allowed to do so. I do not understand Turkish well and wish to have an interpreter of my own tribe, but am not allowed to do so. I want to hand in a written statement of my case, but the Cadi's clerk will not accept it. The Clerk wrote out a statement of my case, and made me sign it, but I do not know what he has written down. ... I hear the Mufti intends to decide against me. I and my children are living in a khan, poor and hungry, and are not allowed to ask for alms.<sup>96</sup>

Taka claimed that the provincial governor, to whom he appealed to intervene in his case, was bought off by Taka's wealthy master, whereas the presiding judge in Sivas would not dare to issue a decision unfavorable to Uzunyayla's powerful slave-owning class. Taka suggested that Uzunyayla elites held influence in Sivas, partially through their ethnic networks, whose members may have lobbied on their behalf.

We do not know how the Sivas provincial judge ruled and whether Taka managed to keep his children. This tragic case is unusual because Taka succeeded in taking his grievances out of Uzunyayla to the district court in Aziziye, then, even more remarkably, to the office of Şeyhülislam in Istanbul, and then to a provincial court, office of the governor, and British vice-consulate in Sivas. This kind of exposure must have embarrassed his masters and other slave owners who did not wish the state to intervene and potentially compromise their social dominance.

The prospects of between a thousand and two thousand slaves living in turn-of-the-century Uzunyayla were bleak. Few slave owners manumitted their slaves without pressure from the state, which rarely intervened in Uzunyayla affairs.<sup>97</sup> In other parts of the empire, runaway slaves sometimes fled to foreign consulates to seek protection; an ensuing scandal often resulted in their manumission.<sup>98</sup> For Uzunyayla slaves, the nearest consulates were

---

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> For rare interventions, see BOA DH.MKT 2647/55 (9 *şevval* 1326, 4 November 1908); 2699/22 (9 *zilhicce* 1326, 2 January 1909).

<sup>98</sup> See Toledano, *As If Silent and Absent*, 62-65, 103-04, 148-50.

in faraway Sivas and Adana, beyond the mountains. Most slaves in Uzunyayla, toiling in various forms of agricultural servitude, could not rely on the protection of outsiders.

Circassian slaves in Uzunyayla occasionally rebelled against their masters. One such revolt took place in Aziziye in 1880, when 26 run-away slaves fought their masters for their freedom. One slave and one slaveowner were killed, six slaves were recaptured, two slaves disappeared, and seventeen slaves reached Sivas, where they were arrested on the orders of the provincial governor.<sup>99</sup> Another revolt took place in 1911, when six slaves and five masters were killed in the village of Kazancık in Uzunyayla.<sup>100</sup> The nascent Circassian press in Istanbul publicized news of that revolt as an example of injustice against muhajirs who were unfortunate to be born as slaves. The Ottoman government, likely in response to pressure from the Circassian Union and Support Association, which was strongly in support of abolitionism, allocated some money for settling some slaves in separate villages.<sup>101</sup>

Discrimination against slaves continued even after some of them were manumitted and moved to a different village. One such village was Karakuyu, now one of the largest villages in Uzunyayla and informally known as a “slave village.” Within Karakuyu, social hierarchies lingered between its “upper” and “lower” quarters. Residents of the Upper Quarter, many of whom descended from freemen, were known to look down on those in

---

<sup>99</sup> Stewart, the British vice-consul in Sivas, cited in G. Rolin-Jacquemyns, “Armenia, the Armenians and Treaties, Part III,” *The Armenian Herald* 1, no. 7 (1918): 381n47.

<sup>100</sup> “Kölelik Aleyhinde,” *Ğuaze* 2 (10 April 1911), f. 6; cited in Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 77; “Kölelik Aleyhinde,” *Ğuaze* 9 (1 June 1911), f. 4; cited in Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 81.

<sup>101</sup> BOA BEO 3887/291512 (29 *rebiülahir* 1329, 29 April 1911); 3899/292398 (1 *cemaziyelahir* 1329, 30 May 1911). According to *Ğuaze*, the government spent 911,800 *kuruş*; Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 79. Another Ottoman practice was settling liberated slaves in different existing villages. In 1874, the government liberated Circassian slaves in Çorlu, Tekfurdağı Subprovince and moved 250 carts of them to different villages, one family per village; see Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 100-01.

the Lower Quarter, most of whom descended from slaves.<sup>102</sup> In modern Uzunyayla, one's ancestry – from freemen or from slaves – remains a significant marker of difference.<sup>103</sup> Slavery lingered in Uzunyayla and the rest of Anatolia into the early Republican era.<sup>104</sup>

### *Uzunyayla after the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War*

The 1877-78 War imposed a massive burden on Ottoman economy and society. After the humiliating loss of territories and populations in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia, the Ottomans stared at a vastly reduced empire, a depleted treasury, an escalating debt, and collapsed morale. After the war, security of life and property generally deteriorated across central and eastern Anatolia. The British vice-consul in Sivas described the state of the province and particularly Uzunyayla and its surrounding areas as “one of impending anarchy.”<sup>105</sup> Among the main culprits were muhajirs, many of whom became destitute during the war and some of whom resorted to brigandage across the Sivas, Ankara, and Adana provinces.

The region faced a massive shortage of law enforcement because the central government could not afford to hire more *zaptiye* [gendarmerie]. The scale of the problem

---

<sup>102</sup> Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 21-22.

<sup>103</sup> On modern-day discrimination of descendants of slaves in Uzunyayla, see Miyazawa, “Memory Politics,” 127-210; Aksoy, “White Slaves and Circassian Slavery,” 133-34, 193-95.

<sup>104</sup> Aksoy, based on oral history, cites 1940 as the year when the last slave sale took place in Anatolia; “White Slaves and Circassian Slavery,” 132-33. One should keep in mind that the sale of Circassian women to men from outside the community for marriage continued at least into the 1940s and 1950s as the part of the Circassian *vase* tradition; see Ibid., 187-93. According to one oral recollection, it was a common practice for Turkish men to annually visit Circassian villages around Maraş (now Kahramanmaraş) to buy women for marriage. The last sale took place in 1957-58, when 23 Circassian women were sold; see Ibid., 191-92, based on our interview in Istanbul with a Circassian man from around Maraş who bore witness to the last sale (1 November 2014).

<sup>105</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #45 (Sivas, 7 October 1879).



is best illustrated by the following incident. In the fall of 1879, a band of Circassians attacked the Greek village of Süleyman köy in Vezirköprü District, in the north of Sivas Province. The village residents sent a telegram to their subprovincial center in Amasya urging to send *zaptiye* to repel attackers. The district in question was only thirty miles away from Amasya, but the Amasya subprovincial governor refused to send any reinforcements. The British vice-consul reported that, upon reading the telegram, the Amasya subprovincial governor told him the following: “What can I do with the force I have at Amasia, five *zaptiehs*? I cannot leave the town unprotected.”<sup>106</sup> The lack of manpower prevented governors across Anatolia from dispatching support to nearby villages, rendering parts of the countryside fair game for robbers. The lootings continued in Vezirköprü District, and later 22 Greek villages in the area presented communal petitions to the authorities alleging the loss of 50 horses, 62 mares, 58 mules, 330 oxen, 462 sheep and goats, and 256 bushels of corn, in addition to money and household items, to Circassian bandits.<sup>107</sup>

The Sivas governor authorized the Ottoman military to supplement the understaffed *zaptiye* forces in order to restore order in parts of the province. This move, however, had an unexpected outcome. The chief of Ottoman military forces in Sivas was Musa Paşa (1818-89), an Ossetian notable, widely regarded as one of the most prominent North Caucasian muhajirs in the empire. Known in modern Turkish historiography as Musa Bey and in Russian historiography as Musa Kundukhov, Musa Paşa had served as a high-ranking officer in both the Russian and Ottoman armies. He also happens to be among the most fascinating and controversial figures in the history of North Caucasian migrations to

---

<sup>106</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #45 (Sivas, 7 October 1879); see also 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 3 in #64 (Sivas, 22 January 1880).

<sup>107</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 5 in #64 (Sivas, January 1880).

the Ottoman Empire. Born into a Muslim Ossetian princely family, Musa Paşa was educated in Saint Petersburg and made a successful military career in the Caucasus. In 1865, under Russian orders, he organized the emigration of 4,990 Chechen, Ingush, Ossetian, and Kabardin families to the Ottoman Empire (see Chapter 6). Unexpectedly for many, he emigrated with his own family and settled in Sivas. The pre-emigration, Russian phase of his career is well documented, particularly thanks to Musa Paşa's memoirs, first published in Paris in the 1930s.<sup>108</sup>

The Ottoman phase of his career is less known.<sup>109</sup> Upon arrival in the Ottoman Empire, Musa Paşa settled in Uzunyayla. He later relocated to the village of Batmantaş near Tokat, in the north of Sivas Province.<sup>110</sup> By late 1866, he petitioned the Ottoman government to grant him a military rank, with governors of the Sivas and Erzurum provinces endorsing his request. In 1867, the Ottoman government appointed him a major general (*mirliva*), although Musa Paşa likely did not actively serve until the next war.<sup>111</sup> With the outbreak of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, Musa Paşa was appointed a commander of a 4,000-strong Circassian cavalry unit fighting on the Anatolian front against the Russian army (see Chapter 4). After his unit was defeated early in the war,

---

<sup>108</sup> Musa Kundukhov, "Memuary Generala Musa-Pashi Kundukhova," *Kavkaz/Le Caucase* (Paris) 1-5, 8, 10-12 (1936); 3, 5, 7-8, 10 (1937).

<sup>109</sup> See Georgy Chochiev's excellent study, "General Musa Kundukhov: nekotorye fakty zhizni i deiatel'nosti v emigratsii," *Kavkazskii sbornik* 3 (35) (2006): 65-86.

<sup>110</sup> Alikhan Kantemir, preface to "Musa Pasha Kundukhov," *Kavkaz/Le Caucase* 4 (1936): 17; Chochiev, "General Musa Kundukhov," 67; idem., "Severokavkazskie sela okruga Tokat glazami frantsuzskogo iezuita: kniazheskaia svad'ba i versia 'Sag'æstæ' Temirbolata Mamsurova," *Izvestiia SOIGSI* 21 (60) (2016): 124-25.

<sup>111</sup> BOA İ.MMS 34/1398 (29 *şevval* 1283, 6 March 1867), cited in Chochiev, "General Musa Kundukhov," 67.

Musa Paşa briefly commanded the Anatolian army and then took charge of Erzurum after the end of the Russian occupation of the city.<sup>112</sup>

After the war, Musa Paşa became chief of military forces in Sivas Province. According to British consular records, his tenure was marked by accusations of bias in favor of North Caucasian muhajirs. Several local communities complained to the British vice-consul that Musa Paşa “would not listen to any accusations brought against the Circassians.”<sup>113</sup> Reportedly, he released Circassian suspects from jail, did not investigate crimes involving muhajirs, and influenced decisions about the settlement of new muhajirs on terms favorable to them.<sup>114</sup> Musa Paşa himself denied all accusations and was backed by the Sivas governor, who suggested to the British vice-consul that Musa Paşa’s mistakes may have arisen from his “imperfect knowledge of the Turkish language.”<sup>115</sup>

The British assessment was that Musa Paşa’s favorable treatment of North Caucasians stemmed from his “desire to ingratiate himself with the Circassians, with whom he hopes to play a leading part in the event of future complications.”<sup>116</sup> The British certainly regarded Musa Paşa as someone who played the long game, which they may have used to their advantage. In the Foreign Office archives, I discovered that in his final years Musa Paşa, while based in Erzurum, agreed to be an informant of the British regarding developments in the Russian Caucasus. The British Consul in Erzurum wrote to London:

I last year took certain steps in [intelligence-gathering], and have correspondents in Kars and Tiflis. I soon, however, realized that no news I was likely to get from such sources ... was likely to equal that procurable by Moussa Pasha, was more uncertain than his, and liable to cease in critical times, when most wanted. ... I was enabled through his friendship to assure the Director General of Military

---

<sup>112</sup> Chochiev, “General Musa Kundukhov,” 72-73.

<sup>113</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #57, f. 109 (Sivas, 6 January 1880).

<sup>114</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 3 in #55, ff. 101-02 (Sivas, 6 January 1880).

<sup>115</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #57, f. 109 (Sivas, 6 January 1880).

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

Intelligence, that in the case of the recurrence of such a crisis as that of 1884, I had every prospect of being able to supply accurate information concerning events in Trans-Caucasia, at a very moderate expenditure, and, as I informed him privately I had offered to contribute 100 T.L. towards 200 T.L. offered by the Pasha for some information which it would be desirable to possess now.<sup>117</sup>

Musa Paşa died in Erzurum in 1889. His son, Bekir Sami Kunduh, served as Foreign Minister in the first Turkish nationalist government, chaired by Mustafa Kemal Paşa, in 1920-21.

The 1877-78 war produced new waves of refugees who were resettled in Uzunyayla. The new muhajirs were Turks from Kars Province, North Caucasians from Russia, and North Caucasians expelled from the Ottoman Balkans. By one estimate, between 1877 and 1879, about 17,000 Circassians and Crimean Tatars arrived in Sivas Province by sea, via Samsun, and 10,000 more arrived by land, via Kars.<sup>118</sup> By February 1880, 13,472 new muhajirs were present in Sivas Subprovince alone. [See Table 14.]

Table 14: Muhajir arrivals in Sivas Subprovince, 1877-79

Ethnic and regional origins*	Population
Nogai Tatars	289
Circassians	1,724
Daghestanis	1,054
Kars Muslims	8,515
Erzerum Muslims	95
Rumeli Circassians	1,729
Rumeli Muslims	66
Total:	13,472

<sup>117</sup> TNA FO 195/1652, Chermiside to White, #21 (Erzurum, 16 June 1889), ff. 166-69, 168r.

<sup>118</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 7 in #64 (Sivas, 23 January 1880).

TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #129 (Sivas, 18 February 1880).

\* All categories are preserved as they appear in the original source. The designation of “Muslims” means that these muhajirs were Turks or other non-North Caucasian Muslims.

Of the 13,472 muhajirs, 10,494 people remained unassigned to permanent locations, and most of them were likely directed to Aziziye District.<sup>119</sup> Considering that the population of Sivas Subprovince in 1880 was about 120,000 and that of Aziziye District somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000, most of it being recent immigrants themselves, the burden of new immigrants on Sivas Province and Uzunyayla in particular was considerable.<sup>120</sup> The government implemented its old practice of entrusting new muhajir households to local families, in the proportion of one to four in some areas. Those local families, usually Muslims, provided lodging, food, and fodder for livestock and built new houses for Muslim immigrants.<sup>121</sup> Very few 1878 muhajirs received the aid that they were entitled to from the state. Nor did local villagers receive compensation for their labor for new immigrants.<sup>122</sup>

The economic aspect of the resettlement of new muhajirs bred resentment, which grew stronger if new muhajirs were assigned land that had been claimed by their neighbors. For example, in Vezirköprü District, which I mentioned earlier for its Circassians' attacks on Greek villagers, in the same winter of 1879, Abkhaz muhajirs were attacked by their Greek neighbors. The local Greek villagers and Turkish notables, who reportedly prompted the Greeks to act, resented that the government had planned to issue *tapu* [title deeds] to

---

<sup>119</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #129 (Sivas, 18 February 1880).

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 7 in #64 (Sivas, 23 January 1880).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

Abkhaz newcomers on the land that they contested as theirs.<sup>123</sup> The land issue remained a source of contention and a thorn in intercommunal relations for decades. In the 1890s, 90 percent of all land-related litigation in Sivas Province stemmed from the settlement of muhajirs.<sup>124</sup>

The settlement of muhajirs also provided ample opportunities for corruption. The same British vice-consul accused the Ottoman Refugee Commission, including its leadership in Sivas, of self-enrichment. Reportedly, the officials extorted money from the refugees, by threatening to settle them on barren lands or charging them for an assignment to good locations, as well as from the local populations by threatening to settle refugees in their areas.<sup>125</sup> The accusations of corruption are difficult to substantiate, and one may presume a bias in the British reporting on the matter. However, British consular reports were typically based on information from their local informants, Ottoman Christians and Muslims. Those accusations likely accurately reflect the locals' grievances against the Ottoman Refugee Commission. Moreover, the accusations of corruption during the settlement of muhajirs were not novel or rare, and a precedent existed even for the settlement in Uzunyayla. In 1861, the former *vakıf* minister in Sivas Province was investigated and found guilty of embezzlement for selling empty lands of one of the *vakıf* in Uzunyayla.<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 4 in #64 (Sivas, 23 January 1880).

<sup>124</sup> Ali Karaca, *Anadolu İslahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)* (Istanbul: Eren, 1993), 110.

<sup>125</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #45 (Sivas, 7 October 1879); 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 7 in #64 (Sivas, 23 January 1880); FO 424/122, Wilson to Dufferin, inclosure in #62 (Sivas, 23 July 1881).

<sup>126</sup> BOA A.MKT.MVL 127/4 (18 *şevval* 1277, 29 April 1861); 131/13 (14 *safer* 1278, 21 August 1861).

The post-war economic turmoil contributed to the emergence of a shadow economy. Some muhajirs became involved in economic activities that the government deemed illegal because it could not tax them. By the 1880s, muhajirs in some parts of central Anatolia participated in the production and smuggling of drugs, particularly hemp, [Turkish] yellow berries, and opium.<sup>127</sup> In the following decades, as the Ottoman Régie Company monopolized the tobacco market in the empire, some Circassians in Sivas, similarly to muhajirs on the Black Sea coast, also dabbled in smuggling tobacco.<sup>128</sup>

The post-war years were a period of hardship in Uzunyayla because of the loss of state aid for older muhajir villages, population pressure due to new immigrants, and a depressed economy in the broader region. However, it could have been much worse in Uzunyayla. In 1879, the Uzunyayla muhajirs lived through a serious crisis, which nearly resulted in the economic ruin of their community but was averted thanks to the North Caucasians' prompt mobilization of political support for their cause. The crisis concerned muhajirs' horses, and its origins lay in the Ottoman government's continued program of sedentarizing nomads, particularly in southern Anatolia. In the summer of 1878, the Kozanoğlu rebellion broke out in the Adana hinterland, in southern Anatolia, in response

---

<sup>127</sup> The evidence is circumstantial. Thus, we know that Indian hemp (*esrar*) was "cultivated on the confines both of the Kaisarieh and Azizieh districts"; see TNA FO 424/122, Bennet to Dufferin, inclosure in #93 (Sivas, 11 August 1881). The British also reported that Circassians were primary cultivators of hemp, opium, yellow berries, and tobacco in Tokat Subprovince, north of Sivas Subprovince; see FO 424/122, Richards to Wilson, inclosure 1 in #130 (Sivas, 8 March 1881).

<sup>128</sup> BOA DH.MKT 333/38 (1312); DH.MKT 476/32 (1903). On smuggling of medicine and saltpeter in Aziziye, see DH.TMIK.M 109/20 (1319). According to Louis Rambert, general director of the Régie, North Caucasian muhajirs played a prominent role in the production and contraband of tobacco; see Chochiev, "Severokavkazskie sela okruga Tokat," 138n3. On tobacco smuggling in the late Ottoman Empire, see Mustafa Batman, *Tobacco Smuggling in the Black Sea Region of the Ottoman Empire, 1883-1914* (Istanbul: Libra, 2016).

to the government's heavy-handed measures against nomadic communities.<sup>129</sup> In the aftermath of the rebellion, the government issued a decree with new policies on the migration of local tribes.<sup>130</sup> That decree had unintended consequences because one of its articles prohibited the Afşars and the Circassians from “com[ing] down to Çukurova during the winter under the pretext of wintering or grazing their animals.”<sup>131</sup>

The Circassians were included in the article because they engaged in transhumance [seasonal migration of people and livestock] as much as their neighboring nomadic populations. In the 1860s, Kabardins, who arrived in Uzunyayla by land from the Northcentral Caucasus, brought with them horses of Kabarda breed. Horse-breeding, in addition to being a central element in Kabardin culture, became the staple of Uzunyayla Circassians' defense capabilities and economy. Much of the wealth of Kabardins was locked in their horses that commanded high prices on the market. Having arrived in central Anatolia, Circassians quickly adopted seasonal pastoral routes of local nomadic tribes because that was the only way to preserve their herds in harsh Uzunyayla winters. In winter months, while most Circassians stayed in Uzunyayla, their shepherds moved their herds – about 3,000 horses – to Çukurova in the south, thus repeating the seasonal track followed by Afşars.<sup>132</sup>

In October 1879, upon learning about the government's plans to enforce the decree and to prohibit Circassians from entering Adana Province, the Uzunyayla Circassians

---

<sup>129</sup> This was the second Kozanoğlu rebellion; see Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 200-06. The first rebellion occurred in 1866 as a protest against the *Fırka-i İslahiyye* (Ott. Tur. “improvement division”); see *Ibid.*, 150-67.

<sup>130</sup> Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 205-06.

<sup>131</sup> Article 8 in Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, “Instructions regarding the inhabitants of Çukurova and their going to the yayla” (26 *şevval* 1295, 23 October 1878). For the full text of the decree, in Ottoman Turkish and in English translation, see Gratien, “The Mountains Are Ours,” 211-14.

<sup>132</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 4 in #99 (Sivas, 28 October 1879).



elected representatives who would head to their provincial capital of Sivas and would appeal, first, to the governor and, then, to foreign representatives (or, at least, the British) in a bid to change the policy determined in Istanbul. The expediency was of utmost importance, as this British consular dispatch demonstrates:

The [Uzunyayla] plateau ... is entirely destitute of trees, and the winter is one of great severity. There is little or no material for building, and, even if there were, sheds could not be erected in time to save the horses. Snow has already fallen in the Yailas, and ... winter sets in on these plateaus with slight warning; if the horses are caught by deep snow they will all perish.<sup>133</sup>

The Sivas governor, Abidin Paşa, reportedly sent at least four telegrams to the Porte, and the British vice-consul in Sivas repeatedly telegraphed his embassy in Istanbul about the matter.<sup>134</sup> The issue at stake was not only the well-being of the muhajir community in remote Uzunyayla but the stability of the area at large. The authorities feared that should the Circassians lose their herds, they would turn to plundering neighboring populations. Meanwhile, the Uzunyayla Circassians, preparing for their worst-case scenario, made arrangements to take their herds to Aleppo Province; if the road south remained closed to them, they would trek eastward, across snowy mountains, to sell those horses that would have survived the trip.<sup>135</sup> The mobilization of support in Sivas paid off. In early November, the Porte communicated its permission for Circassians to continue their seasonal migrations to Çukurova.<sup>136</sup> What would certainly have been an economic doom for muhajirs was averted.

The Ottoman government, notwithstanding its legislative misstep in 1878, developed a direct interest in the success of Circassians' horse-breeding in Uzunyayla. The

---

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 1 in #100 (Sivas, 3 November 1879).

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> TNA FO 424/106, Wilson to Layard, inclosure 6 in #2 (Sivas, 21 November 1879).

Ottoman army became the largest buyer of Uzunyayla horses, likely for its Fourth Army headquartered in Erzincan, to the east of Sivas Province. An army representative would visit Aziziye annually, in late May, around the time when Circassians' herds were returning from Çukurova, in order to select and buy horses.<sup>137</sup> For example, in 1903, the Ottoman army commissioned a purchase of 500 Kabarda horses from Aziziye District.<sup>138</sup> These army contracts likely became critical to the Uzunyayla muhajirs' economy. Interestingly, back in the Caucasus, the Russian army also purchased Kabarda horses for its cavalry troops. Kabardins who stayed in the Caucasus annually sold about 1,297 horses to the Russian army.<sup>139</sup>

The Ottoman army's reliance on a stable supply of horses from Uzunyayla may have also provided the muhajirs with some leverage in their future negotiations with the authorities. Thus, in the same year of 1903, Circassians of Aziziye protested against the newly announced tax on horses, donkeys, and oxen. They telegraphed the Porte their request for an exemption from the tax and, in the case of refusal, asked for permission to return to Russia.<sup>140</sup> The North Caucasians, a tax-paying population in a semi-nomadic area, threatened not only to leave their settlements, in which the government heavily invested, but also to take their precious animals with them.

The Uzunyayla muhajirs continued to send their herds of horses, alongside Afşars' flocks and herds, down to Çukurova every winter.<sup>141</sup> This transhumance continued at least into the early Turkish republican period, for as long as Circassians had large herds.<sup>142</sup> The

---

<sup>137</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Connor, #42 (Sivas, 15 June 1898), ff. 278r-279.

<sup>138</sup> TNA FO 195/2136, Anderson to O'Connor, #9 (Sivas, 7 October 1903).

<sup>139</sup> Ibragimova, *Chechenskaia istoriia*, 291-92.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> TNA FO 195/1405, Bennet to Dufferin, #3 (Adana, 6 February 1882).

<sup>142</sup> See Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 254.

Kabarda breed of horses gave rise to the famed Uzunyayla breed, one of the main “Anatolian” horse breeds today.

*Aziziye Armenians and North Caucasians in the 1890s*

The story of North Caucasian resettlement in Uzunyayla intersects with histories of violence against Armenians in late Ottoman Anatolia. Sivas Province was one of the “six Armenian provinces” (Ott. Tur. *Vilâyât-ı Sitte*), where Armenians formed a significant community.<sup>143</sup> In the late nineteenth century, Armenians constituted about 13-15 percent of the Sivas population.<sup>144</sup> Most Armenians in Sivas Province lived in northern subprovinces, as well as Gürün District in the south. Substantial Armenian communities could also be found in Maraş Subprovince, part of Aleppo Province, in southern Anatolia.

Aziziye District had one of the smallest Armenian populations in the province. In 1898, the British estimated the number of Armenians in the district to be 510, or two percent of the total population of 27,510.<sup>145</sup> Armenians resided in the town of Aziziye and several villages, including Sıvgın, Ekrek, and Yarhisar.<sup>146</sup> The Armenians moved to Aziziye soon after the establishment of the town. In late 1865, about 200 Armenian households from Haçın (now Saimbeyli) in the Taurus Mountains petitioned authorities to

---

<sup>143</sup> The term was first used during the 1878 Congress of Berlin following the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. On different estimates of the Ottoman Armenian population, see Fuat Dündar, *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question, 1878-1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2010), 11-66, 141-56.

<sup>144</sup> The Ottoman data (1881-93): 116,545 Armenians out of 926,971 residents. The French data (1893-97): 170,433 Armenians out of 1,086,015. The British data (1895): 133,367 Armenians out of 910,580. The Armenian Patriarchate (1880) estimated a much higher ratio of 40 percent: 57,000 Armenians out of 142,000; see Dündar, *Crime of Numbers*, 23.

<sup>145</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O’Conor, #42 (Sivas, 15 June 1898), f. 280.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 279.

allow their relocation to Aziziye due to Haçin’s overpopulation and lack of available land.<sup>147</sup> By the late 1890s, the Armenian community formed a quarter of the population of Aziziye.<sup>148</sup> The Armenians were the only Christian and mostly-urban community in this district of Muslim farmers and nomads.

Between 1894 and 1896, anti-Armenian violence swept across Anatolia. The so-called “Hamidian massacres” were inspired, directed, and abetted by the central government, costing the lives of tens of thousands of Armenians.<sup>149</sup>

Table 15: Attacks on Armenians in Sivas Province, 1895-96

District	Armenian households	Houses looted	Shops looted	Churches pillaged	Monasteries pillaged	Houses burnt or ruined	Armenians killed	Turks killed	Armenian women raped	Converts to Islam
Sivas	3,375	961	2,000	6		87	1,185	3	81	3
Hafik (Koçhisar)	1,201	715		8	1	1	365	26	85	
Zara (Koçgiri)	696	166		2			20		3	
Divriği	1,460	1,292	135	16	1	350	312	9	21	
<b>Aziziye</b>	132						1			
Bünyan-ı Hamid (Sarımsaklı)	500									
Gürün	1,929	1,929		3		1,251	1,150	90	180	8
Şarkışla	2,035	1,287		17		76	110	6	66	2

<sup>147</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 348/18 (8 şaban 1282, 27 December 1865).

<sup>148</sup> The population of Aziziye in 1897-98 was 1,600, of whom 400 were non-Muslims, likely Armenians; Ali Güler, *Osmanlı Devletinde Azınlıklar* (Istanbul: Turan Yayıncılık, 1997), 53.

<sup>149</sup> Scholars’ estimates of Armenian fatalities range from 50,000 to 300,000; see Robert Melson, “A Theoretical Enquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894-1896,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24, no. 3 (1982): 481-509, esp. 489. See also Garabet K. Moundjian, “Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdülhamid II, 1895-1909,” Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 2012), 43-122.

Darende	550	550	155	4	1	60	173	42	113	10
Yıldızeli (Yenihan)	145	15					1		3	
Şebinkarahisar	1,430	710	56	2	1	1	535	29	9	
Koyulhisar	33									112
Hamidiye	48	48	18	1						
Alucra	6	6	4							
Suşehri (Endires)	2,145	1,932	60	16	1	173	547	14	4	
Tokat	2,325	485		9			221		7	3
Zile	400	320	150				188		3	
Niksar	457	377	94	1			198	16		1
Erbaa	230	34					4			
Amasya	1,900	5	340				44	2		
Merzifon	1,048	32	270				126	3	2	
Gümüşhacıköy	415	2	112					1		
Vezirköprü	180	130	105	1		28	72		7	
Havza	50	47	42	1			11			
Mecitözü	60	2								
Ladik	40									
Total:	22,790	11,045	3,541	87	5	2,027	5,263	241	584	139

Source: TNA FO 195/1930, Bulman to Currie, “Statistics of disorders in the Sivas Vilayet. 1895-1896,” ff. 625-35 (Sivas, 29 December 1896).

The Hamidian massacres in Sivas province left 5,263 Armenians murdered, 584 women raped, almost half of all Armenian houses ransacked, and over three and a half thousand shops looted.<sup>150</sup> [See Table 15.] The district of Aziziye was one of few places in Sivas that were spared an ethnic cleansing. The British vice-consul in Sivas who prepared the table made a note: “Aziziye and [its] district is inhabited by Circassians who protected the Armenians, against all attempts of the Turks. Some pillage occurred, but the property

<sup>150</sup> For comparable French and American consular statistics for Sivas Province, see a summary in Dündar, *Crime of Numbers*, 143.

was restored, owing to the efforts of the Circassian chiefs.”<sup>151</sup> Two years later, a new vice-consul reiterated that “no massacres took pace in this kaza [district], the Circassians refusing to permit them and protecting any Armenians who took refuge with them.”<sup>152</sup>

We can only speculate why Aziziye turned out to be quite safe for its Armenians in 1894-96. This cannot be explained by the remoteness of Uzunyayla. In mountainous Sivas Province, many districts were ill-accessible, and all communities lived within the same sectarian climate of post-1878 Anatolia. Uzunyayla’s North Caucasians were well connected to muhajir communities elsewhere, and muhajirs in other parts of Sivas Province and surrounding provinces committed atrocities against Armenians.<sup>153</sup> The Armenians in Aziziye were, of course, a small community, but so they were in the Sivas districts of Yıldızeli, Hamidiye, Alucra, Niksar, Erbaa, Vezirköprü, and Havza, where they were brutalized in 1875.

What appears certain is that Aziziye was nearly drawn into the violence of the broader region. Around the time of the massacres, the Ottoman authorities reported the movement of Armenian Hunchakian Party activists around Aziziye, apprehended some Armenians, and confiscated their weapons.<sup>154</sup> The Ottoman military possessed intelligence that, at some point during the massacres, the Armenians planned to attack telegraph lines

---

<sup>151</sup> TNA FO 195/1930, Bulman to Currie, “Statistics of disorders in the Sivas Vilayet. 1895-1896,” f. 630 (Sivas, 29 December 1896).

<sup>152</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O’Conor, #42 (Sivas, 15 June 1898), f. 279.

<sup>153</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 660/32 (Şarkışla, 26 *cemaziyelevvel* 1313, 14 November 1895); 660/41 (Şarkışla and Yıldızeli, 1 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 19 November 1895); 609/29 (Sivas and Ankara, 2 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 20 November 1895); 660/56 (Tonus, 3 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 21 November 1895); Y.PRK.UM 33/89 (Hafik, 25 *cemaziyelevvel* 1313, 13 November 1895); İ.HUS 43/94 (Tokat, 30 *cemaziyelevvel* 1313, 18 November 1895); DH.TMIK.M 8/8 (Gemerek, 13 *muharrem* 1314, 24 June 1896); DH.TMIK.M 8/70 (Haçin, 19 *muharrem* 1314, 30 June 1896); HR.SYS 1902/4 (Gemerek, 17 December 1895).

<sup>154</sup> BOA İ.HUS 25/99 (23 *zilhicce* 1311, 27 June 1894); Y.PRK.UM 29/81 (22 *şevval* 1311, 28 April 1894); 29/89 (7 *zilkade* 1311, 12 May 1894).

in Aziziye.<sup>155</sup> We also know, from Ottoman correspondence, that Afşars of Sarız, in Aziziye District, were agitated over rumors that Armenians intended to attack Muslims in Kayseri, where many of their tribesmen lived, and had been preparing for a counter assault.<sup>156</sup> The security of life and travel in the area diminished, and the authorities reported multiple attacks and robberies. Much of the blame was assigned to Afşars living in the nearby Sarız and Sadabad areas.<sup>157</sup>

The available archival data is scarce, and a complete story remains unclear. However, it is possible that the British report about Armenians being protected by Circassian chiefs refers to their being saved from potential violence by the Afşars. The Afşars attacked Armenian communities in different parts of the Sivas and Ankara provinces.<sup>158</sup> Some Afşars who lived to the south of Aziziye, in Sarız and Sadabad, assaulted the Armenian village of Şar in Haçin District, lying to the south of them.<sup>159</sup> The situation of Armenians in Aziziye was tied to the broader processes of Armenian struggle and anti-Armenian violence across Anatolia, but the local context was critical. The survival of Armenians in Aziziye likely became part of the Circassian-Afşar dynamic.

An additional development, which may have contributed to the tense environment, was the resurgence of an old government ban on North Caucasians and Afşars moving their horses to Adana for the winter, which had caused much alarm in Uzunyayla in 1879. In the mid-1890s, the government likely enforced that ban for security reasons in order to prevent

---

<sup>155</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 660/19 (15 *cemaziyelevvel* 1313, 3 November 1895).

<sup>156</sup> BOA DH.ŞFR 184/70 (10 *teşrin-i sani* 1311, 22 November 1895); A.MKT.MHM 618/7 (7 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 25 November 1895).

<sup>157</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 660/67 (11 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 29 November 1895).

<sup>158</sup> BOA A.MKT.MHM 618/16 (Kayseri, 28 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 16 December 1895); DH.TMIK.M 8/70 (Haçin, 19 *muharrem* 1314, 30 June 1896).

<sup>159</sup> BOA Y.PRK.UM 33/114 (30 *cemaziyelevvel* 1313, 18 November 1895); A.MKT.MHM 660/51 (3 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 21 November 1895), DH.TMIK.M 1/20 (8 *cemaziyelahir* 1313, 26 November 1895).

nomadic migrations, when the region was rocked by instability, despite its potential to decimate muhajirs' and Afşars' economies.<sup>160</sup> The Circassians of Aziziye, just like they did in 1878, preemptively looked to the east to find an alternative migration route for its horses. They asked the government to grant them permission to move their animals to the empty lands of Amik Ovası in Aleppo Province during winter. That request was denied.<sup>161</sup> The situation must have been resolved because, should the muhajirs have lost their herds of horses, Uzunyayla would have been thrown into disarray, and the news of that would have made its way into the archive.

The protection of Armenians by Circassian leaders certainly makes Uzunyayla remarkable in the context of the 1894-96 Hamidian massacres but does not mean that Armenian-muhajir relations in the area were always cordial. Already in 1898, the British reported an incident between Armenians and Circassians in the village of Yarhisar, in the northeastern corner of Uzunyayla.<sup>162</sup> Yarhisar was one of the few villages where Circassians and Armenians lived side by side. Circassians were newcomers in the village and, in the early 1870s, disputed land with older Yarhisar residents.<sup>163</sup> Two months after the Hamidian massacres, an Armenian owed a debt of £250 to a local Circassian chief.<sup>164</sup> (Could it have been protection money?) The Circassians occupied seven Armenian houses and nearby fields in lieu of that debt. A few years later, the two communities clashed in a dispute over another small debt of an Armenian resident. One Armenian was killed and

---

<sup>160</sup> BOA DH.MKT 323/30 (26 *cemaziyelahir* 1312, 25 December 1894).

<sup>161</sup> BOA DH.MKT 32/29 (21 *safer* 1311, 3 September 1893).

<sup>162</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Connor, #17 (Sivas, 12 January 1898), ff. 195-96.

<sup>163</sup> BOA DH.MKT 1310/82 (29 *zilhicce* 1286, 1 April 1870); ŞD 1782C/3 (17 *rebiülevvel* 1290, 15 May 1873).

<sup>164</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Connor, #17 (Sivas, 12 January 1898), f. 195r.



two were wounded, and one Circassian was shot in the shoulder. The Sivas authorities dispatched *zaptiye* to prevent further clashes and arranged to relocate the entire Circassian community from Yarhisar to Aziziye to prevent future conflicts, probably as part of the broader post-1878 policy to break up mixed Christian-Muslim villages.<sup>165</sup> The Circassians reportedly left in spring, and the Armenians secured a £250 loan from the Ottoman Agricultural Bank (*Ziraat Bankası*) for the repayment of their original debt to the Circassians. They also agreed to pay an additional £140 for improvements that the Circassians had made to their occupied properties.<sup>166</sup>

### *Uzunyayla in the Early Twentieth Century*

North Caucasian muhajirs continued to immigrate in Uzunyayla throughout the final decades of Ottoman rule. Many muhajirs explicitly asked to be settled in Uzunyayla, where they hoped to join a large North Caucasian community, and the Refugee Commission was happy to oblige, cognizant that Uzunyayla was one of few regions in the empire where free land could still be found.<sup>167</sup> Gertrude Bell, a famous British traveler, archaeologist, and administrator, passed through Uzunyayla in 1909 and left the following account:

Then we turned down into a wonderful valley set with neat Circassian villages and all cultivated. Before they came, about 40 years ago, there were no villages here and no permanent cultivation, but the nomad Avshar came in summer for their crops and camped. Now they too have taken to houses following the Circassian example, but their villages are not so tidy or well built. At 7.50 we passed through Kara Geuz, Circassian; at 8.35 Mehmet

---

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> BOA DH.TMIK.M 45/27 (19 *receb* 1315, 14 December 1897); TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Conor, #20 (Sivas, 29 January 1898), ff. 201-201r.

<sup>167</sup> See TNA FO 195/2104, Anderson to O'Conor, ff. 5-6 (Sivas, 4 January 1901); BOA A.MKT.MHM 515/33 (18 *receb* 1319, 31 October 1901).

Bey on the other side of the valley; at 8.45 we came to Azizieh, Circassian, Avshar and Armenian.<sup>168</sup>

Gertrude Bell described what she had seen, adorning her account with historical commentary that she likely learned from her local hosts. Her narrative fits into a long tradition – by western observers and Ottoman officials alike – of contrasting North Caucasian “tidy” villages with nomadic “not so tidy” ones.<sup>169</sup> This dichotomy, also invoked in Syria and Transjordan, played to the Ottoman “civilizing mission,” whereby its Turkic-, Kurdish-, and Arabic-speaking nomads needed to be civilized.<sup>170</sup> The settlement of muhajirs, who would set an example as an agriculturally productive, tax-paying population, was ostensibly one way to achieve that.<sup>171</sup>

This short account of Uzunyayla leaves us with another contrast to consider. Thirty years prior, Harry Cooper, the British vice-consul in Sivas, called Aziziye the “chief resort of the robbers and murderers in this part of Anatolia.”<sup>172</sup> In 1909, Gertrude Bell saw Uzunyayla as a “wonderful valley” with neat villages. The two impressions indirectly testify to the overall improvement of Uzunyayla’s economy. In its first decades, Uzunyayla, with its underfunded refugee settlements and a starving population, produced its fair share of bandits who terrorized settled communities in central Anatolia, particularly in the aftermath of the 1877-78 war. A generation later, Uzunyayla was on a more stable economic footing.

---

<sup>168</sup> Gertrude Bell, “Diaries,” 16 June 1909. Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. <[www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/diary\\_details.php?diary\\_id=810](http://www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk/diary_details.php?diary_id=810)> (accessed on 16 March 2018).

<sup>169</sup> See Selim Deringil, “‘They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 2 (2003): 311-42.

<sup>170</sup> See Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism,” *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 768-96.

<sup>171</sup> See Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 100-01.

<sup>172</sup> TNA FO 424/91, Cooper to Wilson, inclosure 2 in #99 (Kayseri, 27 September 1879).

Paradoxically, perhaps, in the early twentieth century, Aziziye District fades away from historical record. The Ottoman archive preserves hundreds of documents about Uzunyayla in the late nineteenth century. Then, only a dozen documents remain about Uzunyayla in the 1900s and early 1910s. The reason was that less news came out of the remote plateau – specifically, no significant conflicts occurred among local North Caucasians, Afşars, and Armenians. Uzunyayla, located in the very middle of Ottoman Anatolia, became an Ottoman periphery. This happened because of the confluence of geography, Ottoman economy, and international diplomacy at the turn of the century.

Table 16: Population of Aziziye District in 1907

Religious or ethnic group	Population
Muslims	49,637
Armenians	1,074
Catholics	4
Greeks	8
Protestants	61
Total:	50,784

Source: *Salname-i Vilayet-i Sivas* (h. 1325, 1907), 254-55.

The subprovince of Sivas, of which Uzunyayla was part, was a grain-producing powerhouse in the late Ottoman period. One contemporary wrote: “Upland after upland, valley after valley, one sees nothing but wheat, barley, rye, millet, and oat fields, extending for miles and miles. The sandjak is, in fact, in time of need a granary for all the surrounding

districts.”<sup>173</sup> The lack of infrastructure, however, prevented export of perishable agricultural products out of Sivas.<sup>174</sup> Reportedly, a large portion of grain, paid in *öşür* tax and stored in local granaries, rotted away because it could not be efficiently transported elsewhere.<sup>175</sup> The cash-strapped Ottoman government and Sivas authorities sought to change that.

The best solution for facilitating agricultural export was building a railway. At the time, the Ottoman state was overseeing several railway projects, all financed by foreign capital. The construction of a railway connecting Sivas Province to Samsun in the north or to Adana in the south would have greatly aided Sivas’s economy and would have plugged central Anatolia into global markets. The railway would have also provided the Ottoman military with quick access to Sivas and, from there, to the eastern provinces with their large Armenian and Kurdish populations. By the late nineteenth century, constructing such a railway was a priority for the Ottoman state. No railway existed in central and northern Anatolia to the east of Ankara. In the south, the nearest railway was the Mersin-Adana Railway, built by the British in 1886 and sold to the French first and then to the Germans.<sup>176</sup> In 1890, the Belgian Cockerill Company purchased the concession to build a railway connecting Samsun and Sivas. Yet the construction never started and the concession was eventually abandoned, primarily because of diplomatic opposition from some of the Great Powers.<sup>177</sup> Chief among them was Russia, which had annexed Kars, Erzurum, and Batum

---

<sup>173</sup> TNA FO 424/122, Richards to Wilson, inclosure 1 in #130 (Sivas, 8 March 1881).

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> V. Necla Geyikdağı, *Foreign Investment in the Ottoman Empire: International Trade and Relations in the Late Nineteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 88-89.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 68.

in 1878 and resisted any foreign plans to build an Ottoman railway that would go near the Russian border.<sup>178</sup>

The other actor was Germany. The *Deutsche Bank* funded the Anatolian Railway (*Chemins de Fer Ottomans d'Anatolie*), established in 1888, which had its own İzmir-Ankara (1893) and Eskişehir-Konya (1896) lines and opposed the Belgian initiative due to its interest in a potential extension toward Sivas.<sup>179</sup> The *Deutsche Bank* also funded the Baghdad Railway, a major priority for the Ottomans. This railway was supposed to link Baghdad to Istanbul, and potentially to Berlin. During the negotiations over the project, the Porte strongly preferred an interior route via Ankara, Sivas, and Diyarbakir.<sup>180</sup> The news of this proposed route spread quickly to central Anatolia, exciting local populations about a potential economic boom that the railway would bring. Thus, in 1898, local communities expected the Anatolian Railway's İzmit-Ankara line to be extended to Kayseri and, via the southern districts of Sivas Province, to Sivas.<sup>181</sup> Such a railway extension, although it would not have gone through Uzunyayla, would have come close enough to amplify the market for Uzunyayla's agricultural and pastoral products. Russia, however, had different ideas and, in 1900, negotiated the Russo-Ottoman Black Sea Treaty, which stipulated that only the Ottoman government or Russia itself could build a railway in the vast region between Ankara and the Russian border.<sup>182</sup> As a result, the Germans chose a more southern

---

<sup>178</sup> Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 36.

<sup>179</sup> Geyikdağı, *Foreign Investment*, 89-90; Murat Özyüksel, *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Industrialization, Imperial Germany and the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 29.

<sup>180</sup> McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*, 39-41.

<sup>181</sup> TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Connor, #42 (Sivas, 15 June 1898), f. 277r.

<sup>182</sup> Igor' S. Ivanov et al., eds., *Ocherki istorii Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1802-2002* (Moscow: Olma-Press, 2002), vol. 3, 203-04; McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*, 36n; Özyüksel, *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway*, 74-77.

route, extending the Anatolian Railway's Eskişehir-Konya line, onto Karaman and Ereğli, and eventually via Adana and Aleppo toward Baghdad.<sup>183</sup> The construction of the Baghdad Railway began in 1903 and was not finished by World War I.

Uzunyayla remained a remote plateau, shielded by mountains from outsiders. Some appreciated a lack of governmental intrusion, which allowed some of their institutions, such as slavery, to thrive. However, isolation also meant fewer opportunities to advance economically. That scarcity of opportunities was an issue that, unexpectedly perhaps, brought the two communities and former foes – muhajirs and Afşars – together.

In 1903, sixteen Circassian and Afşar notables from Aziziye District sent a collective petition on behalf of their communities to the office of the Grand Vizier in Istanbul. The petition read as follows:

People in our district consist of Circassian and Afşar tribes living in poverty and want. We join our efforts to request funding from the Treasury to provide education to the sons of the homeland (Ott. Tur. *evlad-ı vatan*). Previously, we attempted to enroll our children in high schools, to no avail. Every year, five to ten students graduate from our district's middle school, but they have no opportunities to excel here. The sons of the homeland from our district cannot escape ignorance and remain deprived of education. ... We rely on your mercy and ask how many children of both our tribes could be admitted to the Imperial School for Tribes (*Aşiret Mektebi*).<sup>184</sup>

The School for Tribes, founded in Istanbul in 1892, was a five-year boarding school for children of tribal notables. The school was established to integrate Arab and Kurdish nomadic elites into the Ottoman governing system, with quotas for different "tribes," and never identified Afşars or muhajirs as eligible for admissions.<sup>185</sup> The Circassians and the Afşars, resident in and around Uzunyayla, sought to challenge that policy. The two

---

<sup>183</sup> McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express*, 40-41; Özyüksel, *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway*, 134.

<sup>184</sup> BOA BEO 2241/168041, f. 4 (16 *teşrin-i evvel* 1319, 29 October 1903).

<sup>185</sup> Eugene L. Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi: Abdülhamid II's School for Tribes (1892-1907)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28 (1996): 83-107, esp. 88-90.

communities reasoned that graduation from the School for Tribes would increase their children's chances in life and would help them to build networks of patronage in the imperial capital. To demonstrate their loyalty to the state, the two communities employed the relatively new concept of "homeland" (*vatan*), by which they likely meant the territory of the entire Ottoman Empire.<sup>186</sup> In addition, the Circassians, in order to advance educational opportunities for their "sons of the homeland," adopted the tribal self-designation. In late Ottoman bureaucracy, the tribal (*aşiret*) designation typically extended only to nomadic communities and carried cultural connotations, notably an association with backwardness.<sup>187</sup> The muhajir identity constituted its own category, and North Caucasians almost never appeared in documents as *aşiret*. The Uzunyayla muhajirs purposefully used this language to buttress their eligibility for admissions to the Tribal School, and also to signal to Istanbul that Uzunyayla had been deprived of good education and that settled muhajirs were culturally disadvantaged, just like nomadic tribes.

It remains unknown if the government approved the two communities' petition. The School for Tribes was unpopular with many nomadic communities, who saw it as a top-down compulsory initiative by the state. In 1907, the government closed the school after a student rebellion over bad food.<sup>188</sup> Yet this 1903 document remains valuable as a rare act of joint petitioning by two distinct communities, let alone ones sharing memories of mutual violence. It demonstrates that the Circassians and Afşars of Aziziye, first, were concerned with a lack of educational infrastructure in their area, reflective of their

---

<sup>186</sup> The term gained prominence in Ottoman literature in the 1870s; see Kemal H. Karpat, "Nation and Nationalism in the Late Ottoman Empire," in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Political History*, 548.

<sup>187</sup> See Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery."

<sup>188</sup> Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi," 100.

geographic and economic isolation, and, second, attempted to break this isolation by helping their children to join the Ottoman elites.

*Conclusion: Lessons of Isolation*

In the late Ottoman era, Uzunyayla was a story of successful resettlement of refugees. Already by the 1860s, this large plateau in the middle of Anatolia emerged as a major muhajir destination area. By the early twentieth century, Uzunyayla hosted one of the largest and most ethnically diverse North Caucasian communities in the empire. Uzunyayla's economy was based on horse and sheep breeding and agriculture. The town of Aziziye was among the first Ottoman "refugee towns," built specifically to boost the economy and security of North Caucasian villages in Uzunyayla. By the 1910s, Aziziye hosted North Caucasian, Afşar, and Armenian residents and constituted the economic center of its fairly large district.

The history of Uzunyayla is a very "Ottoman" story of migration due to the role that the state played in the resettlement of refugees. The Sivas provincial authorities, acting on behalf of the Ottoman government, actively settled muhajirs in Uzunyayla. The state provided military support to muhajirs in the early 1860s, when nomads challenged muhajirs' right to use the land and, correspondingly, the state's right to distribute uncultivated lands. Afterwards, the state slowly retreated, leaving muhajirs' villages to their own devices. The outcomes in Uzunyayla, however, were very different from those in Dobruja and the Balqa'. Dobruja, in the northern Balkans, had a milder climate and more fertile soil, and, like Uzunyayla, attracted tens of thousands of muhajirs, particularly



western Circassians and Abkhaz. In the absence of sufficient investment and aid, the Dobrujan settlements struggled economically before all muhajirs were expelled from Bulgaria in 1877-78. But it is the story of the Balqa' that provides the starkest contrast. Unlike Uzunyayla, the Balqa' was hardly a popular destination. Only a few thousand Circassians and Chechens made Transjordan their home. Similar to Uzunyayla, muhajirs in the Balqa' faced hostility from several nomadic communities, and the Ottoman state enthusiastically backed muhajirs' claims to the land. Amman, founded in 1878, was about the size of Aziziye by the time of World War I. Today, Amman is a four-million-people megapolis. In comparison, the population of Pınarbaşı, as Aziziye has been known since 1926, had the population of 9,937 in 2015.<sup>189</sup>

The reasons for economic and demographic stagnation of Aziziye/Pınarbaşı could be traced to the late Ottoman period. The Ottomans never built a railway in interior Anatolia. The first railway in the area reached Kayseri in 1927, connecting it to Ankara; it was extended to Sivas in 1930. No railway extension has ever been built to Aziziye. In the absence of a railway, it was near-impossible to attract external capital to this little town, nestled in the mountains. As security deteriorated across eastern Anatolia, a small town like Aziziye could hardly prosper. The disaster struck in 1915, when the town's Armenian community was deported for slaughter.<sup>190</sup> Many Armenians were artisans and merchants, whose trades linked the region to the outside world. Unlike Amman, Aziziye emerged out

---

<sup>189</sup> Fethi Ahmet Canpolat and Selçuk Hayli, "Pınarbaşı İlçesinde (Kayseri) Nüfusun Gelişimi," *Zeitschrift für die Welt der Türken* 9, no. 2 (2017): 192. See also Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 18, 301.

<sup>190</sup> By 1914, 1,104 Armenians lived in Aziziye District, primarily in Aziziye. Armenians were deported through Gürün and Akçadağ to Fıncılar, and their properties pillaged for the benefit of several Turkish *eşrefs* from the district; see Raymond Kévorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013), 444.

of World War I with no merchants, no railway, and no real estate boom. It was a small interior town in the center of a devastated empire, which had just borne a genocide.

The economy and demographics of Uzunyayla also underwent a transformation in the twentieth century. The single most profitable occupation in Ottoman Uzunyayla was raising horses and selling hundreds of them, annually, to the Ottoman army. That business must have collapsed sometime during the early Republican period when the Turkish military no longer needed so many horses. Today, driving through the plateau, one would see cows but not horses that popularized Uzunyayla's name in modern Turkey. The Uzunyayla farmers had to reorient their economy from horse-breeding fully to agriculture and husbandry. Without a railway or any major trans-Anatolian highways, however, Uzunyayla residents could not efficiently export their agricultural and pastoral production. Since the 1960s, younger generations have been leaving Uzunyayla for bigger cities, particularly Kayseri and Ankara, as well as for Germany.<sup>191</sup> In 1907, Aziziye District was home to 50,784 people. [See Table 16.] The population of Pınarbaşı District fell to 31,695 in 1935, recovered to 53,100 in 1975, and then declined again to 35,907 in 1997.<sup>192</sup>

Ironically perhaps, the geographic isolation and scarcity of state infrastructure also secured the North Caucasian character of Uzunyayla. In today's Turkey, Uzunyayla is one of few regions where younger generations still speak Circassian. About ten thousand North Caucasians live in over sixty villages, and although they represent less than half of Uzunyayla's rural population, Uzunyayla is still thought of as a North Caucasian valley.<sup>193</sup>

---

<sup>191</sup> See Berat Yıldız, "Uzunyayla'da Çerkes İskanı Üzerine Bazı Notlar ve Örnek İki Köyün 1960'lardaki Etnolojik Tahlili: Anzurey ve Aslanhable," in *Uzunyayla: Rapor ve Belgeleri*, ed. Muhittin Ünal (Ankara: Kaf-Dav, 2008), vol. 2, 162-82.

<sup>192</sup> Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 301.

<sup>193</sup> Eiji Miyazawa mentions 62 villages in 1997-99, "The Past as a Resource for the Slave Descendants of Circassians in Turkey," 60. Zeynel Abidin Besleney cites 65 villages in Pınarbaşı District; *Circassian Diaspora*, 76n3. See also Miyazawa, "Memory Politics," 302.

Its other residents are Afşars, resettled Kurds, and Turkish muhajirs from Bulgaria. Pınarbaşı is no longer a North Caucasian town; few Circassians live there. The North Caucasian culture survives in the villages on the plateau.

In the summer of 2017, the Hatuqwai (western Circassian) village of Kaynar hosted Uzunyayla's first and Turkey's largest North Caucasian folk festival. The Circassian version of Woodstock, it attracted musicians, singers, and dancers from throughout Turkey, Jordan, and Russia.<sup>194</sup> The festival, which was sponsored by Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism and multiple municipalities and North Caucasian diasporic organizations, lasted two days and was attended by fifteen thousand people. Many festival visitors drove from nearby villages of Göksun, Şarkışla, and Tokat; chartered private buses from Kayseri, Ankara, and Istanbul; and even flew from Germany. Most of them had ancestral connections to muhajirs in Uzunyayla. On those two cool summer days, one could hear different dialects of Circassian and other North Caucasian languages spoken and sung in that small village in the middle of Anatolia. Over a hundred and fifty years prior, muhajirs congregated in Uzunyayla after leaving their homes in the Caucasus. Today, remote Uzunyayla is hardly anyone's residence of choice; it has produced its own diasporas that are larger than the remaining population on the plateau. Instead, Uzunyayla had become the Anatolian Caucasus of sorts, a place that muhajirs' descendants speak of as their homeland.

---

<sup>194</sup> "Birleşik Kafkasya Derneğinden Çolakbayrakdar'a Teşekkür Ziyareti," *Haberler.com* (31 July 2017). <[www.haberler.com/birlesik-kafkasya-derneginden-colakbayrakdar-a-9887740-haberi/](http://www.haberler.com/birlesik-kafkasya-derneginden-colakbayrakdar-a-9887740-haberi/)> (accessed on 13 May 2018).

## CHAPTER 4

### **An Empire in Flux: Refugee Resettlement and Violence**

In November 1895, the Circassian muhajir community in the Golan Heights, an interior region between northeastern Palestine and southwestern Syria, was preparing for battle. That year, the nearby Druze community declared a minor rebellion against Ottoman authority, in part resisting reintroduction of conscription, and raided several Muslim and Christian villages in the area.<sup>1</sup> The Circassians expected an attack because they had their own conflict with the Druze, dating back to 1873, when North Caucasian muhajirs first arrived in the Golan Heights, where they would set up twelve villages lying between the Druze-dominated Mount Hermon and Druze villages in Jabal al-Duruz.<sup>2</sup> The Druze, some of them second- and third-generation refugees from the 1860 massacres in Mount Lebanon, and Circassians clashed primarily over usufruct and grazing rights to land, ever so precious in the rugged volcanic topography of the northern Golan Heights.<sup>3</sup>

On November 19th, a 3,000-strong Druze force attacked the village of Mansura, the largest Circassian village, which the Druze had previously assailed in 1881 and 1894.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> TNA FO 195/1886, Drummond Hay to Herbert, #68 (Beirut, 10 November 1895). See also Kais M. Firro, *A History of the Druzes* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 1:231-32; Jeffrey S. Dixon and Meredith R. Sarkees, *Guide to Intra-State Wars: An Examination of Civil, Regional, and Intercommunal Wars, 1816-2014* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2016), 340-41.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis cites 1873 as the date of the first Circassian arrival in the Golan Heights; see *Nomads and Settlers*, 104-05, 117-18. Natho lists 1872; *Circassian History*, 507. The British reported that the Ottomans deliberately settled Circassians in between Druze villages; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 106.

<sup>3</sup> Following the 1860 civil war in Mount Lebanon, many Druze moved to the Hawran plain bordering the Golan Heights; Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 124, 149-51, 155; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 80-81. On Druze-Circassian land contestation, see Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 216.

<sup>4</sup> On the 1881 and 1894 conflicts, see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 86-90. Firro writes that the Druze attacked Mansura in retaliation for earlier Circassian and bedouin attacks on the Druze villages of Hadar and Hina; *History of the Druzes*, 232.

The Golan Druze received reinforcements from fellow Druze militias in Mount Lebanon and Jabal al-Duruz in southern Syria. The Circassians fought alongside the al-Fadl bedouin, with whom they previously clashed over pasture rights but had concluded a defensive alliance fifteen years prior.<sup>5</sup> Their joint forces numbered 2,000 men. During the battle, as the Circassian-bedouin side was losing, the Druze were attacked by the cavalry force of Mirza Paşa Wasfi, an Ottoman-Circassian general from the Balkans who commanded a gendarmerie force in Damascus. An Ottoman garrison from Beirut soon arrived to witness the defeat and scattering of the Druze forces. The anti-Druze coalition, joined by an Ottoman-Kurdish militia, then pursued the Druze across the Golan Heights and burned down Majdal Shams, the main Druze town, and other villages.<sup>6</sup> In the weeks that followed, more Ottoman troops arrived from Damascus, carrying two artillery guns, and further devastated Druze settlements.<sup>7</sup> A local struggle over land between Circassians and Druze escalated into a regional conflict involving several sedentary and semi-nomadic communities, with cross-regional ethnic ties, as well as semi-regular militias and the Ottoman army.

---

<sup>5</sup> On the 1880 truce, see M. Proux, "Les Tcherkesses," *La France Méditerranéenne et Africaine* 4 (1938): 59, cited in Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 83. Several communities laid claim to the land in the Golan Heights. In the late 1870s, the district governor of Quneitra held a council that included representatives of Druze, Turkmens, al-Fadl, and al-Na'im to discuss communal rights over the use of land for agriculture and pasture; Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 106. The alliance between Circassians and al-Fadl bedouin was likely temporary. In 1900, the government investigated an al-Fadl shaykh for inciting strife between Circassians and Druze and for seizing lands in the area; BOA DH.MKT 2317/82 (11 *zilkade* 1317, 13 March 1900).

<sup>6</sup> The British, who were more sympathetic to Druze than to Circassians, identified Druze as both aggressors and victims. The consul in Beirut wrote that, following the siege of Mansura, several Druze herdsmen were murdered and their cattle stolen by Circassians and bedouin. When attempting to recover their cattle, the 700-strong Druze force was repelled by Circassians and then by Ottoman troops, after which they retreated to Majdal Shams, only to see it devastated by Circassians, Kurds, and bedouin; TNA FO 195/1886, Drummond Hay to Currie, #76 (Beirut, 6 December 1895), #80 (Beirut, 12 December 1895).

<sup>7</sup> For a detailed account of the 1895 Druze-Circassian conflict, based on Russian consular sources, see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 90-92; Kushkhabiev et al., "Syrian Circassians," *ORSAM Report* 130 (2012): 13-14. For an earlier account, based on oral Circassian history, see Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 276-77. For a brief account from the Druze perspective, see Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 231-34. For an account, based on British sources, see Karpas, "The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule," reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 674-75n46.

In the late nineteenth century, muhajirs from the North Caucasus were involved in dozens of such conflicts with various Muslim, Christian, and Druze communities across the Ottoman Empire. These conflicts contributed to a general rise in sectarian violence in the Hamidian period and the eventual demise of the empire. This chapter examines the “militarization” of North Caucasian muhajirs and positions refugee migration in the broader political, social, and economic contexts of the 1860-1914 period. I demonstrate that many conflicts, in which muhajirs were involved and that were framed as sectarian by contemporaries and historians, had their origins in intercommunal competition over land and resources. I also show that the Ottoman strategies regarding refugee resettlement underwent changes, with the 1877-78 and 1912-13 wars affecting how and where the government chose to utilize Muslim refugees. In the post-1878 era and especially after the 1913 coup by the Committee of Union of Progress (CUP), the Ottoman government used the resettlement of muhajirs as a policy of demographic engineering in the empire.<sup>8</sup> In the final decades of Ottoman rule, central and local Ottoman authorities supported and abetted the recruitment of North Caucasian muhajirs into different armed formations, from the Ottoman army to irregular *zaptiye* militias to the special forces unit *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*. By the 1910s, the militarization of muhajirs contributed to new rounds of displacement and ethnic cleansing against Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek populations, and the unraveling of the Ottoman Empire. The involvement of many North Caucasian muhajirs in late Ottoman paramilitary organizations also cemented popular associations of muhajirs with

---

<sup>8</sup> On the Committee of Union and Progress, see Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); idem, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See also Dündar, *İskan Politikası*.

the military and the security apparatus, which affected how Ottoman resettlement of muhajirs would be interpreted by historians.

*Was There a “Master Plan”? The Ottoman Objectives in Resettling Muhajirs*

In scholarship on the Ottoman resettlement of refugees, the primary question, and a source of disagreement between historians, has often been why the Ottoman government settled North Caucasian muhajirs where it did. I refer to this elusive Ottoman rationale for placing refugees as a “master plan.” Three explanations, or types of a “master plan,” are common in historiography: demographic engineering, security-related, and economic.<sup>9</sup>

According to the demographic engineering narrative, by the 1860s, the Ottoman government was disturbed by the loss of Greece and brewing national movements among Serbs, Bulgarians, and, to a lesser degree, Armenians. The Ottomans intentionally settled incoming Muslim immigrants among these Christian populations to alter demographic ratios in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia as a way to forestall nationalist rebellions. In this framework, it was the muhajirs’ religious affiliation that the state valued above all and regarded as a guarantee of future loyalty to the Ottoman state. This narrative is dominant

---

<sup>9</sup> Yücel Terzibaşoğlu identified the first two narratives as a “political-military objective” and a “civilising mission”; “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 130-31.

in literature on Balkan Christians and Armenians,<sup>10</sup> and is common in works by North Caucasian historians, whether in the diaspora<sup>11</sup> or in Russia.<sup>12</sup>

The narrative gained widespread acceptance because this is how, in the age of growing national movements in the Balkans, many Ottoman Christian leaders and foreign observers perceived resettlement, which also shaped historians' source base. Felix Kanitz, an Austro-Hungarian scholar who did ethnographic research in Bulgaria and Serbia, wrote in 1865:

The Porte planned to settle Circassians, like [Crimean] Tatars, along the Bulgarian border, which the Serbs last threatened in 1862. Circassians were meant to advance the Muslim and Albanian settlement, from east to west, like a "living frontier" (Ger. *lebendige Grenzhecke*) or a "military belt" (*Militärgürtel*), that would separate Christian Bulgarians from their Serb brethren.<sup>13</sup>

This language of physical separation and reduction of "national" territory was widespread among Bulgarians and Serbs. After 1878, when examining the origins of muhajirs' villages, a state official in the autonomous Principality of Bulgaria concluded that the Ottoman objective in settling Circassians and Tatars was to "put a wedge amongst Bulgarians" (Bg. *klin mezhdū naselenieto bŭlgarsko*).<sup>14</sup> In 1867, the Russian vice-consul in Tulça believed

---

<sup>10</sup> Pinson, "Demographic Warfare," 141-43; Arsen Avakian, *Cherkesskii faktor v Osmanskoi imperii i Turtsii (vtoraia polovina XIX - pervaiia chetvert' XX vv.)* (Yerevan: Gitutiun, 2001), esp. 146-223. The book is available in Turkish translation as Arsen Avagyan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Kemalist Türkiyen'in Devlet-İktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler: XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısından XX. Yüzyılın İlk Çeyreğine*, trans. Ludmilla Denisenko (Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2004). See also Stephan H. Astourian, "The Silence of the Land: Agrarian Relations, Ethnicity, and Power," in *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 55-81. Notably, both Avakian (p. 177) and Astourian (p. 72) date the Ottoman demographic engineering rationale to as early as 1858-62, when the government settled 30,000 Circassians around Zeitun, Maraş, and Haçin, allegedly to provoke sectarian clashes, in which it would back the Muslim newcomers.

<sup>11</sup> Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 263.

<sup>12</sup> Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 46; Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 51.

<sup>13</sup> Felix Kanitz, "Die Tscherkessen Emigration nach dr Donau. Historisch-ethnographische Skizze," *Österreichische Revue* 3, no. 11 (1865): 240. See also Dobрева, "Remarks on the Circassian Settlements in the Kaza of Lom and Belogradchik," 106.

<sup>14</sup> TsDA f. 159K, op. 1, d. 5, ll. 46-49 (undated; sometime in 1880).



that the Ottomans intentionally settled Muslims, including Crimean Tatars and Circassians, on their Danubian border with Russia to increase the Muslim population in their borderlands.<sup>15</sup>

The Ottoman archival record, however, reveals little rhetoric of intentional demographic engineering in the 1860s. If Ottoman authorities intended to change demographic ratios by placing North Caucasian muhajirs among the empire's "suspect" Christian populations, one could assume the Ottoman Refugee Commission would have chosen resettlement areas more discriminately.<sup>16</sup> In the 1860s, about half of the muhajir population settled in the Ottoman Balkans, with many finding home in the Varna, Tulça, and Rusçuk subprovinces (in the north of Danube Province) and Prizren Subprovince (in Manastır Province, later Kosovo Province), which all had Muslim majorities. In Anatolia, most muhajirs settled in predominantly Muslim areas in northern and central Anatolia. By and large, the "six Armenian provinces" (*Vilâyât-ı Sitte*) had a small North Caucasian population, with the exception of Sivas Province.<sup>17</sup> This is not to say that, in the 1860s, Ottoman officials did not consider the "value" of Muslim muhajirs in demographic engineering; some probably did. Those concerns, however, do not explain the overall geography of resettlement.

---

<sup>15</sup> Leont'ev to Ignatiev, #276 (Tulça, 20 October 1867), reprinted in Leont'ev, *Diplomaticheskie donesenii*, 156-58.

<sup>16</sup> See also Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 173.

<sup>17</sup> According to the demographic survey presented to the European ambassadors by the Armenian patriarch in 1880, prior to the 1877-78 War, about 35,000 North Caucasians lived in the region, including 10,000 in Erzurum Province (except the Van, Bitlis, and Muş subprovinces), 10,000 in Mamuret-ül-Aziz Province, and 15,000 in Diyarbekir Province; Georgy Chochiev and Bekir Koç, "Migrants from the North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia: Some Notes on Their Settlement and Adaptation (Second Half of the 19th Century – Beginning of the 20th Century)," *Journal of Asian History* 40, no. 1 (2006): 92. According to British consular data, by 1881, about 6,000 Circassians and 18,000 Chechens lived in the provinces of Erzurum, Bitlis, Mamuret-ül-Aziz, Van, Sivas (except the Uzunyayla region), and Aleppo out of a total population of 2,442,000; TNA FO 195/1376, Trotter to Dufferin, ff. 581-84r (Istanbul, 11 July 1881).

The security-related explanation is tied with the Ottoman narratives of centralization and “civilizing mission,” whereby the Ottoman government employed the North Caucasians to impose a stricter control over its outlying regions and to keep in check its nomadic and semi-nomadic populations. This narrative is common in literature on eastern Anatolia, with regard to Kurds,<sup>18</sup> in central Anatolia, referring to Afşar Turks,<sup>19</sup> and on Greater Syria, in relation to Druze and bedouin.<sup>20</sup> In a variation of this narrative, North Caucasian settlements appear as a “security buffer,” strategically placed, for example, along Ottoman frontiers with Serbia and Russian-held Bessarabia.<sup>21</sup>

The Ottomans certainly regarded muhajirs as a counterweight to Druze, Kurdish, and bedouin communities, hoping that muhajir settlements would promote sedentarization of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes and reinforce state control over frontier areas.<sup>22</sup> Muhajirs were expected to improve infrastructure, by building roads and protecting railways, and to enforce tax collection. Their claims on land would also encourage local

---

<sup>18</sup> Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 165-66.

<sup>19</sup> Reşat Kasaba notes that some muhajir villages “were designed in a way that formed ribbonlike patterns around the lower reaches of the mountains, so that the migration routes of the local tribes would be blocked and the tribes would have to alter their nomadic lives”; *Moving Empire*, 109-10. See also Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 175-76.

<sup>20</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 100-01; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 61-62, 77; Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 55-56; Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 277-78; Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 40-42; Fuat Dündar, “Pouring a People into the Desert: The ‘Definitive Solution’ of the Unionists to the Armenian Question,” in *Question of Genocide*, eds. Suny et al., 278; Karpat, “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 666. A particularly curious historiographical view is that of the Russian consul in Beirut, Konstantin D. Petkovich, who believed that the Ottoman government sought to settle Circassians in Syria to “counter Arab Muslims, whom it did not trust, with new Muslim fanatics”; cited in Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 63-64; the date is unclear, but Petkovich’s tenure was 1869-96. The British consular authorities developed a similar view, that the Ottomans settled new Circassian immigrants around Manbij and in al-Raqqa, in northern Syria, as a population to rely on in case of an Arab uprising; FO 195/2187, Barnham to O’Conor, #47 (Aleppo, 24 November 1905); TNA FO 195/2213, Barnham to O’Conor, #1 (Aleppo, 1 January 1906).

<sup>21</sup> Karpat, “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 654; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 45-46.

<sup>22</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 69; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 52-56.

inhabitants to formally register their land in state land registries.<sup>23</sup> The geography of North Caucasian resettlement gives credence to the notion of a concerted Ottoman effort to “push” the nomadic frontier eastward. In Greater Syria, muhajirs’ settlements ran in a north-south line – from Manbij to Aleppo, then to Hama, Homs, and Damascus, down to Quneitra and then to Jerash and Amman – that separated sedentary communities from nomadic ones.<sup>24</sup>

The problem with the security-related narrative, as well as the demographic engineering one, is akin to a chicken or the egg causality dilemma. At an early stage of refugee resettlement in the 1860s, many muhajirs ended up in large agricultural provinces, where some free land was still available. Those areas had a Bulgarian majority (Danube Province) or large Greek and Bulgarian communities (Edirne, Salonica, Hüdavendigâr, and Aydın provinces). At a later stage of North Caucasian resettlement starting in the 1870s, the land was scarcer and was often offered to muhajirs precisely at those “internal frontier” zones, such as the Syrian interior, which lacked general security and sedentarized population. In those areas, land was likely to be contested by nomadic communities. Both the demographic engineering and security narratives were retroactively assumed because, in the 1876-78 period, many North Caucasian muhajirs committed violence against Balkan Christians and, in the 1910s, against Anatolian Christians; and throughout the late Ottoman period, they clashed with Afşar, Druze, Kurdish, and bedouin nomadic communities. The common notion of North Caucasians as strong-armed enforcers of the state gave further

---

<sup>23</sup> The “defensive registration” was common among nomadic communities in Transjordan; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 85-92. Terzibaşoğlu reports that, in western Anatolia, villagers commonly appropriated empty unused lands whenever they “heard of a planned refugee settlement in the area” and acquired title deeds to the lands that they controlled for some time but now wished to register, volunteering to pay *bedel-i mist*; “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 134-35, 137.

<sup>24</sup> See Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 99-100.

credence to the idea that the Ottoman government intended to use them as such from the beginning.

The third and least common narrative of Ottoman refugee resettlement is the economic one, according to which the Ottomans regarded muhajirs as a long-term investment and placed them around the empire to boost agriculture and revitalize certain areas.<sup>25</sup> This rationale is the hardest to account for. Rarely did the Ottoman government, including the Refugee Commission, explicitly state that it settled immigrants to further its local economic objectives. The strong economic motivations of Ottoman policy toward the Circassians come into focus when one considers how muhajirs helped to implement the Ottoman government's arguably chief economic reform, the 1858 Land Code. The long-term goals of the 1858 Land Code were to increase tax payments into the imperial treasury, by both enlarging the agricultural population and enforcing tax compliance, and to open up new areas for economic development. Under the dual framework of the 1857 Immigration Law and the 1858 Land Code, the government accorded muhajirs land in three legal categories: *miri*, *vakıf*, and *mevat*. The *miri* land was agricultural land and was the most common type of land tilled by Ottoman peasants. The *vakıf* land was part of charitable endowments, and, in the absence of available *miri* land, the government could convert *vakıf* land that was in its custodianship into *miri* land, as it happened in Uzunyayla. The *mevat* land was "dead" or uncultivated land, such as malarial swamps, which the government readily distributed to anyone willing to turn it into a profit.<sup>26</sup> Muhajirs, by taking up these

---

<sup>25</sup> See Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 70-94; Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, 68, 76-77.

<sup>26</sup> On *mevat* lands, see Chris Gratien, "The Ottoman Quagmire: Malaria, Swamps, and Settlement in the Late Ottoman Mediterranean," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 4 (2017): 583-604.

lands, raised the agricultural output and economic attractiveness of many rural and often neglected parts of the empire.

This dissertation offers a comprehensive approach by integrating all three narratives, albeit considering the third one to be the most applicable empire-wide. I assert that, in the post-1878 era, the Ottoman government had better formulated ideas on what refugee resettlement should accomplish; some of the post-1878 imperial priorities may have been retroactively applied to the 1860s waves of muhajirs, many of whom ended up living near Bulgarians, Greeks, and Armenians, in nomadic areas, and/or in frontier regions.

I also offer two points of critique regarding the search for a comprehensive Ottoman rationale for refugee resettlement. First, much of literature implies spatial and temporal coherence of Ottoman resettlement objectives. Over the long 1860-1914 period, Ottoman objectives in resettling muhajirs had evolved, depending on domestic priorities of different cabinets and on regional politics. The Ottoman government was not a uniform agent either because multiple agencies made decisions as to where to settle muhajirs: the Istanbul-based Refugee Commission (in its many reorganizations) and its regional offices, and provincial, subprovincial, and district authorities. The rationales often overlapped: the authorities could have encouraged Circassians to settle in Çukurova to cultivate cotton and in Vidin to bolster defenses in the Ottoman-Serbian-Romanian borderlands, all in the 1860s; or to settle in Transjordan, in the 1880s, to reclaim land from nomads, and, in the 1900s, to protect the Hejaz Railway.

Second, one should not assume that the Ottomans had a “master plan” for resettling muhajirs from the beginning. The premise of the state’s long-term objectives for its newly

arrived immigrants may stem from our familiarity with a modern state – one with a large bureaucracy and greater control over its territory and resources. The reason historians proposed different explanations for the geography of refugee resettlement may be that there was no “master plan,” especially at an early stage of resettlement in the 1860s.<sup>27</sup> By 1864, over a half million Circassians arrived in the Ottoman Empire by boats and steamships, catching the Ottoman government unprepared to handle such a massive refugee crisis. The geography of resettlement suggests that most muhajirs ended up in the areas that were logistically easiest to reach from Circassia, provided that Ottoman provincial authorities could find sufficient land there. In the early 1860s, most muhajirs were settled in either coastal areas (between Ordu and Sinop, Sulina and Burgas, and Istanbul and Çanakkale) or adjacent interior areas (the Trabzon, Sivas, Kastamonu, and Hüdavendigâr provinces in Anatolia and the Salonica, Edirne, and Danube provinces in the Balkans).

In order to understand the existing Ottoman strategies of refugee resettlement, I find it useful to reconstruct the refugee resettlement narrative, paying closer attention to the changing political, social, and economic environments in the empire between 1860 and 1914.

### *Reconstructing the Resettlement Narrative, 1860-1914*

The immigration and resettlement of muhajirs from the North Caucasus had occurred over several decades of Ottoman reforms, counter-reforms, and local responses to reforms. The intertwined cultures of sectarianism and dispossession are particularly

---

<sup>27</sup> See also, Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 143-46.

important to Muslim immigration and resettlement in the late Ottoman era. Both phenomena, as practiced by the government and Ottoman subjects, were profoundly “modern” and linked to the Ottoman reforms, European diplomacy, and global capitalism.<sup>28</sup>

I use sectarianism to refer primarily to acts of violence between different ethnic and religious communities in the late Ottoman period, but sectarianism also encompasses what people thought and wrote about those who were different from them.<sup>29</sup> The culture of sectarianism denotes the hardening of communal boundaries, the growing enmity between communities expressed in ethnic or religious terms, and the institutionalization of cultural differences in governance. The question of sectarianism lies at the core of late Ottoman historiography: how did a multi-ethnic empire that had managed diversity for over five centuries descend into intercommunal violence, with neighbors committing ethnic cleansing against each other?

Contemporary historians locate the origins of sectarianism in the Ottoman Empire in the long nineteenth century. The often cited “rupture” is the 1860 massacres in Mount Lebanon and Damascus, which featured explicitly sectarian (interreligious and interethnic) violence and resulted in institutionalizing religious difference in the administrative structure of the 1861 Mount Lebanon Mutasarrifate.<sup>30</sup> Other breaking points, which brought sectarianism to the fore of Ottoman domestic politics and into the global spotlight,

---

<sup>28</sup> On the “modernity” of sectarianism, see Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 159-74; Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism*, 15-19. For an excellent study linking immigration and dispossession in the late Ottoman Empire, see Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 41-122.

<sup>29</sup> See Makdisi’s definition of sectarianism as a practice that developed in the context of the nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms and as a discourse constructed on assumptions about the ‘other’ “within the narrative of Ottoman, European, and Lebanese modernization”; *Culture of Sectarianism*, 6-8.

<sup>30</sup> See Engin Deniz Akarlı, *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 82-84, 150-51; Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 159-65.

were the 1876 April Uprising in Bulgaria, the 1894-96 Hamidian massacres of Armenians, and the 1897 Greco-Ottoman War over Crete.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, communal coexistence, shored up by the notions of a shared Ottoman citizenship and identity, persisted and even flourished, epitomized in the 1908 Young Turk Revolution and the restoration of the Ottoman constitution.<sup>32</sup> Yet shortly after that, explicitly sectarian violence consumed the Balkans in the 1912-13 wars, and then the CUP unleashed ethnic cleansing against Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek populations throughout Anatolia.

This narrative of a dramatic rise of sectarianism in the latter part of the nineteenth century is an important historiographical breakthrough, against the backdrop of Orientalist assumptions about perennial intercommunal violence in the Middle East. Yet it also requires further investigation. I find that certain ideas that are associated with post-1878 Treaty of Berlin sectarianism, particularly the notion that Christians would be better off in a Christian state, whereas Muslims belonged to a Muslim one, were well-set by the 1860s.

Kemal H. Karpat, a prominent demographic historian of the Ottoman Empire, referred to the migration of North Caucasian muhajirs as part of a “small Russian-Ottoman exchange of population.”<sup>33</sup> His reasoning was that, in 1859-60, the Ottoman and Russian governments agreed to a limited (c. 40,000-50,000) emigration of [Muslim] Circassians from Russia, and, in 1867, the governor of Kuban Province agreed to accept and resettle [Christian] Greeks from Trabzon. The migration of over a half million Circassians to the

---

<sup>31</sup> See, respectively, Richard Millman, “The Bulgarian Massacres Reconsidered,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 58, no. 2 (1980): 218-31; Melson, “A Theoretical Enquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894-1896”; Uğur Zekeriya Peçe, “Island Bonds: The Civil War in Crete and the Rise of Mass Protest in the Ottoman Empire, 1895-1912,” Ph.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> See Michelle U. Campos, *Ottoman Brothers; Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Early Twentieth-Century Palestine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 68.



Ottoman Empire vastly exceeded the two governments' agreement, whereas only several hundred Ottoman Greek families moved to Russia, and many of them eventually returned to Anatolia.<sup>34</sup>

The question of whether the Ottomans engaged in demographic engineering so early on is open.<sup>35</sup> By the early 1860s, however, many North Caucasian muhajirs and Christian populations in the Ottoman Empire already perceived the resettlement of Muslim refugees as a sectarian project that the Ottomans either pushed or endorsed. Notably, some Ottoman subjects and foreign observers spoke of a population exchange. A population exchange is a policy of demographic engineering (in the guise of “nation-building” and “peace-making”) that was institutionalized in the Middle East much later, in the 1913 Ottoman-Serbian-Greek-Bulgarian population exchanges and the 1923 Greek-Turkish population exchange.<sup>36</sup> These population exchanges, deemed “successful” by the international community, in turn, codified a forced demographic transfer as a global conflict resolution mechanism, resulting, most infamously, in the 1947-50 population transfers between India and Pakistan.<sup>37</sup> The evidence of the mid-nineteenth-century conceptions of population exchanges is scarce. What we know is that, as early as 1861,

---

<sup>34</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 67-68.

<sup>35</sup> On Ottoman demographic engineering, see Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*; Şeker, “Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians”; Üngör, “Seeking Like a Nation-State.” Russian demographic engineering in the Caucasus was more explicit in the 1860s. Many tsarist generals and governors openly advocated emigration of indigenous Muslim populations and immigration of Christian settlers; see Breyfogle, *Heretics and Colonizers*; Sherry, “Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast.”

<sup>36</sup> See Robson, *States of Separation*, 65-104; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 66-70; see also Stephan Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: MacMillan, 1932); Renée Hirschon, ed., *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008).

<sup>37</sup> See Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*. Reportedly, the first time the “population exchange” was formally proposed as such was during the 1878 Ottoman-Russian peace negotiations, by the Ottoman side; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 67.

before mass immigration from the North Caucasus began, rumors circulated in the Vidin area, in northwestern Bulgaria, that Circassian and Nogai Tatar muhajirs would replace the Bulgarians.<sup>38</sup> The rumor was likely based on popular perceptions and was deemed serious enough for the office of Grand Vizier to send an order to provincial and district governors in Silistre Province, across the northern Balkans, that they must reassure local residents that all rumors of an exchange (Ott. Tur. *mübadele*) were false, and that the Sultan would protect the comfort of the Bulgarian community as his loyal subjects.<sup>39</sup> Likewise, some foreign observers, whose informants were typically Ottoman Christians, regarded refugee resettlement in similar light. The British consul in Trabzon, in 1864, referred to refugee migrations as “the exchange which the Turkish Government is sanctioning between Greek[s] and Circassian[s].”<sup>40</sup>

How should we explain such relatively early popular perceptions of a Christian-Muslim population exchange between the Ottoman and Russian states? Those ideas may originate in demographic transformations, including ethnic cleansing and displacements, that had occurred on the margins of the Ottoman Empire, in the Balkans and the Greater Caucasus, in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the Balkans, during the Greek War of Independence (1821-29), Greek revolutionary forces massacred Muslims and Jews – ethno-religious “outsiders” who did not fit into the model of a homogenous nation-state – whereas Ottoman forces and local Muslim communities assaulted Greeks, including those living in Istanbul, Salonica, Cyprus, and Crete.<sup>41</sup> In the case of Bulgaria, after the Russo-

---

<sup>38</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 465/92 (5 *şevval* 1277, 16 April 1861).

<sup>39</sup> BOA A.MKT.UM 459/3 (20 *şevval* 1277, 1 May 1861), reprinted in Naiden Gerov, ed., *Dokumenti za Bŭlgarskata istoriia* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1940), vol. 3, 404-05; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, ed. Gurulkan, vol. 2, 232-33.

<sup>40</sup> TNA FO 78/1832, Stevens to Russell, f. 101 (Trabzon, 3 August 1864).

<sup>41</sup> McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 10-12; Douglas Dakin, *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821-1833* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1973), 59-60, 66-67.

Ottoman wars of 1806-12 and 1828-29, many Bulgarians emigrated to Russian Bessarabia (now Moldova and Ukraine's Odessa Province) and Crimea. At the same time, Crimean Tatars had been leaving the Russian Empire for Ottoman Dobruja – a process that Mark Pinson described as “demographic warfare” and a “population exchange” on the basis of a “quid pro quo agreement” between the two empires.<sup>42</sup>

In the South Caucasus, the Muslim-Christian massacres and displacements occurred during the 1826-28 Russo-Persian War and the 1828-29 Russo-Ottoman War. Several tens of thousands of Muslims were displaced from the Khanate of Erivan, which Russia conquered from Iran, and about 50,000 Armenians from Iran and the Ottoman Empire immigrated in the area.<sup>43</sup> In the North Caucasus, the most conspicuous demographic “reversal” occurred with the cleansing of the Circassian and Abkhazian coast of most of its Muslim population and the settlement of thousands of Christian (Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, Estonian, German, etc.) farmers in the 1860s.<sup>44</sup> These demographic engineering projects – whether fully sanctioned by state officials or not – that occurred in the western and eastern borderlands of the Ottoman Empire framed how some Ottoman Muslims and Christians perceived immigration of muhajirs by the second half of the nineteenth century.

The culture of dispossession was equally important to the unraveling of the Ottoman Empire. At its core lay a struggle over land that intensified with the gradual adoption of a new property regime, rooted in the 1858 Ottoman Land Code. Dispossession,

---

<sup>42</sup> Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 3, 146-48, 149; see also Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, “Mukhadzhirstvo v ‘demograficheskikh voynakh’ Rossii i Turtsii,” *Vostok* 2 (2010): 67-78.

<sup>43</sup> McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 29-32; George A. Bournoutian, “The Ethnic Composition and the Socio-Economic Condition of Eastern Armenia in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century,” in *Transcaucasia, Nationalism, and Social Change*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny, 70-72, 77-79.

<sup>44</sup> See Sherry, “Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast.”

by which I mean the appropriation of land and property by some Ottoman communities at the expense of others, took various forms. First, immigration of Muslim refugees from Crimea and the Caucasus in the 1850s and 1860s and from the Balkans in 1877-78 and 1912-13 prompted local authorities to search for sufficient agricultural land to settle muhajirs. The Ottoman Refugee Commission, in its various forms, granted land to over two million Muslim muhajirs, who entered the shrinking Ottoman state between 1860 and 1914.<sup>45</sup> A substantial part of that real estate had been claimed, but not substantiated by *tapu* deeds, by local villagers or nomadic tribes.<sup>46</sup> Second, since the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman government increased its efforts in sedentarizing nomadic communities. The demand for land for new villages often went against the interests of local settled communities, most notably Armenians in the eastern Ottoman provinces.<sup>47</sup> Third, gradual transition from communal to individual usufruct rights allowed large landowners to buy up land held by individual peasant households, a phenomenon that, perhaps, was nowhere more visible and far-reaching than in Palestine.<sup>48</sup> This development often did not cross ethno-religious lines; many muhajirs, in fact, fell further into want and debt as their beys acquired titles for their land.<sup>49</sup>

The cultures and practices of sectarianism and dispossession that had been coexisting for a while came together – and were now promoted by various state actors –

---

<sup>45</sup> See McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 339.

<sup>46</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 133-49.

<sup>47</sup> Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 128-69; Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Warrant for Genocide: Key Elements of Turko-Armenian Conflict* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 138.

<sup>48</sup> Kristen Alff, “Levantine Joint-Stock Companies, Trans-Mediterranean Partnerships, and Nineteenth Century Capitalist Development,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 1 (2018): 150-77.

<sup>49</sup> Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, 116-17; Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 133-34. This phenomenon must have been regional in nature. Ottoman land records from Dobruja and Transjordan do not reveal mass-scale land registration by muhajir notables at the expense of others.

after 1878. The 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, and particularly its resolution in the treaties of San Stefano and Berlin, constituted a landmark event in the remaking of the Ottoman world and bringing forth the modern Middle East. The war – among the most devastating in Ottoman history – cost the empire two-fifths of its territory and one-fifth of its subjects.<sup>50</sup> Not only did those treaties shape the political map of the Balkans, by affirming the independence of Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania and the autonomy of Bulgaria, but they also entrenched ethno-religious demography as a legitimizing principle in the ordering of the broader Middle East.<sup>51</sup>

The 1878 treaties of San Stefano and Berlin impressed upon the Ottomans the importance of “counting” – a strategy increasingly used in global diplomacy to stake out demographic and territorial claims. First, the act of counting *people* was now not just an exercise for tax purposes, but also a matter of territorial integrity and security.<sup>52</sup> The new Balkan nation-state governments, with their European imperial allies, claimed to draw national borders according to ethno-religious principles.<sup>53</sup> Second, the Ottoman government grew more apprehensive about counting *land*, particularly who owns usufruct

---

<sup>50</sup> M. Hakan Yavuz, “The Transformation of ‘Empire’ Through Wars and Reforms: Integration vs. Oppression,” in *War and Diplomacy*, eds. Yavuz and Sluglett, 33.

<sup>51</sup> For 1878 as a watershed moment, see Isa Blumi, “Contesting the Edges of the Ottoman Empire: Rethinking Ethnic and Sectarian Boundaries in the Malësore, 1878-1912,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35, no. 2 (2003): 237; Dündar, *Crime of Numbers*, 11-24, 36; Yavuz and Sluglett, eds., *War and Diplomacy*.

<sup>52</sup> For the idea of the Ottomans counting their populations for political purposes, see Dündar, *Crime of Numbers*. On the demographic counting in Russia, see Holquist, “To Count, to Extract, to Exterminate.” On the evolution of Ottoman demographic statistics, see Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, “Borders, Maps, and Censuses: The Politicization of Geography and Statistics in the Multi-Ethnic Ottoman Empire,” in *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 171-216; Kemal Karpat, “Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/1882-1893,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9 (1978): 237-74.

<sup>53</sup> During the 1878 negotiations, the Ottoman government seemingly embraced the ethno-religious principle of border-drawing and was willing to negotiate away an [unconquered] Ottoman territory to Montenegro on the basis of it being Christian, if that would strengthen its hand; Blumi, “Contesting the Edges,” 239.

rights to the land. Redrawing the ethno-religious “map” of land tenure and ownership was constitutive of nation-making projects in the post-Ottoman Balkans. In Bulgaria, for example, as described in Chapter 1, the post-1878 national government hastily distributed or sold the land of emigrating Muslims to Bulgarians, as part of a process of increasing the Bulgarians’ share of the national property and economy.<sup>54</sup> Similar processes unfolded in Greece, Romania, and Serbia.<sup>55</sup> After 1878, the Ottoman government sought to emulate the experiences of its Balkan neighbors in making sure that the state benefits from who controls and derives income from the land.<sup>56</sup>

The post-1878 discourses of counting people and land and of thinking about populations in terms of “majorities” and “minorities” went in hand with the mass influx of Muslim refugees from the Balkans. By 1879, about 515,000 Muslims, including Circassians and Crimean Tatars, formerly resident in the Danube and Edirne provinces, became internal refugees within the Ottoman Empire.<sup>57</sup> The religious make-up of the Ottoman Empire underwent significant changes in the late nineteenth century. The Ottoman population, despite the loss of much of the Balkans in 1877-78, increased by 40 percent between 1875 and 1895, from 19.9 million to 27.3 million.<sup>58</sup> A shift in religious demographics was dramatic everywhere, especially in what remained of the Ottoman Balkans, whose Muslim population by 1879 increased by 37 percent, thanks to Muslim immigration, and was now a slight majority, or 50.8 percent of the total population,<sup>59</sup> and

---

<sup>54</sup> See Mirkova, *Muslim Land, Christian Labor*.

<sup>55</sup> See Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 51-55; Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, 70-75.

<sup>56</sup> For a version of this argument, which locates the emergence of “minorities” in the post-1878 thinking about the land, see Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 177.

<sup>57</sup> McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 90-91.

<sup>58</sup> Karpát, *Ottoman Population*, 57, 160.

<sup>59</sup> Justin McCarthy, “The Demography of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War,” in *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*, ed. Turan, 72.

in Anatolia, where most muhajirs settled, and whose Muslim population rose from around 75 percent in 1874 to 80 percent in 1880.<sup>60</sup> The Ottoman Empire, in its demographic composition, had never been more “Muslim” than after 1878.<sup>61</sup>

This abrupt demographic transition, coupled with a string of military defeats, territorial attrition, and a popular perception that foreign powers mistreated former Ottoman Muslim subjects, contributed to a more assertively “Islamic” rhetoric by the Hamidian governments, which commonly appears in historiography as Pan-Islamism.<sup>62</sup> Two spatial-ideological developments, often linked to “Pan-Islamic” ideas, are crucial in regard to refugee resettlement. The first was the promotion of the Ottoman Empire as a caliphate and the Ottoman sultan as a caliph and a protector of all Muslims.<sup>63</sup> The French encroachment in North Africa, the British grip on the Raj, Dutch annexations in Southeast Asia, and Russia’s conquest of Turkestan elevated the global Muslim community’s interest in the Ottoman Empire, which remained the strongest independent Muslim empire and the custodian of Mecca and Medina. The idea of a global caliphate, dormant since the seventeenth century, was back in global demand.<sup>64</sup> The Hamidian government promoted

---

<sup>60</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 55, 117.

<sup>61</sup> The Muslim share of the population in the empire rose from 59.6 percent in the 1820s to 76.2 percent in the 1890s; Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 56.

<sup>62</sup> On Ottoman Pan-Islamism, see Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); see also a classic account by Nikki R. Keddie, “The Pan-Islamic Appeal: Afghani and Abdülhamid II,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 3, no. 1 (1966): 46-67.

<sup>63</sup> On the Hamidian caliphate, see Selim Deringil, “Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909),” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 3 (1991): 345-59; Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain, 1877-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

<sup>64</sup> On the early modern Ottoman caliphate, see Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 117-51. See also Mona Hassan, *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 142-54.

the Ottoman dynasty as caliphs and defenders of faith to elevate Ottoman standing among foreign Muslims, but also to shore up state legitimacy among domestic Muslims.

The second development was the emergence of Anatolia as a meaningful concept. As the territoriality of the empire was forcibly recast in 1878, Anatolia became the “core” of the empire, accounting for much of its population and economy. This coincided with the emergence of the notion of Ottoman Muslims as a separate *millet*, for whom Anatolia would become the “homeland.”<sup>65</sup> This conceptual focus on Anatolia, as someone’s heartland, was one of many ideas to which Ottoman Muslims subscribed in the post-1878 era, but it would gain significant traction in the late 1910s and the early 1920s.

In light of these developments, the Hamidian regime utilized the resettlement of Muslim refugees to help in forging the image of the Ottoman state as a benevolent protector of Muslims – a tool deployed primarily for domestic purposes. After 1878, the Ottoman government framed the public conversation on helping refugees as not only a religious obligation for good Muslims, but also a patriotic duty.<sup>66</sup> The Ottoman elites continued to donate money for the resettlement of muhajirs, as a public expression of charity and commitment to the imperial cause. Sultan Abdülhamid II wrote in his memoirs:

I came to the aid of those oppressed in the past disastrous war. I did all in my power to settle and protect our coreligionist refugees (Ott. Tur. *muhacir dindaşları*). Refugee villages have been set up from Istanbul to Sivas to Aleppo. I happily paid for most expenses for their mosques ... from my own pocket.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> See Kemal H. Karpat, “The *Hijra* from Russia and the Balkans: The Process of Self-Definition in the Late Ottoman State,” in *Muslim Travelers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination*, eds. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990); reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 702-03; Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 163, 169.

<sup>66</sup> On late Ottoman charity and patriotism, see Nadir Özbek, “Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and the Hamidian Regime, 1876-1909,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (2005): 59-81.

<sup>67</sup> Abdülhamid II, *İkinci Abdülhamid'in Hatıra Defteri* (Istanbul: Selek Yayınevi, 1960), 109-10.



Although this was not explicitly stated, refugee resettlement was a matter of imperial legitimacy. The Ottoman caliphate, which global Muslims held in high esteem, was hardly capable of helping Muslims living in European colonial empires, but it was deemed responsible for taking care of Muslim refugees reaching the “well-protected domains” (Ott. Tur. *memalik-i mahruse*). In 1887, the Ottoman government held a lengthy debate about Muslim immigration from the Caucasus and the Balkans. The resulting report criticized injustices that Muslims faced in neighboring states and called on Muslims to immigrate to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>68</sup> The rhetoric was different from the Tanzimat-era 1857 Immigration Law, which invited all potential immigrants regardless of their creed. Thirty years later, the government explicitly courted Muslim immigrants. In the same year of 1887, the Ottoman government renamed the Refugee Commission as the Islamic Refugee Commission (*Muhacirin-i İslamiye Komisyonu*).<sup>69</sup>

Whereas the pre-1878 Ottoman refugee resettlement policy seemed haphazard, the post-1878 settlement of muhajirs, by then streaming not only from the Caucasus and Crimea but also from the Balkans, appears more controlled. The geography of post-1878 settlements was often strategic, with an overall goal of increasing the Muslim population in areas with non-Muslim majorities and pluralities.<sup>70</sup> For example, Yücel Terzibaşoğlu finds that, in the 1877-1912 period, the Ottoman government settled muhajirs along the Dardanelles to achieve “a balance between the Greek and Muslim villages along this

---

<sup>68</sup> Karpat, “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 661-63.

<sup>69</sup> Karpat, “The *Hijra* from Russia and the Balkans,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 696.

<sup>70</sup> İpek, *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri*, 155-59, 176-79, 205-07; Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 158; “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 163.

strategic location.”<sup>71</sup> Likewise, many muhajirs were directed to settle around Istanbul in order to guarantee a Muslim majority in the broader Istanbul region.<sup>72</sup>

Paradoxically, as the 1878 Treaty of Berlin demonstrated to the Ottomans the political value of settling refugees in frontier provinces, it also placed constraints with regard to where the Porte could resettle incoming muhajirs. Thus, the Ottomans agreed “not to employ irregular troops, such as Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, in the garrisons at frontiers” of the newly created province of Eastern Rumelia (Article 15). The Porte was also urged to implement reforms “in the provinces inhabited by Armenians” and to guarantee their security “against the Circassians and the Kurds” (Article 61), a close rewording of a similar provision in the 1878 San Stefano Treaty, which called on the Ottomans to protect Armenians “from Kurds and Circassians” (Article 16). In both treaties, the Great Powers, and chiefly Russia, implied that they considered Muslim immigrants to be a threat to non-Muslim Ottoman subjects, a powerful statement that lived on within and beyond Ottoman borders after 1878.<sup>73</sup>

The 1878 Treaty of Berlin left a further long-lasting legacy in the region for having brought the plight of Armenians into international spotlight.<sup>74</sup> The security and rights of Ottoman Armenians, traditionally the “most loyal millet” (Ott. Tur. *millet-i sadika*), became the centerpiece of the Eastern Question and, correspondingly, the primary threat to the Ottoman Empire’s integrity, as perceived from Istanbul. From its early stage, the

---

<sup>71</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 170.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> This rhetoric persisted in diplomacy. Thus, in international negotiations on the administration of eastern Anatolia, into which Russia forced the Ottoman Empire in 1913-14, Russia insisted on the exclusion of muhajirs from resettlement in *Vilâyât-ı Sitte*. It was one of few demands that the Porte managed to drop from the final draft; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 73-77.

<sup>74</sup> On international negotiations on the Armenians in 1878, see Moundjian, “Struggling for a Constitutional Regime,” 14-21.

“Armenian question” was tied to Muslim immigration. As early as 1872, the Armenian National Assembly, comprised of Ottoman-Armenian leaders, sent the Porte a report documenting harassment of Armenians by several groups, including Circassian muhajirs.<sup>75</sup> This report, and the second one from 1876, underpinned the Armenian claims for protection from muhajirs, which Russia endorsed in the 1878 treaties of San Stefano and Berlin. After 1878, the Armenians lobbied the Porte and foreign powers to enforce the guarantee of their security, as stipulated in the Treaty of Berlin, and to disarm Circassians and Kurds in the eastern provinces.<sup>76</sup>

The strategic usage of incoming Muslim immigrants likely grew in appeal, as the empire was losing more territories: Cyprus to Britain in 1878; Egypt to Britain in 1882; Tunisia to France in 1881; Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary in 1908 (de facto since 1878); Eastern Rumelia to Bulgaria in 1908 (de facto since 1885); Libya to Italy in 1911; and Crete to Greece in 1913 (de facto since 1898/1908).<sup>77</sup> Internal Ottoman reports hint at the growing sectarian thinking about populations and land among imperial officials. Following the 1894-96 Hamidian massacres of Armenians, one Ottoman provincial

---

<sup>75</sup> Astourian, “Silence of the Land,” 59-60.

<sup>76</sup> Chochiev and Koç, “Migrants from the North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia”: 88, 98-100. For example, in 1880, Armenians of Muş submitted several requests to Ottoman authorities, including not to give government offices in the eastern provinces to Circassians and Kurds out of fear that those officials would discriminate against them; TNA FO 195/1315, Clayton to Trotter, inclosure in #21 (Van, 25 May 1880), ff. 126-31. Sometimes, this kind of pressure affected resettlement outcomes. For example, in one case, the government redirected Circassian muhajirs, who were about to settle in the Erzurum, Van, and Hakkari provinces, towards Adana. A report by the Refugee Commission reveals that the authorities paid some attention to Armenian reservations and British complaints, which had invoked the Treaty of Berlin; BOA Y.MTV 36/103 (28 *rebiülahir* 1306, 1 January 1889). [The document cites “Hakkari vilayeti,” although the area was merged into Van Province in 1888.]

<sup>77</sup> The 1897 Cretan insurrection led to the establishment of the autonomous Cretan State, under Ottoman suzerainty but with a High Commissioner from Greece, in 1898. In 1908, the Cretan Assembly unilaterally declared a union (enosis) with Greece; see Peçe, “Island Bonds”; idem., “An Island Unmixed: European Military Intervention and the Displacement of Crete’s Muslims, 1896-1908,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 54, no. 4 (2018): 575-91.

governor wrote to Istanbul, “Now, thanks to these wise steps taken ... the majority [of the population] is everywhere to be secured for the Muslims.”<sup>78</sup> A 1911 communiqué of the Interior Ministry, meant for internal consumption and erroneously sent out to all provincial governors, warned of the danger of Ottoman Muslims’ selling their land to Ottoman Christians, a minority, and that the state ought to help Muslims retain and purchase more land “to remain the ruling millet.”<sup>79</sup>

This new mode of political thinking, in terms of ethno-religious counting of people and properties, contributed to the unraveling of the empire. By the early twentieth century, the Ottoman government routinely directed muhajirs or newly sedentarized tribes to certain regions in order to achieve its desirable demographic ratio.<sup>80</sup> This process coincided with the gradual entrenchment of the 1858 Ottoman Land Code, which privileged individual title-holding over communal farming or nomadic grazing. As a result, in some parts of the empire, entire communities were slowly losing their usufruct rights to large landowners. In the eastern provinces, in particular, Armenians were often victims of such dispossession. After 1908, Armenians pressed for land reforms that would restore lands seized from Armenians during the Hamidian decades. These demands for land were opposed by

---

<sup>78</sup> Astourian, “Silence of the Land,” 65-66.

<sup>79</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 171-72, 177.

<sup>80</sup> In some cases, the Ottoman authorities intentionally directed muhajirs to Armenian areas. For example, Baderkhan cites an internal Ottoman document from 1879, ordering to settle Circassians near Malazgirt, Muş Subprovince, which had experienced Armenian disturbances, in order to “strengthen the Muslim element”; *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 62. Likewise, in 1906, many North Caucasian muhajirs were settled around Muş, reportedly due to the government’s anxiety over Armenian revolutionaries in the region; see Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 149. Nevertheless, in 1909, the Ottoman government also investigated allegations that some Armenian lands in Muş and Bulanık villages were forcibly seized and given to Circassians; BOA DH.MKT 2851/31 (2 *cemaziyelahir* 1327, 21 June 1909).

Kurdish, Turkish, and Circassian elites in eastern Anatolia, which severely strained intercommunal relations, forming a crucial but overlooked context for the genocide.<sup>81</sup>

The 1912-13 Balkan Wars, which all but ejected the Ottomans from Rumelia, further confirmed the primacy of demography in contesting frontier regions.<sup>82</sup> The wars helped to consolidate the dominance of the CUP, which rigged the April 1912 elections, led the January 1913 coup, and annihilated its opposition after the assassination of their Grand Vizier in June 1913. During the Balkan Wars, the CUP-led government insisted that Balkan Muslim refugees, streaming into the Ottoman state, resettle around Edirne and not cross into Anatolia, in order to prop up the Muslim majority in East Thrace, the remaining Rumelian sliver of land, to the west of Istanbul.<sup>83</sup> After the wars, the CUP-led Ottoman government and several Balkan nation-states conducted a series of population exchanges that aimed to homogenize their frontier populations.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> See Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 128-69; Moundjian, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime," 429-30; Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 102, 170; Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 61-63. See also Mark Levene, "Creating a Modern 'Zone of Genocide': The Impact of Nation- and State-Formation on Eastern Anatolia, 1878-1923," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12, no. 3 (1998): 393-433.

<sup>82</sup> On the Balkan Wars, see M. Hakan Yavuz and Isa Blumi, eds., *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah, 2013), esp. Yavuz, "Warfare and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars as a Catalyst for Homogenization," 31-84. See also Ramazan Hakkı Öztan, "Point of No Return? Prospects of Empire after the Ottoman Defeat in the Balkan Wars (1912-13)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50, no. 1 (2018): 65-84; chapters by Eyal Ginio and Keith Brown in *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Borderlands*, eds. Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013); Mark Biondich, *The Balkans: Revolution, War, and Political Violence Since 1878* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75-84.

<sup>83</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, "Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics," 170. According to the Ottoman official estimates, in the 1912-20 period, 413,922 Muslim refugees from the Balkans arrived in the Ottoman Empire; McCarthy, *Death and Exile*, 161, 164. To put it in other terms, in the 1912-13 Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Empire lost 83 percent of its territory and 69 percent of its population in Europe; Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, 298.

<sup>84</sup> Ladas, *Exchange of Minorities*; Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 72-74, 80.

The CUP policy of resettling muhajirs was explicit in its demographic engineering, tailoring emigration policies towards Christians and promoting immigration by Muslims.<sup>85</sup> The process of settling immigrants – whether by the Ottoman state or globally – often has an uncomfortable connection to someone emigrating or losing their land. The two terms used to describe the two phenomena in Ottoman parlance – *hicret* [immigration/emigration to the Ottoman Empire] and *tehcir* [deportations] – stem from the same Arabic root. In the CUP era, these two processes became symbiotic and were jointly administered on the scale never previously attempted by any Ottoman government.

The CUP heralded new policies changing how the resettlement of refugees would be implemented. In 1913, the CUP issued the new Immigration Regulations (Ott. Tur. *Muhacirin Nizamnamesi*) and then created the Directorate for the Settlement of Tribes and Refugees (*İskan-ı Aşiret ve Muhacirin Müdüriyeti*).<sup>86</sup> This well-resourced organization was not only responsible for settling both muhajirs and nomads, but also had an intelligence unit that conducted research on Anatolia's ethnic and religious groups. These data were used to determine where to settle Muslim refugees and nomads.<sup>87</sup> Ethnicity played an important role for the CUP, which favored Turkifying Anatolia. Thus, the new Regulations stipulated that wherever Albanian and Bosnian muhajirs were resettled, their share should

---

<sup>85</sup> See Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 62-66, 130-34. See also Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*; Üngör, "Seeking Like a Nation-State." Dündar asserts that "during the First World War, the aim of the Unionist demographic policy was to find land for homeless refugees from the Balkans [which] meant evacuating certain areas where 'troublesome' Armenians lived"; *Crime of Numbers*, 2. Klein also finds that the CUP did not want to restore lands usurped by local aghas to Kurdish and Armenian peasants because it intended to use these lands to settle Kurdish nomads and Circassian immigrants; *Margins of Empire*, 165-66.

<sup>86</sup> See Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 70-71. Üngör dates the establishment of the organization to early 1914; "Seeing Like a Nation-State," 22.

<sup>87</sup> Üngör, "Seeing Like a Nation-State," 22-23.

not exceed ten percent of the local population.<sup>88</sup> In 1915, the CUP issued the Relocation and Resettlement Law (*Sevk ve İskan Kanunu*, better known as *Tehcir Kanunu*), which provided a legal framework for deporting and dispossessing Armenians.<sup>89</sup> In 1914-16, the CUP also evolved the legal notion of *emval-i metruke*, or “abandoned property” (not to be confused with *arazi-yi metruke*, or “public commons” of the 1858 Land Code).<sup>90</sup> The state employed this concept to appropriate property that was left by Ottoman Christians and eventually to transfer that property to others. Many Ottoman Armenians, Greeks, and Assyrians were forcibly deported or murdered, and Muslim immigrants – whether muhajirs from the Balkans, or displaced Kurds, or sedentarized nomads – often settled in their place and occupied their houses, fields, and pastures.<sup>91</sup>

The resettlement politics was among the most potent mechanisms of the CUP in Islamicizing and Turkifying Anatolia.<sup>92</sup> By the 1910s, refugee resettlement was both a product and a tool of transition from the imperial order to the nation-state order, which necessarily implied ethnic or religious homogenization. The settlement of muhajirs in Anatolia, amidst ethno-religious violence, cannot be viewed in isolation from similar

---

<sup>88</sup> Dündar, *İskan Politikası*, 118. The CUP applied quotas to long-established populations as well. By 1915, the CUP made a decision that the population share of Armenians should not exceed ten percent in Anatolian provinces, two percent in Aleppo Province, and ten percent elsewhere, which, in practice, sanctioned a genocide; see *Ibid.*, 2, 41-42, 103-19.

<sup>89</sup> See Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property* (London and New York: Continuum International, 2011), 6.

<sup>90</sup> Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 44-48, 78-79, 83-104.

<sup>91</sup> The rich emerging literature on confiscated property holds a potential to reframe how we understand the Armenian Genocide, the making of modern Turkey, and even capitalism in the Middle East. See Akçam and Kurt, *Spirit of the Laws*; Üngör and Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction*; Hrayr S. Karaguezian, *A Perfect Injustice: Genocide and Theft of Armenian Wealth* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009); Ümit Kurt, “Revisiting the Legal Infrastructure for the Confiscation of Armenian and Greek Wealth: An Analysis of the CUP Years and the Early Modern Republic,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 53, no. 5 (2017): 700-23; Bedross Der Matossian, “The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of ‘Armenian Capital’ at the End of the Ottoman Empire,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (2011): 1-23.

<sup>92</sup> See Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 57; Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 16-17, 263-64.

processes unfolding outside of Ottoman borders during and after World War I. Between 1913 and 1923, Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia unleashed ethnic cleansing of “undesirable” ethnic groups and resettled their co-ethnic refugees fleeing from somewhere in the Balkans, while Armenians and Azeri Turks perpetrated violence against each other in the South Caucasus.<sup>93</sup>

### *Contesting Land: Conflicts Between Muhajirs and Local Communities*

The immigration and resettlement of about a million muhajirs from the North Caucasus, in addition to about 1.3 million Muslims from the Balkans, the Crimea, and Elviye-i Selâse in the 1856-1914 period, transformed the economies of many Ottoman regions.<sup>94</sup> The economic changes often came with ruptures in social relations between muhajir communities and local populations. A substantial share of conflicts, as reported by Ottoman authorities and foreign consuls, featured competition over land.<sup>95</sup> I do not seek to explain intercommunal conflict solely in economic terms. Most, if not all, property disputes between two or more different communities, in the late Ottoman setting, had additional dimensions, whether related to ethnic or religious bias, social status, political power

---

<sup>93</sup> On demographic changes in the Balkans, see George Kennan, *Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in Retrospect* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1993); Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees, 1922-1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). On demographic changes in the South Caucasus, see Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 191-251.

<sup>94</sup> McCarthy estimates 300,000 Crimean and Nogai Tatar muhajirs in 1856-60; 515,000 Turkish muhajirs from Bulgaria in 1877-79; 70,000 muhajirs from Elviye-i Selâse in 1877-79; and 410,000 muhajirs during the 1912-13 Balkan Wars; see *Death and Exile*, 17, 90-91, 113, 161, 339. Karpas estimates a much larger figure of five to seven million immigrants, mostly Muslims, in the Ottoman Empire between 1860 and 1914; “The *Hijra* from Russia and the Balkans,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 691.

<sup>95</sup> A growing number of scholars point towards muhajirs’ immigration as exacerbating conflicts over land, which acquired sectarian dimensions; see Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 117-58; Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 128-69.



struggle, administrative corruption, or interference by central authorities. Nor did many conflicts arise solely out of a contested property transaction but rather compounded over a number of communal grievances.

The 1895 Circassian “war” with the Druze, for example, which opened this chapter, was a multi-layered conflict that lasted several decades, involved multiple actors from outside of the Golan Heights, and stemmed from a range of perceived slights and injustices. In 1881, about 600 Druze men carried out a raid by against the Circassian village of Mansura. The Circassians retaliated, and since then the two communities clashed on multiple occasions until concluding a peace agreement in 1889.<sup>96</sup> In 1894, several Druze men attacked a Circassian caravan, killing a Circassian woman and looting the caravan.<sup>97</sup> Circassian elders, in a bid to prevent a lengthy blood feud between the two communities, appealed to the Quneitra district authorities. The local authorities negotiated for the Druze to pay the blood money of 300 Ottoman liras and to surrender murder suspects if they were identified. When Circassian deputies went to identify the culprits, they were attacked; four Druze men were killed in the altercation, with no Circassian casualties.<sup>98</sup> The conflict was spiralling out of control, as both parties prepared for war. The Druze of Majdal Shams

---

<sup>96</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 86-87; idem. et al., “Syrian Circassians,” *ORSAM*, 12-13. See also Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 230.

<sup>97</sup> See Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 87. For the general outline of events, I combine Kushkhabiev’s detailed account, based on Russian consular sources, with information from Ottoman and British sources. Russian diplomats were more likely to have Circassian informants than Druze ones, and their reporting bias would likely be pro-Circassian. For the British consular account, see TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #13 (Damascus, 11 June 1894). The British account is similar to the Russian one; their Syrian dragoman reported that four Druze attacked a Circassian couple, wounding a woman. For Ottoman accounts, see BOA Y.MTV 97/9 (2 *zilhicce* 1311, 6 June 1894); Y.A.HUS 299/40 (3 *zilhicce* 1311, 7 June 1894).

<sup>98</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 87. The British reported that Circassians shot one Christian who was with four Druze; TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #13 (Damascus, 11 June 1894).

reportedly issued calls for support and received detachments from Hasbaya and Rashaya in the Wadi al-‘Ajam area on the slopes of Mount Hermon.<sup>99</sup>

The Quneitra district governor then traveled to Majdal Shams to persuade the Druze to suspend preparations for war. Instead, he was captured only to be released in exchange for Druze prisoners. In May 1894, a several thousand-strong Druze army besieged the Circassian village of Mansura.<sup>100</sup> The Circassian community of Mansura and surrounding villages rallied to battle, which reportedly lasted fourteen hours.<sup>101</sup> On the evening of the battle, Hüsrev Paşa, head of the gendarmerie department of Damascus Province, arrived on the scene with reinforcements. He forced both parties into negotiations and eventually into a truce, with a promise of a just judicial investigation.<sup>102</sup> In the aftermath, the Druze sent a collective petition to the governor of Damascus Province, Rauf Paşa, presumably describing Circassians as culprits.<sup>103</sup> The Circassian community, doubtful about impartiality of local Ottoman authorities, sent petitions directly to Istanbul, complaining that they were mistreated and accusing Rauf Paşa of sympathizing with the Druze.<sup>104</sup> The central authorities must have been disturbed by the escalation of the conflict, which, because it happened in the vicinity of Palestine and Lebanon, was monitored closely by

---

<sup>99</sup> BOA BEO 433/32458 (8 *muharrem* 1312, 12 July 1894). See also Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 87.

<sup>100</sup> Rauf Paşa, the Damascus governor reported that 3,000 Druze besieged Mansura, 56 Circassians and 20 Druze lost their lives, and 14 houses and barns burnt down; BOA Y.A.HUS 299/40 (25 *mayıs* 1310, 6 June 1894). Russian consular sources mention up to 10,000 Druze besieging Mansura; Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 88.

<sup>101</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 88. The British reported 80 Circassians dead and 20 Druze dead; TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #13 (Damascus, 11 June 1894).

<sup>102</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 88-89.

<sup>103</sup> TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #13 (Damascus, 11 June 1894); Meshaka to Currie, #14 (Damascus, 21 June 1894).

<sup>104</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 89.

foreign consuls.<sup>105</sup> Shortly thereafter, the Damascus provincial governor and the Quneitra district governor were dismissed from their positions.<sup>106</sup>

The new governor of Damascus Province, Osman Nuri Paşa, then formed a special commission entrusted with solving the crisis. The commission brokered a deal, whereby the Druze would issue an apology and pay 1,000 Ottoman liras to the Circassians.<sup>107</sup> The Circassians received an additional 500 Ottoman liras as an “imperial gift” from the Sultan.<sup>108</sup> In August 1894, 35 Druze shaykhs from the Golan Heights and the Beqaa Valley arrived in Mansura for the reconciliation ceremony.<sup>109</sup> The truce was fragile and imposed from above, as was abundantly clear to everyone, and, as a precaution, the Ottoman authorities, in order to prevent any future escalation and to “secure public order,” deployed cavalry regiments from Nablus to the Safed and Jenin districts, near the Golan Heights.<sup>110</sup> The 1894 truce lasted less than a year before the 1895 “civil war” erupted, pitting Circassians and bedouin, on one side, against Druze of the Golan Heights, Hawran, and Mount Hermon on the other. Circassian conflicts with Druze and bedouin over land in the Golan Heights continued into the early twentieth century.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> The British reported that local Maronite, Greek Orthodox, and Catholic populations were fearful that the authorities would punish the Druze, which could provoke Druze retaliation and make Christian populations vulnerable; TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #13 (Damascus, 11 June 1894).

<sup>106</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 89.

<sup>107</sup> The indemnity of 100,000 Ottoman liras was to be paid as 20,000 liras in cash and 80,000 liras in two instalments, one per year. The Druze of Majdal Shams sought the help of “their coreligionists, in the Lebanon and elsewhere” to collect the sum; TNA FO 195/1839, Meshaka to Currie, #19 (Damascus, 25 August 1894).

<sup>108</sup> The Ottoman officials justified the gift by regarding Circassians as being “afflicted with the damage of life and property”; BOA DH.MKT 285/46 (19 *rebiülevvel* 1312, 20 September 1894). See also BEO 489/36647 (6 *rebiülahir* 1312, 7 October 1894), 547/40956 (26 *kanun-ı evvel* 1310, 7 January 1895).

<sup>109</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 87-90.

<sup>110</sup> BOA BEO 492/36867 (10 *rebiülahir* 1312, 11 October 1894), 503/37716 (25 *rebiülahir* 1312, 26 October 1894), 516/38680 (12 *cemaziyelevvel* 1312, 17 November 1894).

<sup>111</sup> In 1903, for example, local Arab bedouin occupied the Mansura Circassians’ neglected lands (*agfalat*). Circassians filed a complaint, and, upon investigation, the authorities discovered that the lands laid uncultivated, which prompted an audit of available vacant lands (*mahlul*) in the area; BOA DH.MKT

In the northern Golan Heights, land was a precious commodity, and control over pastures and springs translated into economic dominance over the region. Circassian newcomers challenged that dominance. The Circassian villages cut off those Druze settlements that lay deeper in the Golan Heights from Druze areas in southern Syria and eastern Lebanon. The issue of land was also enmeshed with the notion that the Circassian settlement was the latest development in the long Ottoman game to suppress the Druze. In 1860, the Druze fought the Maronites in Mount Lebanon. In 1861, the Ottomans, under local and international pressure, singled out the Druze for punishment.<sup>112</sup> In the course and in the aftermath of the 1860 civil war, many Druze became refugees eastward and southward of Mount Lebanon.<sup>113</sup> In the neighboring Hawran, the Druze fought the Ottoman forces over tax payments and military conscription.<sup>114</sup> Finally, in the late 1870s and the early 1880s, the Druze had armed clashes with the Ottoman troops, local bedouin tribes, and Hawranese peasants.<sup>115</sup> For the Druze, the Circassians' hold on the northern Golan Heights represented the Ottoman government's continued effort to fragment and diminish the Druze power in the Levant.

The Circassian-Druze conflict brings into focus the central state, a prominent actor in many conflicts involving muhajirs throughout the 1860-1914 period. More often than

---

745/59 (2 *cemaziylevvel* 1321, 27 July 1903). In 1909, the Ottomans reported another battle between Circassians of Mansura and Druze of Majdal Shams; Y.EE 37/93 (6 *rebiülahir* 1327, 27 April 1909).

<sup>112</sup> Makdisi, *Culture of Sectarianism*, 153-57. On Druze perceptions of 1860, see Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 124-26. Some European contemporaries believed that the Ottomans shielded Druze notables from punishment, see Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *An Occasion for War: Mount Lebanon and Damascus in 1860* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 177, 180-92, 207-10.

<sup>113</sup> Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 129-53.

<sup>114</sup> See Schilcher, "The Hauran Conflicts of the 1860s." In the early 1860s, many Druze of Lebanon and Palestine migrated to Jabal al-Duruz; Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 155-77. On tax disputes, see *Ibid.*, 140-48, 176; on conscription, see *Ibid.*, 165-67.

<sup>115</sup> TNA FO 195/1264, Jago to Layard, #27 (Damascus, 3 November 1879); 195/1368, Dickson to Layard, #9 (Beirut, 12 February 1881); 195/1369, Jago to Layard, #2 (Damascus, 13 February 1881). See also Firro, *History of the Druzes*, 195-205.

not, central and regional authorities would take the side of muhajirs, particularly when the opposing side was a (semi-)nomadic and/or non-tax-compliant community, whom the Ottomans long sought to bring under their control. Only large conflicts that threatened regional stability attracted intervention from the state and, therefore, left a paper trail. We know little about smaller clashes within muhajir communities or intercommunal conflicts that were resolved internally, without attracting a third party.<sup>116</sup> The overreliance on Ottoman reporting of muhajirs' conflicts, in which the state played an active part, may skew our vision of how muhajirs interacted with other communities and entrench the perception of muhajirs as enforcers of imperial designs.

Throughout the empire, the conflicts between muhajirs and local established communities reflected not only contestation over physical use of land and resources but also a clash over how property ownership was understood and what role the state would play in regulating land tenure. For many communities, muhajirs represented the harbingers of a new land regime, with their land allotment occurring under two basic scenarios. In the first one, the state would grant muhajirs local lands that the government would unilaterally designate as *miri*, notwithstanding historical claims on that land by others. In the second one, if the government delayed allotment of free land, muhajirs would occupy land that they perceived to be available, and the government would often back them. Muhajirs' immigration prompted many to formally register their land and pay relevant taxes, accepting the tenets of the 1858 Land Code, whereby the state formally owned all *miri* land and granted usufruct rights under certain conditions. The Land Code itself was hardly

---

<sup>116</sup> For rare Ottoman reports of conflicts within muhajir communities, see BOA BEO 277/20728 (Damascus-Salt, 1893); DH.MUI 26/3 (Hüdavendigâr-Düzce, 1909); HH.THR 466/75 (Aleppo-Menbic/Manbij, 1889).

revolutionary – it reflected economic practices on the ground in some areas; but its gradual adoption across the Ottoman domains meant standardization of certain practices and centralization of control by the state. The Land Code privileged sedentary cultivators, who would hold individual title and live on the land, and, as such, disadvantaged many pastoral communities that relied on seasonal and communal land usage. Refugee resettlement may have affected local economic relations in indirect ways too. For example, the “securitization” of the areas where muhajirs settled – through muhajirs’ militias and state forces – decreased some tribes’ power over local settled communities, including the right of tribute (Ar. *khuwa*), which may have also been a source of bedouin grievances against muhajirs.<sup>117</sup> These tensions resulted in multiple conflicts between muhajirs and nomadic communities in Kurdistan, central Anatolia, and Greater Syria.

In Transjordan, whose Circassian villages were the focus of Chapter 2, muhajirs’ settlement and real estate success were accompanied by a burgeoning conflict with several bedouin communities. The location of Amman was a contested territory even before the muhajirs arrived in 1878. As we saw earlier, it lay in the tribal territories of two rival bedouin forces, the ‘Adwan, who led the Balqawiyya tribal confederation, and the Bani Sakhr.<sup>118</sup> They both valued access to the water of the Ra’s al-‘Ayn springs and the Sayl

---

<sup>117</sup> For this argument, see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 82; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 62. Rogan states that, in Transjordan, Circassians refused to pay *khuwa* to bedouin; *Frontiers of the State*, 75. On *khuwa*, see Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 10, 15-16, 18; Jamie Allinson, *The Struggle for the State in Jordan: The Social Origins of Alliances in the Middle East* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 42-67; Yoav Alon, *The Making of Jordan: Tribes, Colonialism and the Modern State* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 17-18.

<sup>118</sup> The ‘Adwan were dominant in the western Balqa’ until the late 1860s, but lost many lands due to the Ottoman-led land registration. The Balqawiyya alliance included the ‘Adwan, ‘Ajarma, Balqawiyya, Bani Hasan, Bani Hamida, Da’ja, al-Hadid, Saltiyya, and other tribes and clans. The Bani Sakhr were a dominant tribe to the east of the pilgrimage route, or the Hejaz Railway; see Alon, *Making of Jordan*, 29-30, 159-61; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 68, 184-85, 203-04.

‘Amman stream, and to fertile lands in the eastern Balqa’.<sup>119</sup> Within a year of the arrival of the first Circassian refugees, the al-Hadid clan of the Balqawiyya tribal confederation attempted to register lands around Amman, with the support of Salti notables, but this preemptive registration was never formalized, perhaps due to high tax obligations.<sup>120</sup>

Sattam al-Fayiz, a leader of a powerful clan within the Bani Sakhr, initially opposed the Circassian settlement but eventually chose to ally with the muhajirs because his clan increasingly looked towards a good relationship with the Ottoman authorities.<sup>121</sup> At some point in the late 1890s, the Bani Sakhr and the Circassians concluded a defensive alliance that required each party to support the other in case of an attack by rival bedouin communities.<sup>122</sup> The alliance, perhaps, covered only some Bani Sakhr clans because, in 1904, Circassians fought the Khuraysha (Khurshan) clan of the Bani Sakhr.<sup>123</sup> The confrontation reportedly developed out of the two communities’ unresolved claims over pastures near Amman. The conflict was deemed serious enough for the Ottoman provincial administration to dispatch three horse cavalry divisions and one camel cavalry division from Damascus.<sup>124</sup> In 1907, Circassians were involved in another armed conflict, likely

---

<sup>119</sup> The competition over land was not only inter-tribal but also between clans. In 1864, two sections of the ‘Adwan clashed near Amman in a land dispute; Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 46.

<sup>120</sup> For the full story, see Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 203-10. On bedouin’s management of land in the late Ottoman Salt District, see Barakat, “An Empty Land?”

<sup>121</sup> Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 107. On Sattam al-Fayiz, see Alon, *Shaykh of Shaykhs*, 7-22; Abujaber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 177-96; Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 79-81, 85-87.

<sup>122</sup> This alliance, the text of which remains unknown, features prominently in the Jordanian-Circassian oral history; see Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 44-45; Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 275-76. According to one retelling of the story, the alliance agreement was written in blood; interview in Amman (8 August 2014). The alliance between Circassians and the Bani Sakhr proved important for Jordan’s political history and was renewed by their leaders in 2013; interviews in Amman (8, 16 August 2014), also “B‘ada qarn min al-zaman .. Bani Sakhr wa-l-Sharkas yujaddidan al-wathiqa al-tarikhiyya,” *Ammon News* (23 June 2013). <[www.ammonnews.net/article/157277](http://www.ammonnews.net/article/157277)> (accessed on 7 November 2017).

<sup>123</sup> On the Khuraysha, see Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 14; Alon, *Making of Jordan*, 163. As in most cases, the relationship was not solely antagonistic; at some point, the Khuraysha employed Circassians of Wadi al-Sir as laborers; *Ibid.*, 131.

<sup>124</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 84.

with one of the Balqawiyya tribes, over the lands that newly-arrived Circassian muhajirs occupied in 1906 and that were claimed by nearby bedouin communities.<sup>125</sup>

In 1910, the Circassians of Amman became embroiled in their largest conflict to date, which entered Jordanian historiography as the “Balqawiyya war.”<sup>126</sup> At the root of the Circassian conflict with the Balqawiyya tribes was contestation over land and water access, but the confrontation erupted, reportedly, over a bedouin attack on a Circassian landowner and the kidnapping of his children.<sup>127</sup> With communal honor at stake, Amman’s male population mobilized for an assault on the Balqawiyya clans. The Bani Sakhr mediated the conflict, which ended in a peace agreement between the two parties.<sup>128</sup>

Other Circassian and Chechen settlements in Transjordan built their own relations with surrounding bedouin communities, usually with a combination of military confrontation and economic cooperation: muhajirs in al-Zarqa’ with the Bani Hasan, in Wadi al-Sir with the ‘Abbad and the Manasir, in Sweileh with the ‘Adwan and the ‘Abbad, in al-Rusayfa with the Da’ja and the Bani Hasan, in Sukhneh with the Bani Hasan, and in Na‘ur with the Bani Sahr, including the al-Fayiz clan, and the ‘Ajarma.<sup>129</sup> Although local circumstances varied, the government typically favored newcomers in the matters of land registration, when bedouin communities had no title deeds on the land and occasionally

---

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 44-46; Shami, “The Circassians of Amman,” 312-15. Mufti cites 1900 as the date of the conflict; Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 275-76. Abujaber cites 1904; *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 211.

<sup>127</sup> For this version of the conflict, narrated from a Circassian perspective, see Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 45-46. Another version, also from a Circassian standpoint, attributes the conflict to the kidnapping of a “Circassian maiden” by the Balqawiyya tribe. According to that account, the Bani Sakhr “assisted” the Circassians during the conflict; see Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 275-76.

<sup>128</sup> Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 46.

<sup>129</sup> Natho, *Circassian History*, 479-80; Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 40-41; Barakat, “An Empty Land,” 80-81; BOA A.MKT.MHM 530/32 (Sweileh, 8 *rebiülahir* 1325, 21 May 1907). On Transjordanian tribes, see Alon, *Making of Jordan*, 159-64.



when they did.<sup>130</sup> In some cases, the government recategorized the status of the bedouin-claimed land, for example, as *mahlul*, to assert state ownership and then award it to muhajirs.<sup>131</sup>

Notably, in many intercommunal conflicts, including ones with the Druze and Transjordanian bedouin, North Caucasian muhajirs were but a new party entering into a preexisting conflict. In two unrelated instances, muhajirs clashed with a major bedouin community, including the al-Fadl and the Bani Sakhr, only to make a defensive alliance with them later against, respectively, the Druze and the Balqawiyya confederation, both of whom happened to be settled and semi-settled communities in the immediate vicinity of Circassian villages. A similar scenario unfolded in the Ra's al-'Ayn area, in southern Kurdistan/northern Syria. Shortly after their settlement there in the mid-1860s, Chechen muhajirs clashed with two major Arab bedouin tribal confederations, the Shammar (or Shemr) and the 'Anaza (or 'Aneze, 'Aniza), who had also been at war with each other.<sup>132</sup> The British reported that, by April 1868, the Chechens of Ra's al-'Ayn entered into an alliance with the Shammar, led by 'Abd al-Karim [Abd el Kereem], against the 'Anaza.<sup>133</sup> A month later, the alliance must have fallen apart because the Chechens carried out an attack against 'Abd al-Karim's encampment on the Khabur River.<sup>134</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup> Thus, in 1884, the 'Abbad complained that Circassians of Wadi al-Sir occupied the land that the bedouin community had already formally registered; Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 46.

<sup>131</sup> The *mahlul* lands were *miri* lands whose title reverted back to the state because the land was laid uncultivated for three years; see Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 46-48, 66-69; Mundy and Smith, *Governing Property*, 129; Fischbach, *State, Society and Land in Jordan*, 53.

<sup>132</sup> TNA FO 195/1368, Stewart to Dufferin, #21 (Aleppo, 14 July 1881); Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 102-03.

<sup>133</sup> TNA FO 195/889, Taylor to Elliot, #20 (Diyarbakir, 20 April 1868), ff. 484r-85r.

<sup>134</sup> TNA FO 195/889, Taylor to Elliot, #27 (Diyarbakir, 28 May 1868), ff. 534-39. The Ottoman administration recorded that muhajirs' conflict with the Shammar, in some form, continued on; BOA DH.MKT 1890/91 (15 *rebiülahir* 1309, 18 November 1891); HR.SYS 1528/77 (10 October 1897); DH.MKT 1030/36 (10 *şevval* 1323, 8 December 1905).

Muhajirs contested land with nomads across Syria and southern Kurdistan. In the vicinity of Homs and Hama, Circassians fought with the Fawa'ira tribe in a dispute over land, prompting the Ottoman authorities to intervene and mediate a peace settlement.<sup>135</sup> In Manbij, a Circassian village in Aleppo Province, muhajirs clashed over rights to the land with the Abu Sultan and Bani Sa'id tribes.<sup>136</sup> In Khanasir, a large Kabardin village in the same province, muhajirs came into conflict with an 'Anaza tribe that occasionally raided the immigrant settlement.<sup>137</sup> In Maraş Subprovince, in the north of the province, Circassians fought the settled Kurdish population of Göksun, which protested muhajirs' occupation of their lands, in 1887. The conflict left 80 Kurds and 40 Circassians dead.<sup>138</sup>

In northwestern Anatolia, a major refugee resettlement area, muhajir communities often clashed with surrounding Turkish- and Greek-speaking villagers over usufruct and grazing rights.<sup>139</sup> For example, in Manyas, in Hüdavendigâr Province, sometime after 1878, Circassian muhajirs occupied about 12,000 *dönüm* of land and pasture claimed by nearby villagers. The government, to prevent the escalation of the conflict, bought out the land in question from villagers, thus allowing Circassians to remain on the land.<sup>140</sup>

Yücel Terzibaşoğlu notes that, in the final decades of the nineteenth century, conflicts steeped in contestation of land between Christians and Muslim muhajirs were increasingly couched in “an ethnic/religious vocabulary.”<sup>141</sup> In their petitions to the state, some communities attributed a property dispute to ethnic or religious animosity that the

---

<sup>135</sup> BOA DH.ŞFR 376/81 (15 *şubat* 1322, 28 February 1907); DH.TMIK.M 237/52 (18 *muharrem* 1325, 3 March 1907); ŞD 2303/36 (27 *şevval* 1325, 3 December 1907).

<sup>136</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 83-84.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-86.

<sup>139</sup> See Terzibaşoğlu, “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 149-57.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>141</sup> Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 164.

opposing side professed. In the Hamidian period, conflicts over land between different communities could turn into conflicts about identity in what Ellinor Morack called “ethnification of property conflicts.”<sup>142</sup>

In eastern Anatolia and western Kurdistan, where the resettlement of North Caucasians was scarce (not least due to Russia’s repeated protests whenever the Ottomans attempted to place muhajirs there), one conflict near Muş involved Ossetian muhajirs, Kurds, and Armenians.<sup>143</sup> In 1893, the Armenian community of the village of Lapbudak reportedly hired Ossetian men from the nearby village of Simo to help them to emigrate to Russia.<sup>144</sup> The Ossetians guarded a convoy of the emigrating Armenian community, when it was attacked by the Kurdish Sipkan tribe. The Ossetians repelled the attack, and the convoy reached the Russian border safely. The Kurdish tribe then attacked the Ossetian village in retaliation, locking the two Muslim communities in a blood feud. The land was at stake in this story, as Georgy Chochiev points out, because shortly thereafter the Ossetian muhajir community settled the village of Lapbudak, taking over the land that the Armenians left behind.<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup> Morack, *Dowry of the State*, 47-48.

<sup>143</sup> During Loris-Melikov’s negotiations in Istanbul in 1860, the Ottomans reportedly agreed not to settle muhajirs near the Russian border; see Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 121. During the 1865 Chechen emigration, the Ottoman authorities reaffirmed that they would not settle muhajirs in the Ottoman frontier districts, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ff. 27-30, 184-89 (1865). See also Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 69, as based on Ottoman sources. The British consul for Kurdistan reported, in 1888, that “after the great Circassian emigration [of 1863-64], a convention was subsequently entered into by Russia and Turkey that no Circassians should be established in Asia Minor east of Sivas”; TNA FO 195/1617, Chermside to White, #25 (Erzurum, 14 August 1888), f. 80r. See also Chochiev and Koç, “Migrants from North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia.”

<sup>144</sup> See Chochiev, “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 110-11.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

In central Anatolia, North Caucasian muhajirs contested agricultural land with settled populations of Turks and Armenians, and pastures with Afşar and Kurdish tribes.<sup>146</sup> Starting in the early 1860s, for example, Circassians of Uzunyayla clashed with Afşar nomads, primarily over grazing rights. The Afşars, who had long been seasonally migrating between the highlands of Sivas and plains of Adana, viewed North Caucasian settlements in Uzunyayla as limiting their mobility and pastoral economy, and, on several occasions, the Ottoman troops were deployed to Aziziye to guarantee the security of Circassian immigrants (see Chapter 3).<sup>147</sup> Muhajirs reportedly provoked some conflicts themselves, such as in 1861, when Circassians of Cebel-i Kozan Mutasarrıflık stormed into a settlement of Kurdish nomads, belonging to the Lek tribe, and stole their livestock. The tribe, which allied with the Afşars, retaliated by raiding the muhajirs' village and killing several immigrants.<sup>148</sup>

As previously mentioned, not all conflicts were directly related to land, although contestation of some kind of property was a regular stress factor, reflective of a reconfigured balance of power after mass immigration. One conflict, in which muhajirs were involved in Ra's al-‘Ayn, in southern Kurdistan/northern Syria, constituted a power struggle between a district governor and chiefs of newly settled Chechen muhajirs. In 1870, the Ottoman Refugee Commission received a petition, carefully crafted in Arabic, from

---

<sup>146</sup> Chochiev argues that areas of central Anatolia, where Muslim muhajirs settled among “a comparatively homogenous Turkish Muslim sedentary population,” witnessed least conflict; “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 109-10. On Circassians’ clashes over land with settled populations in central Anatolia, see BOA DH.MKT 777/56 (Ankara-Yozgat, 1903), 1310/82 (Sivas-Hafik, 1870).

<sup>147</sup> On Afşar-Circassian clashes, see BOA A.MKT.MHM 240/70, 271/9, 271/15, A.MKT.UM 560/70, ML.MSF.d 15815, MVL 639/1, 639/50, 640/6, 640/51, 646/13, 648/39 (h. 1277-1280, 1861-63).

<sup>148</sup> The central authorities, when ordering to punish the muhajirs, lamented: “While great efforts were put towards providing for [muhajirs’] settlement and comfort, they did not appreciate the goodness of this. Their disorderly conduct is regretful”; BOA A.MKT.UM 502/60 (25 *rebiülevvel* 1278, 30 September 1861).

Jantemir, who introduced himself as a leader of the Chechen community in Ra's al-'Ayn.

He wrote as follows:

We emigrated for Almighty Allah (Ar. *hājarnā li-llah ta'ālā*) from the land of Daghestan. When we arrived here, in this Islamic land (*al-dār al-islāmī*), weapons of all muhajirs were taken, as is appropriate by the laws of the Exalted [Ottoman] State. After we arrived in the town of Ra's al'Ayn, those weapons were carried along, stored, and preserved there. In the month of *jumādha al-awwal* of the year 1284 [September 1867], muhajirs from our village gathered and appealed to me that I ask the governor [of Diyarbekir Province], Ismail Paşa, to return those weapons to their owners.<sup>149</sup>

Jantemir traveled to Diyarbekir, a provincial capital, and interceded with the provincial governor. Ismail Paşa issued him a letter ordering district authorities to release weapons to muhajirs. Jantemir went back to Ra's al-'Ayn, where Ya'qub Bey, the district governor, dutifully returned 833 weapons to the Chechen community.

Ya'qub Bey then ordered Jantemir and five Chechen elders to stamp seals on a statement affirming that the owners of some weapons could not be found. The elders refused, arguing that the owners were present in Ra's al-'Ayn and the weapons ought to be returned to them. According to Jantemir, Ya'qub Bey became angry with the Chechen deputies, mocked them, and threw them out of the majlis [council meeting]. The two parties, the Chechen elders and the district governor, then brought lawsuits against each other. Meanwhile, twenty-one leaders of Ra's al-'Ayn's two muhajir communities, the Chechens and the Karabulaks [an ethnic group from the Northcentral Caucasus], traveled to Diyarbekir to complain to the provincial governor about the corruption of Ya'qub Bey. The second visit to the provincial capital proved less fortunate for Jantemir. The provincial governor had him arrested.

---

<sup>149</sup> BOA DH.MHC 1/40/2 (16 *zilkade* 1286, 17 February 1870). Jantemir dictated the petition to a scribe, 'Abdallah al-Ḍa'yif.

Jantemir, writing his petition from a Diyarbekir jail, seemed to know little about the charges brought against him. He suspected that Ya‘qub Bey, in league with a former district governor, now residing in Istanbul, and a Karabulak elder, with whom Jantemir had a disagreement, persuaded the Diyarbekir provincial governor that Jantemir had been inciting refugees (Ar. *bi-annī mufsid bayna al-muhājirīn*). Jantemir countered the accusations of spreading corruption (*mufassada*) – an Ottoman euphemism for anti-governmental activities – by arguing that he was a good Muslim and a religious leader for his community:

I served Muslims in the land of Daghestan as a judge and a mufti for five years in the time of Shaykh Shamil [1854-59] and, after him, for six more years in the time of Muscovy (Ar. *fī zaman Musqūf*) [1859-65]. Then I served muhajirs of Ra’s al-‘Ayn ... since we arrived here and until I was imprisoned.<sup>150</sup>

Jantemir informed the Refugee Commission that, in addition to building three houses and two shops for himself, he built a school and a mosque for muhajirs. “If I wanted to sow corruption among muhajirs,” he asked, “why would I put my money into these expenses even though I am not rich myself?” He appealed to Istanbul to order his release from jail not only because he was innocent but because he, and his community, had sacrificed much to come to the Ottoman Empire:

I left my house, my homeland, and my country for the sake of the prophetic hijra (Ar. *al-hijra al-nabawiyya*). I was separated from my relatives and my loved ones [in the Caucasus] for the sake of that hijra. Fifty-seven of my brothers, sisters, uncles, and their sons and daughters died in Ra’s al-‘Ayn. Those who remain are widowed women and orphaned children, and some of them are now crying for me.

---

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

Jantemir also suggested that the real reason that Ya‘qub Bey was displeased with him was more personal than his rearmament of the muhajir community or the revelation of Ya‘qub Bey’s corruption:

A girl of great beauty lived in the town, and she was from the Chechen tribe. She did not have a father or a brother, only a mother. She was coveted [in marriage] for my son, and her mother wanted her to marry him. District governor Ya‘qub Bey fell deeply in love with the girl, proposed to her, and offered 12,000 *куруш* in *nikāh* [marriage agreement]. If her mother had asked for more, he would have offered more. The mother and daughter refused *nikāh*. Ya‘qub Bey then intended to marry her against her will, by force. The two women fled the city for another village in fear of him, as is well-known among muhajirs. Ya‘qub Bey accused me of having arranged for the two women to refuse his *nikāh* and to escape him.<sup>151</sup>

The story of Jantemir and his reported persecution by a local governor illustrates the multi-layered nature of muhajirs’ conflicts. Not all altercations revolved around land; most arose because refugee immigration altered a local balance of power. Throughout the empire, district and subprovincial administrators now needed to forge relations with muhajir elites, some of whom aspired to a greater role in their new environments. Muhajir elites, in turn, faced the daunting task of helping their communities to rebuild, while negotiating with local authorities. The North Caucasian leaders, such as Jantemir, often made fateful decisions that affected how muhajirs’ relations with their neighbors would unfold.

*Serving the State: Military and Paramilitary Recruitment of North Caucasian Muhajirs*

In modern Middle Eastern history, muhajirs from the North Caucasus and elsewhere are often associated with state service, particularly the military and the security

---

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

apparatus. This section traces various routes of military and paramilitary employment for, and the “militarization” of, the North Caucasian community from the 1860s to the 1910s.

During the 1863-64 refugee crisis, Circassian muhajirs arrived in an environment where many held preconceptions about who Circassians were, what they were good at, and what their likely role would be. The centuries-long practice of the recruitment of male Circassian slaves into the Ottoman military and bureaucracy, coupled with female Circassian enslavement for elite households, resulted in generations of Ottoman-Circassian generals and governors. With the defeat of the Caucasus Imamate (1828-59) in the Northcentral and Northeast Caucasus, many military commanders of Imam Shamil relocated to the Ottoman state, with some joining Ottoman service.<sup>152</sup> North Caucasian muhajirs were, in the minds of many, connected to the state even before they, as new immigrants, received free land and subsidies from the state and became entangled in the state’s many regional agendas.

Until 1878, by and large, most muhajirs were put to work in agriculture, but the Ottoman authorities made a few exceptions in areas where they sought manpower for security purposes. In 1860, about 500 muhajirs were employed to guard frontier posts on the Ottoman-Russian frontier in Kars Subprovince.<sup>153</sup> In 1865-66, the government created the *Fırka-i İslahiyye* (Ott. Tur. “improvement division”), which consisted of local fighters, including Circassians, Kurds, Albanians, and others, and aimed to sedentarize and enforce

---

<sup>152</sup> See BOA MVL 646/69 (1 *muharrem* 1280, 18 June 1863), A.MKT.UM 464/90 (27 *ramazan* 1277, 8 April 1861); İsmet Binark, ed., *Osmanlı Devleti ile Kafkasya, Türkistan ve Kırım Hanlıkları Arasındaki Münasebetlere Dair Arşiv Belgeleri (1687-1908 Yılları Arası)* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1992), #21, 23 (1858-64); Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 134-39.

<sup>153</sup> Chochiev, “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 109.



taxation in Çukurova and the mountains of Kozan and Bereket.<sup>154</sup> During this period, however, most muhajirs were exempt from military conscription, and few entered the military as regular soldiers.<sup>155</sup>

By the 1870s, as Chapter 1 demonstrated, many muhajir settlements had been failing economically and some muhajirs turned to banditry. Marauding gangs of North Caucasian muhajirs and Balkan muhajirs became common throughout the empire.<sup>156</sup> By many accounts, bandits targeted Christians and Muslims alike, and multiple communities complained to the Ottoman authorities and foreign consuls about the immigrants' depredations. The British vice-consul in Edirne, when describing the ongoing attacks and looting, referred to Circassians as "Children of the Devil."<sup>157</sup> This turn to crime had the same causes as why many muhajirs were drawn into the army or paramilitary organizations: many muhajirs were impoverished; farming did not come easily to many North Caucasians whose traditional economies relied on sheep- and horse-breeding; and some had prior martial experience in fighting the Russians. In addition, some muhajir communities had access to arms, having brought their guns from the Caucasus.<sup>158</sup> Throughout the 1870s, the Danubian authorities sought to disarm muhajir villages, likely with little success.<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> Kasaba, *Moveable Empire*, 101; Astourian, "Silence of the Land," 71-73; Moumdjian "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime," 8-9, 23-24, 449-50.

<sup>155</sup> Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 27.

<sup>156</sup> On Ottoman reports of North Caucasian banditry, see, for example, BOA DH.MKT 1548/45 (Diyarbakir-Resülayn, 1888); BEO 3078/230842 (Damascus-Nablus, 1907); A.MKT.MHM 660/41 (Sivas-Şarkışla and Yıldızeli, 1895). Gingeras finds that, in the late Ottoman popular rhetoric, bandits and refugees became near-synonymous, with certain ethnicities acquiring popular association with criminal behavior; *Sorrowful Shores*, 29-30, 33-34.

<sup>157</sup> TNA FO 195/934, Blunt to Elliot, #18 (Edirne, 25 April 1870).

<sup>158</sup> See Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 184.

<sup>159</sup> NBKM OAK Collection 91/92 (8 mart 1291, 20 March 1875); Silistre 30/6 (h. 1291-93, 1874-76). An early complaint about Crimean Tatar, Nogai Tatar, and Circassian muhajirs walking around while carrying

By the time of the 1876 April Uprising in Bulgaria, many muhajir gangs were *başıbozuk* – unruly irregular Ottoman militias that caused much damage to life and property in Bulgarian and Greek villages.<sup>160</sup> In all likelihood, during the 1876 massacres and the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the Ottomans, as anyone would expect, applied a range of policies towards muhajir militias depending on the course of war and perceived imperial needs. Archival evidence points towards both the state’s endorsement of *başıbozuk* attacks and arming of Circassian and Abkhaz irregular militias and its orders to suppress muhajir gangs and to punish those who committed violence against Ottoman Christians.<sup>161</sup>

During the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the government sought to recruit North Caucasians for its war effort in a more organized manner.<sup>162</sup> For the eastern Anatolian front, the Ottomans assembled four North Caucasian cavalry units, each 1,000 men strong, from muhajirs of different North Caucasian ethnicities living around Aziziye, Sivas, and

---

arms came from Danube Province in 1861; BOA A.MKT.MHM 238/12 (28 *cemaziyelevvel* 1278, 1 December 1861).

<sup>160</sup> For Ottoman reports on Circassian/*başıbozuk* violence against Balkan Christians, see NBKM, OAK Collection 85/23-26 (May 1877); Erol Karayel, ed., *Kuzey Kafkasya Tarihinden Belgeler* (Istanbul: Meydan Yayıncılık, 2010), 123-24, 125-26 (1877).

<sup>161</sup> For state-sanctioned militarization of muhajirs, see, for example, Boris Nedkov, ed., *Aprilsko vŭstanie 1876 g.* (Sofia: Nauka i Izkustvo, 1956), vol. 3, 54-59, 86-87, 110-113, 194-96, 206-07, 217. For the government’s suppression of muhajir militias, see “Zapovŭd na Velikoto vezirstvo do dunavskiiia valiiia” (9 *cemaziyelevvel* 1294, 11 May 1877), in Pancho Dorev, ed., *Dokumentŭ za Bŭlgarskata istoriia* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1942), 4:39-40, 43-44; NBKM, Silistre 31/1, f. 46 (18 *teşrin-i evvel* 1293, 30 October 1877), in Khristov et al., *Tŭrski izvori za bŭlgarskata istoriia* (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Science, 1973), vol. 4, 365-66. In 1876, for example, the Vidin subprovincial governor ordered the Rahova and Berkofça district governors not to distribute weapons to local muhajir communities and to only arm regular troops; Mariia Mikhaïlova-Mrŭvkarova, ed., *Opis na turski dokumenti za sŭprotivata i natsionalno-revoliutsionnrite borbi na Bŭlgarskiiia narod prez XIX vek* (Sofia: Narodna Biblioteka Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodii, 1984), p. 132, no. 548 (Vidin, 23 May 1876).

<sup>162</sup> See Mehmet Beşikçi, “Başıbozuk Savaşçıdan ‘Makbul’ Tebaaya: 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı’nda Osmanlı Ordusunda Çerkez Muhacirler,” *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 23 (2015): 85-123. Beşikçi argues that the “voluntary” service by North Caucasian muhajirs was, in practice, expected and demanded by the state; that muhajirs viewed auxiliary service as a platform to integrate and negotiate with the state; and that the 1877-78 war fostered an “alliance” between the Ottoman state and its North Caucasian populations. The British evidence corroborates that the Ottoman government distributed guns to Muslim volunteers, for example, arming Circassians and Kurds in Erzurum; TNA FO 195/1140, Zohrab to Elliot, f. 126 (Erzurum, 29 March 1877).

Canik.<sup>163</sup> These units were later reorganized into three divisions. The three generals in charge of the divisions were Mustafa Paşa; Musa Paşa (Musa Kundukhov, a former Russian general);<sup>164</sup> and Ghazi Muhammad Paşa (son of Imam Shamil).<sup>165</sup> In May 1877, the Ottomans dispatched about ten divisions, mostly consisting of North Caucasian muhajirs, to the siege of Sukhum within Russian territory.<sup>166</sup> The Russians believed that the Ottomans intentionally dispatched Circassian soldiers who would be familiar with Northwest Caucasian topography and would elicit support for the Ottoman troops from Abkhazians.<sup>167</sup> North Caucasian troops were also part of Ottoman troops defending Kars.<sup>168</sup> On the Balkan front, according to Russian military data, Circassian cavalry numbers exceeded non-Circassian ones, numbering at least 16,050 men.<sup>169</sup>

Following the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, the Ottoman government more assertively employed North Caucasian armed groups to prop up its control over far-flung provinces and semi-nomadic communities. It is unclear if a general strategy to do so existed. Likely, the government responded to emerging crises, utilizing its wartime military networks and co-opting new North Caucasian militias. The developments in eastern Anatolia suggest

---

<sup>163</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 36.

<sup>164</sup> On Musa Paşa, see Chapter 3. See also Chochiev, “General Musa Kundukhov”; Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 126, 181-86.

<sup>165</sup> Boris M. Koliubakin, *Russo-Turetskaia voina 1877-1878 gg. na Kavkaze i v Maloi Azii* (Saint Petersburg: Tipo-litografiia A.G. Rozena, 1906), vol. 1, 67; cited in Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 36. The Ottomans likely relied on North Caucasian leaders to drive up recruitment among their communities. Reportedly, Musa Paşa initially promised to recruit 15,000 “Circassians”; TNA FO 195/1140, Zohrab to Elliot, #54 (Erzurum, 1 May 1877) ff. 203-04; #58 (Erzurum, 4 May 1877), ff. 217-18.

<sup>166</sup> Musa Kundukhov was offered to lead muhajir divisions to Abkhazia but refused; see Chochiev, “General Musa Kundukhov,” 71.

71-72. See also TNA FO 195/1140, Zohrab to Elliot, #67, f. 268 (Erzurum, 17 May 1877); #77, ff. 321-23 (Erzurum, 2 June 1877).

<sup>167</sup> Grigorii K. Gradovskii, *Voina v Maloi Azii v 1877 godu: ocherki ochevidtva* (Saint Petersburg: Tip. i khromolit. A. Transhelia, 1878).

<sup>168</sup> Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 170-88.

<sup>169</sup> Samir H. Hotko, “Importance of the Russian-Turkish War of 1877-1878 for the Circassian History,” in *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*, 224-25.

some continuity in the Ottoman military deployment of muhajirs. The North Caucasian cavalry of Musa Paşa, for example, participated in the suppression of the 1880-81 Sheykh Ubaidullah's [Kurdish] revolt.<sup>170</sup>

The practice of hiring a “minority” community that is socially and economically marginalized is a common imperial strategy in Ottoman and global history. It had mutual appeal to both sides. The state recruited smaller “minorities” to bolster its hold on certain regions and to keep other communities in check, through variations of the “divide and rule” policy. For many poor minority communities, the army or paramilitary organizations were a primary (or the sole) vehicle of social and economic advancement. Benjamin Fortna astutely notes that Circassian fighters were recruited because “they were available to be recruited.”<sup>171</sup> In the late Ottoman period, non-Turkish and non-Arab Muslims, such as Bosnians, Albanians, and Kurds, were overrepresented in the government troops and *zaptiye* forces.<sup>172</sup> Elsewhere, the British recruited Gurkhas, the French mobilized Berbers, and the Dutch relied on the Ambonese. This reliance on minorities, especially in the military, was particularly pronounced in the post-Ottoman Levant – the French and the British mandate authorities and the governments of Israel, Jordan, and Syria all favored recruiting select minorities vis-à-vis larger ethnic or religious groups.

In 1890, Sultan Abdülhamid II and his trusted generals created the infamous Hamidiye Light Cavalry Regiments (Ott. Tur. *Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları*), an irregular, mostly Kurdish force.<sup>173</sup> In 1909, it was renamed the Tribal Light Cavalry

---

<sup>170</sup> Chochiev, “General Musa Kundukhov,” 73.

<sup>171</sup> Fortna, *The Circassian*, 14.

<sup>172</sup> Fortna, *The Circassian*, 14.

<sup>173</sup> Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 3-6

Regiments (*Aşiret Hafif Süvari Alayları*). Its primary tasks were tightening imperial control over the eastern provinces, sedentarizing Kurdish tribes, and securing the Ottoman-Russian frontier, as well as countering Armenian activities – a growing priority in the CUP era.<sup>174</sup> The Hamidiye cavalry was modelled after the Russian Cossack troops, which proved effective in Russia's many wars in Crimea and the Caucasus, and the Porte sent Ottoman officers in charge of the Hamidiye to Saint Petersburg for training.<sup>175</sup> This may be one of the reasons that Ottoman-Caucasian officers, who had experience with the tsarist army, played a leading role in the early Hamidiye.<sup>176</sup> Although most Hamidiye regiments consisted of Kurds, the Ottomans made attempts to recruit other Muslim groups that lived in the vast territory comprising central Anatolia, Kurdistan, and Syria, particularly semi-nomadic communities (Yörüks, Turkmens, and bedouin tribes) and, potentially, muhajirs.<sup>177</sup>

---

<sup>174</sup> For the best discussion of the Hamidiye goals, see Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 20-51.

<sup>175</sup> Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 42-43.

<sup>176</sup> Avakian claims that several high-ranking North Caucasian muhajirs played a leading role in creating the Hamidiye, namely Musa Bey (Kunduh), Ghazi Muhammad Paşa, the son of Imam Shamil, and Zeki Paşa. Avakian also states that Şakir Paşa, a Circassian, was a driving force behind the Hamidiye; *Cherkesskii faktor*, 167-68; also Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 41. A contemporary Russian source corroborates that, by 1900, “most officers” of the Hamidiye frontier regiments were Circassians, including Tevfik Paşa, a Kuban-born brigade commander, in charge of nine Hamidiye regiments; Petr I. Aver'ianov, *Kurdy v voimakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v techenie XIX stoletia* (Tiflis: Tipografiia Shtaba Kavkazskogo voennago okruga, 1900), 262.

<sup>177</sup> Avakian argues that, by 1899, three out of 63 Hamidiye regiments were Circassian; *Cherkesskii faktor*, 169, based on Russian military data. Klein, based on extensive research in British and Ottoman sources, states that the early plans to include Muslim minority groups (Qarapapaqs, Turkmens, Druze, Alevi and Yezidi Kurds) did not materialize, does not mention North Caucasians as part of the regiments, and calls the Kurds “practically the sole element comprising the Hamidiye regiments”; *Margins of Empire*, 49-51. A contemporary Russian Orientalist and military attaché, Petr I. Averyanov, who was stationed in the region for several years, lists three regiments of Qarapapaqs but no Circassian regiments; *Kurdy v voimakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei*, Appendix 33, 119-36. Likewise, the 1906 Russian military report, which provides an ethnic breakdown of Hamidiye regiments, lists three regiments of Qarapapaqs, but does not mention Circassians; Russian State Military-Historical Archive (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voenno-istoricheskii arkhiv, Moscow, hereafter cited as RGVIA) f. 2000, op. 1, d. 1006 (22 December 1906). Tsarist diplomatic and military officials gathered intelligence on all Hamidiye-related developments and would have been attentive to any information regarding North Caucasian muhajirs' involvement. For example, Russian intelligence discussed that the Hamidiye was armed by up to 10,000 contraband Russian rifles and that the Hamidiye could be recruiting Kurds from the Russian-occupied Kars Province, who were Russian subjects.

The Hamidiye contributed to the rapidly disintegrating security in Kurdistan and eastern Anatolia. The organization became a major player both in Ottoman regional politics, wherein local governors relied on the Hamidiye divisions, and in intra-Kurdish power struggles, as many tribes benefited from their association with the organization at the expense of others.<sup>178</sup> In this environment, many armed North Caucasian groups were available for hire in the eastern provinces. Some served as private guards: as previously mentioned, the Armenians of Lapbudak paid the nearby Ossetians to escort them to the Russian border.<sup>179</sup> Others were recruited by the Tobacco Régie to clamp down on Laz smugglers on the Russo-Ottoman frontier.<sup>180</sup> The multi-directional violence in eastern Anatolia and Kurdistan did not always follow religious lines, although the trends were clear. Kurdish peasants complained about being harassed by Circassians; Circassians lamented violence perpetrated by the Hamidiye; and Armenians often fell victim to both.<sup>181</sup> Various local alliances were made and remade. During the 1909 Adana massacres, for example, some Circassians were reported to have protected an Armenian village, but Circassian brigands were also among Muslim militias that brutalized local Christians.<sup>182</sup>

---

See, respectively, National Archive of the Russian Federation (Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii, Moscow, hereafter cited as GARF) f. 102, op. 238, d. 32, ch. 65 (7 January 1908), ll. 2-6; SSSA f. 12, op. 2, d. 469, ll. 72-73 (7 June 1902); l. 130 (31 March 1902).

<sup>178</sup> See Brad Dennis, "Patterns of Conflict and Violence in Eastern Anatolia Leading Up to the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Berlin," in *War and Diplomacy*, eds. Yavuz and Sluglett, 273-301.

<sup>179</sup> See Chochiev, "The Case of Anatolian Ossetians," 110-11. In another case, Circassians served as private guards of Hasan Bey (Eugene O'Reilly), an Irish adventurer in Ottoman service; TNA FO 195/902, Muirhead to Elliot, #84 (Aleppo, 12 November 1868).

<sup>180</sup> TNA FO 195/1552, Devey to White, ff. 148-51 (Erzurum, 22 November 1886).

<sup>181</sup> On North Caucasian gangs (*çeteler*) and bandits (*eşkiya*) attacking Armenians, see, for example, BOA ŞD 2118/41 (Maraş, 1879); A.MKT.MHM 609/29 (Sivas and Ankara, 1895); Y.PRK.UM 33/89 (Sivas-Hafik, 1895). Some marauding bands crossed ethnic lines; thus, one band from Sivas included two Circassians and an Armenian; DH.MKT 327/17 and Y.A.HUS 313/69 (Sivas, 1894-95). See also Garabet K. Moumdjian, "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya: Abdülhamid II and Armenians, 1878-1909," in *War and Diplomacy*, eds. Yavuz and Sluglett, 302-50.

<sup>182</sup> See, for example, TNA FO 195/2307, Doughty-Wylie to Lowther, f. 175 (Adana, 22 September 1909); 195/2306, Doughty-Wylie to Lowther, ff. 392-93 (Adana, May 22, 1909). On the 1909 Adana massacre,

Alongside the Hamidiye corps, which had been terrifying Armenian, Kurdish, and Circassian peasants alike across eastern Anatolia, and the Ottoman army, which openly recruited muhajirs after their conscription exemptions had expired, the Ottoman authorities often relied on North Caucasian muhajirs for their *zaptiye*, or gendarmerie, forces.<sup>183</sup> In many areas, the government used mobile *zaptiye* forces to maintain the security of the area, including protecting roads, railways, and telegraph lines and preventing excesses of other paramilitary groups, even those that were also sanctioned by the state. For example, in 1904, the Ottomans approved a *zaptiye* force made up of local North Caucasian muhajirs of Bulanık District, Muş Subprovince as a counterweight to the growing power of the Kurdish Hamidiye regiments in the area.<sup>184</sup> Another key function of the *zaptiye* was tax collection. Eugene Rogan reports that, in Transjordan, a *zaptiye* force, stationed in Amman and drawing overwhelmingly from local Circassian and Chechen communities, either

---

see Bedross Der Matossian, "From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909," *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6, no. 2 (2011): 152-73.

<sup>183</sup> The Ottomans had been reforming their *zaptiye* forces throughout the 1860s. After the 1877-78 war, the *zaptiye* was split into *Jandarma Daire-i Merkeziyesi*, for rural policing and under military control, and *Zaptiye Nezareti*, for urban policing and a civil force. See Nadir Özbek, "Policing the Countryside: Gendarmes of the Late 19th-Century Ottoman Empire (1876-1908)," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 1 (2008): 47-67; Omri Paz, "The Policeman and State Policy: Police Accountability, Civilian Entitlements, and Ottoman Modernism, 1840-1860s," in *Society, Law, and Culture in the Middle East: 'Modernities' in the Making*, eds. Dror Ze'evi and Ehud R. Toledano (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 108-09. Some localities had both forces; see, for example, Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 67. Recruitment into *zaptiye* was not part of conscription and was often done through the mediation of North Caucasian leaders; Karpat, *Ottoman Population*, 27.

<sup>184</sup> TNA FO 195/2172, Heathcote to O'Connor, ff. 101-02 (Bitlis, 19 March 1904). A British consul in Erzurum earlier reported that the same "mounted Circassians" could be used against Armenian revolutionaries ("Fedai"); FO 195/2172, Shipley to O'Connor, ff. 25-26 (Erzurum, 22 January 1904). In Bulanık District, the British reported in 1880 that a local district governor recruited "nearly a hundred Circassians" into his retinue and terrorized local Armenians; FO 195/1315, Clayton to Layard, ff. 68-69r (Erzurum, 30 March 1880). In 1880, many Chechens of Ra's al-'Ayn, who had a hard time with the local administration ten years prior, as Jantemir's petition revealed, were employed as *zaptiye* in Diyarbekir Province. The British consul reported that this association with the state made them very unpopular with local Kurdish and bedouin tribes; FO 78/3132, Trotter to Layard, #68, ff. 214r-15 (Istanbul, 30 October 1880).

accompanied tax collectors or collected taxes themselves from bedouin and other communities.<sup>185</sup>

The formation of the *zaptiye* force in Transjordan perhaps epitomizes the eventual militarization of the muhajir community, abetted by the state in different ways since 1860. The formative figure in the creation of *zaptiye* in the Balqa' was the Circassian officer Mirza Paşa Wasfi. Born in the Russian Empire and having become, at a young age, a muhajir in Bulgaria, he joined the Ottoman army in 1873. He fought in the 1876-78 Serbian-Ottoman War and the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War in the Balkans and, in the 1880s, was reassigned to Damascus. Mirza Paşa Wasfi then headed the gendarmerie in Beirut, Hawran, Mecca, and Yemen. While in Hawran, his *zaptiye* force clashed with both Druze and bedouin communities when they were deemed to be in defiance of Ottoman rule.<sup>186</sup> By the late 1890s, he settled in Amman, where he commanded a local *zaptiye* force, made up of Circassians.<sup>187</sup> His troops came to the defense of fellow Circassian villages in the Golan Heights during their conflict with the Druze in 1895.<sup>188</sup> By that time, Circassians in central Transjordan had already fought several clans and tribes in the Balqa' and secured a crucial military alliance with the Bani Sakhr. The Circassian *zaptiye* protected the Hejaz railway and enforced taxation in the area. Mirza Paşa Wasfi's forces helped the Ottomans to suppress the 1910 Karak Revolt.<sup>189</sup> By the eve of World War I, Amman's *zaptiye*,

---

<sup>185</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 67; see also Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 273.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 67-68; Abujaiber, *Pioneers Over Jordan*, 296n57; see also Mohammad Kheir Haghandoqa, *Mirza Pasha Wasfi: kitab watha'iqi, marhala min tarikh bilad al-Sham min khilal watha'iq Mirza Pasha* (Amman: Royal Scientific Society, 1994).

<sup>187</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 67.

<sup>188</sup> Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 276; Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 91.

<sup>189</sup> Mufti, *Heroes and Emperors*, 273-74; Haghandoqa, *Circassians*, 61. On the 1910 Karak Revolt, see Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 184-85, 197-217.



seasoned through clashes with bedouin and reinforced by Mirza Paşa Wasfi's Ottoman military training, was among the most reliable Ottoman troops in the region.

The cultures of sectarianism and dispossession, which grew alongside the shrinkage of the empire and the proliferation of radical exclusive (as opposed to inclusive) ideologies, culminated in a series of massacres against Ottoman Christians in 1915-23.<sup>190</sup> The CUP was their chief perpetrator, through its military orders to exterminate and its refusal to protect. The local executors included the Ottoman army and irregular militias that sprang up throughout eastern Anatolia, Kurdistan, and Syria in the 1910s.<sup>191</sup> The North Caucasians were among those who committed violence against the Armenians. The exact reasons for brutalizing Christian populations differed from locale to locale but common motivations – whether for muhajirs or local Kurds, Turks, and Turkmens – included Christian property, which was commonly seized after the murder of its owners, and the idea that ethno-religious cleansing of “disloyal” Ottoman subjects was a service to the *vatan*.<sup>192</sup>

The CUP's primary vehicle of demographic engineering was the *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* (Ott. Tur. “special organization”), a clandestine unit formed at the CUP party headquarters in 1911, formally established in 1913, and then placed under the War

---

<sup>190</sup> As a foray into the rich and growing scholarship on the Armenian Genocide, see Naimark et al.; see also Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*.

<sup>191</sup> On the CUP's responsibility, see Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 7-8, 111-204. On irregular militias, see, *Ibid.*, 134-36.

<sup>192</sup> Some scholars expressed the view that Muslim muhajirs must have felt enmity against Ottoman Christians because they had been brutalized by Russia, with whom Ottoman Christians sympathized. When describing the 1876 massacres in Bulgaria, McCarthy states that “[to Circassians] the Russians, whom they had long known and hated and the Bulgarians must have appeared little different from each other”; *Death and Exile*, 60. Kévorkian, in his excellent work on the Armenian Genocide, notes that Circassians and Chechens “were easily led to identify the Armenians with their Russian oppressors”; *Armenian Genocide*, 810. I am skeptical about such essentialist statements.

Department.<sup>193</sup> The organization put in place the logistics of displacing, deporting, and annihilating Armenians in the eastern provinces.<sup>194</sup> *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* recruited from various ethnic Muslim groups, but North Caucasians were overrepresented among both its rank-and-file agents and its command.<sup>195</sup> In addition, several North Caucasian militias in eastern Anatolia and Syria were responsible for harassing and murdering Armenian deportees during their “march” to Deir al-Zor. Thus, survivors’ recollections and archival records attest that Circassian irregulars rounded up and accompanied deportees, and Circassian bandits committed massacres of deportees, including in Diyarbekir, whereas some Chechen muhajirs around Ra’s al-‘Ayn were involved in slaughtering Armenians in their desert detention camps.<sup>196</sup>

Drawing conclusions about the ethnic identification of perpetrators of the genocide, particularly of high-ranking officials, is problematic. As previously mentioned, many officials overseeing deportations and killings belonged to Ottoman Muslim minorities, including prominent North Caucasians: Mehmet Reşid (Circassian), a CUP founder and

---

<sup>193</sup> On the establishment of *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*, see Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 93-95; Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 226-34; Fortna, *The Circassian*, 121, 133-35. On the organization, see Philip Stoddard, “The Ottoman Government and the Arabs: A Preliminary Study on the *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*,” Ph.D. dissertation (Princeton University, 1963); Ahmet Tetik, *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa (Umûr-u Şarkiye Dairesi) Tarihi* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası, 2014); Polat Safi, “History in the Trench: The Ottoman Special Organization – *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* Literature,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 48, no. 1 (2012): 89-106.

<sup>194</sup> Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 96-97, 130-39, 162-66.

<sup>195</sup> Akçam, based on CUP internal documents, asserts that three main sources of manpower for *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* were Kurdish tribes, jailed convicts, and muhajirs from the Caucasus and Balkans; *A Shameful Act*, 134-35. Avakian quotes that, at its early stage, up to 60 percent of all members were North Caucasians, including its leaders Süleyman Askeri Bey, Hüsamettin Ertürk, and Eşref Kuşçubaşı; *Cherkesskii faktor*, 224. On Eşref Kuşçubaşı, see Fortna, *The Circassian*; on his mistaken designation as head of *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* in historiography, see Safi, “History in the Trench”; Fortna, *The Circassian*, 275-76n8. Ryan Gingeras notes that, in western Anatolia, *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa* privileged North Caucasian villages of the south Marmara region as a recruitment pool; “Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens,” 93.

<sup>196</sup> For the most comprehensive study, albeit ethnically deterministic, of North Caucasian involvement in the genocide, see Avakian, *Cherkesskii faktor*, 236-43. See also Donald Bloxham, “The First World War and the Development of the Armenian Genocide,” in *Question of Genocide*, eds. Suny et al., 271, 403n74; Kévorkian, *Armenian Genocide*, 435-49, 800-31; Thomas K. Mugerditchian, *The Diyarbekir Massacres and Kurdish Atrocities* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2013), 23, 26-27, 45-49.

Diyarbakir governor in 1915;<sup>197</sup> Zeki Paşa (Circassian), a supreme Hamidiye commander;<sup>198</sup> Bekir Sami [Kunduh] (Ossetian), Trabzon governor in 1915; and Salih Zeki (Circassian), the Deir ez-Zor subprovincial governor in 1916.<sup>199</sup> They were all, however, born or grew up in the Ottoman Empire and were products of Ottoman civil/military bureaucracy similarly to their fellow Kurdish-, Albanian-, and Turkish-speaking career officers. One must ask how much their North Caucasian identity was relevant to their role in the genocide. Overemphasizing “ethnic” (i.e. non-Turkish) origins of irregular militias has also been an element in the “denialist” canon on the subject, as a way to deflect the responsibility for the genocide from the central government.<sup>200</sup>

Dismissing this “ethnic” connection entirely would be erroneous, however, due to the many social networks that connected these high-ranked Ottoman officers to rural-based muhajir communities throughout the empire. The officers, who often came from notable muhajir families, enjoyed a certain prestige within their co-ethnic communities, which relied on their notables for patronage and protection.<sup>201</sup> As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, these networks were crucial to the inner mechanisms of refugee resettlement. By World War I, officers of North Caucasian origin were the ones who could mobilize muhajir communities; the ethnicity and, specifically, ethnically-based social networks of

---

<sup>197</sup> See Hans-Lukas Kieser, “From Patriotism to Mass Murder: Dr. Mehmet Reşid (1873-1919),” in *Question of Genocide*, eds. Suny et al., 126-48.

<sup>198</sup> On Zeki Paşa, see Klein, *Margins of Empire*, 27, 76-84.

<sup>199</sup> On high-ranking muhajirs’ complicity in the genocide, see Avakian, *Cherkesskii faktor*, 179 and 224-43.

<sup>200</sup> See, for example, Guenter Lewy, *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide* (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2005), 226-27, 252-54. On studies of denialism, see Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence Against Armenians, 1789-2009* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Vahakn N. Dadrian, “Ottoman Archives and Denial of the Armenian Genocide,” in *The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics*, ed. Richard G. Hovannisian (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1992), 280-310.

<sup>201</sup> On this note, see also Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 56-65; Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 57. Ryan Gingeras finds that “senior Circassian officers with close ties to the CUP functioned as recruiters for Circassians with experience as bandits and *çetecis*”; Heroin, *Organized Crime, and the Making of Modern Turkey* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 38.

commanding officers mattered for who would be recruited into the *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*, the Ottoman army, or local *zaptiye* forces.

*Conclusion: Servants of the State?*

Through the focus on the political economy and mobility of refugee communities, I attempt to reframe some of the old historiographical debates, including one about the Ottoman motivations to settle muhajirs in certain places. Whether the Ottomans had a comprehensive long-term plan for their Muslim immigrants or not – by the 1860s, 1880s, or 1910s – central and regional authorities knew that any immigration would produce intercommunal tensions.<sup>202</sup> As soon as land allotment and usufruct rights came into the picture, the North Caucasians were bound to clash with their new neighbors if they were to dispute rights to the land. This is where the geographic aspect of resettlement becomes crucial. In some areas, such as central Anatolia and Dobruja, the friction was minimal, thanks to an abundance of land and the compact character of refugee resettlement at a distance from other communities. In other areas, including parts of western Syria and Transjordan, western Anatolia, and Rumelia, much of the land that muhajirs received had already been claimed (with or without *tapu*) by local nomadic, semi-nomadic, and settled Muslim, Christian, and Druze communities. Muhajir communities, many of whom included veterans of *ghaza* and anti-colonial fighting in the Caucasus (and, as many

---

<sup>202</sup> The authorities “knew” if only because muhajirs and local communities sent numerous petitions about land disputes to their district, subprovincial, and provincial authorities and the Ottoman Refugee Commission.

contemporaries pointed out, were adept at horse-riding and gun-shooting), defended their new land or forcibly appropriated land from others.

The resettlement of muhajirs often complicated regional political processes that had already been under way for decades. To put it another way, muhajirs often “landed” in the middle of brewing intercommunal conflicts, and, with their new land, they acquired the political and economic values attached to their land and the presence of the “other” on that land. In the Balkans, muhajir immigration came during the climax of the Bulgarian national movement; in the eastern provinces, muhajirs found themselves amidst escalating violence between Armenians, Kurds, and the Hamidiye; in Greater Syria, their villages were drawn into inter-tribal politics. In a great many cases, muhajirs were not victims but rather aggressors against local communities. This experience of contesting property – whether defensive, offensive, or a combination of both – soon translated into various muhajir groups being among the most armed communities around. As the empire’s management of internal diversity was deteriorating, local and central authorities often abetted further militarization of muhajir groups and their employment in state military and paramilitary organizations. By the 1910s, many muhajir communities were active participants in armed conflicts throughout the empire.

After World War I, the experiences of North Caucasians differed dramatically, depending on local politics. In many areas, North Caucasian paramilitary forces were Ottoman loyalists. In Transjordan, for example, Mirza Paşa Wasfi’s *zaptiye* was reformed as the Circassian Volunteer Cavalry (Ott. Tur. *Çerkes Gönüllü Süvari*) to fight anti-Ottoman bedouin militias.<sup>203</sup> In other areas, North Caucasians, similarly to other Ottoman

---

<sup>203</sup> Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 226-27.

communities, made decisions that best suited their circumstances at the time. In the Marmara region – ironically, a region where the Ottomans reportedly settled Circassians specifically to “secure” the Muslim majority and the strategic access to Istanbul – some Circassian militias cooperated with Greek and British occupying forces.<sup>204</sup>

In the post-Ottoman reordering of the 1920s, the North Caucasian elites, once strongly associated with the Ottoman state, had to reorient their political loyalties. The overarching trend was forging a strong working relationship with the new authorities, whether “nationalist” Kemalists, the Hashemites, or the British and French mandate officials. Those relationships typically rested on the military expertise that the North Caucasian groups were willing to offer. In Turkey, shortly after 1918, North Caucasian loyalties split between Atatürk’s *Kuva-i Milliye* and the Ottoman loyalists in Istanbul. Following the 1919-20 Ahmet Anzavur “rebellion” and the 1920-21 Çerkes Ethem’s “rebellion” (Tur. *ayaklanma*), many North Caucasians were purged from positions of power in new Turkey.<sup>205</sup> The notorious *Teşkilât-ı Mahsusa*, which employed many muhajirs, provided an institutional foundation for Turkey’s intelligence services, first the National Security Service (*Milli Emniyet Hizmeti*) and then the National Intelligence Organization (*Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı*).<sup>206</sup> In Syria, the French, perhaps the more explicit practitioners of the “divide and rule” policy, recruited Circassian (and Druze, Alawi, and Christian) soldiers into *Troupes spéciales du Levant* and relied on Circassian and other

---

<sup>204</sup> Gingeras, *Sorrowful Shores*, 118-23; idem., “Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens.”

<sup>205</sup> On a complex relationship between North Caucasian leaders and Turkish nationalists, see Ryan Gingeras, “Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens”; Bilmez, “A Nationalist Discourse of Heroism and Treason”; Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 60-75.

<sup>206</sup> İlhan Bahar, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa, MİT ve İstihbarat Örgütleri* (Istanbul: Kum Saati Yayıncılık, 2009); Gültekin Ural, *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa’dan MİT’e: Abdullah Çatlı ve Susurluk Dosyası* (Istanbul: Kamer Yayınları, 1997).

minority auxiliaries to suppress the 1925-27 Great Syrian Revolt.<sup>207</sup> In Transjordan, Mirza Paşa Wasfi, a former Ottoman loyalist, alongside other Circassian notables, welcomed Emir ‘Abdullah to Amman in 1921 and offered the Hashemites private protection in the form of the Circassian Royal Guard, which has served the dynasty ever since.<sup>208</sup> When the British established the first “indigenous” army, the Transjordanian Reserve Force, in 1921, they recruited primarily among the North Caucasians and other minorities. The force was then reorganized as the Arab Legion, in which, by 1924, Circassians represented 30 percent of troops.<sup>209</sup> In Israel, Circassians became the second minority group (after the Druzes) to be drafted into the Israel Defense Forces in 1958.<sup>210</sup>

By the final decade of Ottoman rule, the North Caucasian muhajirs represented no more than five percent of the empire’s population, yet they often played an outsized role in many conflicts that the empire, and its many communities, were involved in at the time. The muhajirs’ participation in these conflicts often depended on where the Ottoman government settled them within the empire and whether muhajirs could support themselves

---

<sup>207</sup> Jane Priestland, ed., *Records of Syria, 1918-1973* (Slough, Eng.: Archive Editions, 2005), vol. 3, 684, 719, 793; Benjamin Thomas White, *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 51-54. On Circassians in post-Ottoman Syria, see Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 111-53. Interestingly, although expectedly, Syria’s early military dictators, al-Za‘im, al-Hinnawi, and al-Shishakli, in 1949-54, all disproportionately employed Circassian and other minority officers for their protection and rule; *Ibid.*, 129-30.

<sup>208</sup> Bruce D. Mackey, “The Circassians in Jordan,” M.A. dissertation (Naval Postgraduate School, 1979), 69-70. The Circassians played a critical role in repelling a Wahhabi attack in August 1922 and quelling the ‘Adwan revolt in August 1923. Both events were formative for the consolidation of Hashemite rule and the dynasty’s relations with Transjordan’s Circassian and several bedouin communities and, for those very reasons, are vague in detail in historiography; see Wilson, *Making of Jordan*, 71-72, 77-78; Alon, *Making of Jordan*, 52-57; Andrew Shyrock, *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008), 88-92, 303-04.

<sup>209</sup> Mackey, “Circassians in Jordan,” 73-74, 84. On the TRF and the Arab Legion, see Wilson, *Making of Jordan*, 75; Alon, *Making of Jordan*, 26, 50-51. On Circassians in post-Ottoman Jordan, see Mackey, “Circassians in Jordan”; Shami, “Ethnicity and Leadership”; Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 87-142. In Jordan, the Circassians also established themselves in civil service and real estate business.

<sup>210</sup> Randy Geller, “The Recruitment and Conscription of the Circassian Community into the Israel Defence Forces, 1948-58,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 48, no. 3 (2012): 387-99.

there. As the empire used armed groups of muhajirs to fight for its causes – and the successive nation-states sought to do the same – muhajirs became ever so closely associated with the state. This perspective was both external and a self-promotional narrative within the North Caucasian diaspora. This historiographical emphasis on the North Caucasians as enforcers of the state masks the historical realities of the North Caucasian community. Most muhajirs, including most men, toiled in agriculture and experienced the unraveling of the Ottoman Empire from behind a plow, not a rifle.



## CHAPTER 5

### North Caucasian Networks and Organizations in the Ottoman Empire

In 1890, Hanife Hanım, the matriarch of the Khutatzade family, finally moved to the Ottoman Empire from Russia.<sup>1</sup> Her two sons, Fuat Bey and Cevat Bey, who had left native Circassia ten years prior and lived in Istanbul, had long been urging her to leave Russia and join them and their fellow Circassians as muhajirs in the Ottoman state. Fuat Bey, in his thirties, was in the graduating class at the Military Academy (Ott. Tur. *Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Şahane*) in Istanbul, an elite institution of the Tanzimat era that trained officers for the Ottoman army. His 25-year-old half-brother, Cevat Bey, studied law but left the university without finishing his degree.<sup>2</sup> The two ambitious young men aspired to pursue careers in the Ottoman military and administration. They came a long way from the mountainous Circassian village of Benoqa (Circ. Bänäqw’/Бэнэкъу; now Benokovo, Krasnodar Krai, Russia), where, as young boys, they lived through the ethnic cleansing of Circassians and then Slavic colonization of their region.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 1, Fuat Bey to Hanife Hanım (4 February 1891). I thank S. Khutat for generous access to his family collection. The contents of Fuat Bey’s letters survived because his half-brother Cevat Bey, the head of the Amman branch of the family, carefully copied them into his notebook. In the opening line of his notebook, he lists his family name as Khutatzade, with “zade” being a Persian suffix used to denote a high social status and, possibly, in the case of the Circassian Khutats, to Ottomanize their family name. I refer to this family as the Khutatzades for the late Ottoman period.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017). Hanife Hanım was married twice: to Muhammad Shah, father to Fuat, and to his nephew, Ismail, father to Cevat. She was widowed twice by the time she moved to the Ottoman Empire. According to family history, Cevat Bey attended university. Ottoman records place him as a student of a military high school, Soğukçeşme Rüşdiye-i Askeriye, at the time; see BOA DH.MKT 1814/95 (21 *receb* 1308, 2 March 1891).

<sup>3</sup> The Circassian names of Fuat and Cevat were, respectively, Tasultan and Anzor, according to the genealogical tree compiled by Fuat Bey; courtesy of S. Khutat. I use the Latinized spelling of the village name as it appears in Fuat Bey’s letters.

The brothers and their mother belonged to a Kabardin family that, following the Russian conquest of Kabarda, in the Northcentral Caucasus, moved to unincorporated Circassian territories on the western slopes of the Caucasus Mountains in the early nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> By 1864, the tsarist army occupied these Circassian territories as well. Amidst the mass displacement of Circassians, the village of Benoqa avoided military-ordered expulsion or relocation. Yet its residents, descendants of Kabardins who did not wish to live under Russian rule, sought to join their fellow Circassians in exile and petitioned the government to let them emigrate to the Ottoman Empire. In 1889, the Russian government granted such permission.<sup>5</sup> Cevat Bey's father, Ismail Khutat, was leading 333 Circassian families out of Russia.<sup>6</sup> He likely died before reaching the Ottoman Empire. In 1895, the Khutatzades' home village was repopulated by families of retired Russian soldiers who had taken part in the conquest of the western Caucasus.<sup>7</sup>

After Hanife Hanım crossed into the Ottoman Empire, she registered with the Refugee Commission. The Commission sent her, along with her Benoqa neighbors, for prospective settlement near Adana, in southern Anatolia. By 1891, the Khutatzade family was dispersed. Fuat Bey sat through his final military examinations in Istanbul. Cevat Bey

---

<sup>4</sup> On Kabardin “khadzhrety” in western Circassia, see Khodarkovsky, *Bitter Choices*, 148; Timur Kh. Alov, ““Beglye’ kabardintsy: formirovanie v Zakuban’e massiva kabardinskogo naseleniia i ego uchastie v Kavkazskoi voine v 1799-1829 gg.” Ph.D. dissertation (Kabardino-Balkarian State University, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Gugov et al., eds., *Tragicheskie posledstviia*, 282-83.

<sup>6</sup> Ismail [bin] Khutat [Houtat] and Bekmirza bin Qardan were leaders of Benoqa muhajirs. The emigrating party of 982 families also included 354 families from the village of Foz, 214 families from Bougouch, and 81 families from Bzedoug; see BOA HR.TH 88/14, f. 2 (26 March 1889). In turn, the party of 982 families was part of larger migration of about 9,100 Muslims from Russia's Kuban Province who were sent to the Kastamonu, Ankara, Konya, Mamuret-ül-Aziz, Sivas, and Adana provinces in 1890; see DH.MKT 1749/28 (21 *zilhicce* 1307, 8 August 1890). The original destination of Benoqa muhajirs was Kastamonu Province, in northern Anatolia, where the government planned to build houses and secure grain for their arrival; see HR.TH 88/25 (2 April 1889); 88/66 (18 April 1889).

<sup>7</sup> Nikolai T. Mikhailov, *Spravochnik po Stavropol'skoi eparkhii: obzor gorodov, sel, stanits i khutorov Stavropol'skoi gubernii i Kubanskoi oblasti* (Ekaterinodar, 1911; reprinted Moscow: Izd. Nadyrshin, 2008), 648-49.

left Istanbul to join his mother and sister, Şerife, in Adana.<sup>8</sup> Selim Girey, Hanife Hanım's brother-in-law, had moved to the Ottoman Empire with her, but then engaged in a failed business venture, and subsequently chose to return to the Caucasus.<sup>9</sup> Gulumhan, Hanife Hanım's sister-in-law, had previously emigrated with her husband and lived in Konya Province.<sup>10</sup> Hanife Hanım and her two sons focused their efforts on finding a settlement area in the Ottoman Empire where their entire family and friends could reunite.

This chapter is the story of the Khutatzades' search for a new home. It also explores the connections among North Caucasian muhajirs in the Ottoman domains. I examine different types of immigrants' social affiliations – through family and kinship ties, village networks, and formal muhajir associations. Representing different ways of how individual North Caucasians engaged with each other, these affiliations enabled muhajirs to assert and reformulate their communal identities in the Ottoman Empire.

The Khutatzades (Khutats) were Circassian notables who had emigrated to the Ottoman Empire from Russia in the 1880s and 1890s. I reconstruct their history based on the collection of fifty-eight private letters that Fuat Bey Khutatzade, a young officer in the Ottoman army, wrote, in Ottoman Turkish, to his Circassian family members between 1890 and 1905. Within one generation, the geography of this family's resettlement and social networks spanned western, central, southern, and eastern Anatolia, the western Caucasus, and southern Syria/Transjordan. North Caucasian notables, such as the Khutatzades, utilized their existing family networks to maximize their economic and social gains during resettlement. The family history of the Khutatzades, a rare addition to the nascent field of

---

<sup>8</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 4, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (30 September 1892); BOA DH.MKT 1814/95 (21 *receb* 1308, 2 March 1891).

<sup>9</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 1, Fuat Bey to Hanife Hanım (4 February 1891).

<sup>10</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 7, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (1 January 1893).

Ottoman refugee studies, contributes to the broader interdisciplinary field of migration studies through its synthesis of two research strains that rarely go together: on the one hand, elites and their social capital, and, on the other, new immigrants and their kinship networks.

The muhajirs' geography can be conceptualized as a grid of immigrant villages that maintained social and economic connections with each other. Through these village networks, North Caucasian communities traded, inter-married, exchanged information, and evolved their educational and religious infrastructure. Muhajirs socialized within other networks as well, but muhajir village networks were crucial in both facilitating the advancement of their settlements and preserving their cultural identities. In other words, in order to examine the internal processes of migration and resettlement, one must look beyond the well-established and more visible networks, such as inter-district and inter-provincial administrative channels or urban-rural economic connections. The study of village networks provides clues about how dispersed immigrants experienced their new empire.

In the final decades of Ottoman rule, and especially after the 1908 Revolution, muhajir elites established formal muhajir associations to represent North Caucasians' communal interests. These associations, particularly the Cairo-based Society for Circassian Unity (1899) and the Istanbul-based Circassian Union and Support Association (1908), promoted new socio-political identities, based around muhajirs' ethnic and regional origins, religious affiliation, and loyalty to the Ottoman state. These elite North Caucasian

associations laid groundwork for muhajirs' politics in the post-Ottoman Middle East and even the Caucasus itself.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Khutatzades: A Muhajir Family History*

In 1891, Hanife Hanım and her two children, Cevat Bey and Şerife, were in Adana, together with other newly arrived Circassian muhajirs. The Khutatzade family never considered Adana a desirable location. The region of Çukurova, of which Adana was the largest city, was among the empire's fastest-growing areas, supported by a focused state investment in Çukurova's cotton industry. The Ottoman government intentionally settled nomadic communities and muhajirs in Çukurova for them to work on cotton plantations and in wheat fields.<sup>12</sup> Çukurova's marshes, however, served as a breeding ground for mosquitos, making it one of the world's northernmost malaria-prone areas. Muhajirs around Adana often contracted malaria and tuberculosis.<sup>13</sup> The Khutatzades wrote to the Refugee Commission that their community had been "suffering from population loss due

---

<sup>11</sup> On North Caucasian identities in diaspora, see Mitat Çelikpala, "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2006): 423-46; Shami, "Disjuncture in Ethnicity"; Kaya, *Türkiye'de Çerkesler*; Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*; Setenay Nil Doğan, "Formations of Diaspora Nationalism: The Case of Circassians in Turkey," Ph.D. dissertation (Sabancı University, 2009); Lars Funch Hansen, "iCircassia: Digital Capitalism and New Transnational Identities," *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1-32.

<sup>12</sup> See Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region, 1850-1908* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 65-81. In the 1890s, the German-Levantine Cotton Society attracted 50,000 Circassian and "Danubian" peasants to work on its cotton fields. The society distributed seed, issued credit, and erected a model farm for the training of Circassian laborers; see Derek Jonathan Penslar, *Zionism and Technocracy: The Engineering of Jewish Settlement in Palestine, 1870-1918* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 63.

<sup>13</sup> The vast majority of 30,000 Nogai Tatars, who settled in Çukurova after 1856, died in malarial heat; see Quataert, "The Age of Reforms," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. İnalcık and Quataert, vol. 2, 794. See also Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton*, 167.

to its incompatibility with [local] water and air.”<sup>14</sup> Hanife Hanım sought to escape the deadly region for a safer area.

In the fall of 1892, Cevat Bey moved the family to Aziziye, a little town in Sivas Province, to the north of Adana. The town, nestled in the foothills of the Hınzır and Tahtalı Mountains, was primarily Circassian, with a small Armenian community. Eventually, most family members reunited in Aziziye, including Gulumhan, who moved her family from Konya, and Selim Girey, who re-emigrated from the Caucasus, but not Fuat Bey, who pursued a military career, assuming financial responsibility for his family.<sup>15</sup> The family regarded Aziziye as only a temporary location before it could move to a better area. Prior to their mass expulsions and emigration, Circassians, whether in mountainous Kabarda or on the Black Sea coast, hardly knew urban culture. Their social and economic life centered on groups of large villages. In the Ottoman state, the Khutatzades wished to establish a Kabardin village, with plenty of farmland, and to attract as many of their former neighbors, now lingering in Adana, as possible, essentially recreating the life they had in the old country. Fuat Bey urged his brother, before the latter left Adana: “Go to the people in [our] village and recruit those who have an affection for us and who want to escape from there.”<sup>16</sup>

The Khutatzades, who were Kabardin notables but had been separated from Kabarda for almost a century, had all but lost their former wealth. They owned some land in western Circassia, which provided enough income to educate their younger offsprings, Fuat and Cevat, and their cousins, in Istanbul. Prior to emigration to the Ottoman Empire, the Khutatzades must have sold their properties in Russia. In the first years after Hanife

---

<sup>14</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 3, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (4 July 1892).

<sup>15</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 14, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 November 1893); Letter no. 16, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 February 1894).

<sup>16</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 4, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (30 September 1892).

Hanım's arrival in the Ottoman Empire, her sons closely followed the fluctuating exchange rate between the Russian ruble and the Ottoman lira. Their friends sent them telegrams with the latest updates about the currency market in Istanbul and Trabzon. The brothers waited for the optimal moment to exchange the Russian currency that they brought with them from the Caucasus.<sup>17</sup>

The Khutatzade family members, prolific letter-writers, reached out to their many muhajir connections throughout the empire soliciting their friends' advice on which areas were best for settlement, specifically having available and cheap land, peaceful neighbors, and minimal bureaucratic red tape. The obvious choice for the family was Uzunyayla, a large plateau to the north and east of Aziziye, where the family considered purchasing the Kütüklü fields.<sup>18</sup> Uzunyayla was one of the most compact muhajir settlement areas in the empire, with several dozen Kabardin villages (see Chapter 3). Its geography and climate, resembling the Kabardins' native lands, also supported North Caucasians' traditional economic activities, such as horse-breeding and husbandry. Yet Fuat Bey discouraged his family:

The reality is that living in Uzunyayla would not be very comfortable. We have been feigning ignorance, but we should own up to the truth that there is nothing desirable about living among people who used to be Circassians but lost their culture, are not sufficiently civilized, and are seditious and rebellious.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 19, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (24 May 1894); Letter no. 21, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (12 July 1894).

<sup>18</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 4, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (30 September 1892); Letter no. 8, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (13 March 1893).

<sup>19</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 24, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (19 October 1894).

Fuat Bey judged it unsafe to settle within a large North Caucasian community, brutalized by memories of their expulsion, economically struggling, and amidst a simmering conflict with Turkic-speaking Afşar nomads over the Uzunyayla grazing rights.

Fuat Bey considered purchasing land near Istanbul, in eastern Thrace, for the benefit of, as he stated, “our family and people of our village who are attached and devoted to us.”<sup>20</sup> He gathered information about available agricultural land in Konya Province, in central Anatolia, and in Gümüşhane Subprovince, Trabzon Province, in northeastern Anatolia.<sup>21</sup> Fuat Bey got in touch with the authorities of Malatya Subprovince, Mamuret-ül-Aziz Province, in eastern Anatolia, who encouraged the family to relocate to their region and take up farming.<sup>22</sup> The Khutatzades also thought of settling on the banks of the Euphrates River, between Aleppo, Gaziantep, and Birecik, and considered sending Selim Girey to Aleppo Province to inspect the area.<sup>23</sup>

Fuat Bey’s views on an ideal settlement for his family evolved. In 1894, he wrote to his brother Cevat that it was essential that their home be in a town, not a village, because an urban environment offered greater opportunities for trade in the future.<sup>24</sup> Having experienced firsthand the rapid urbanization of Istanbul – from about 382 thousand to over 873 thousand only within the 1882-85 period, as a result of refugee migration from the Balkans – Fuat Bey recognized the economic prospects that the empire’s urban transformation held.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 2, Fuat Bey to Hanife Hanım (26 February 1891).

<sup>21</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 3, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (4 July 1892).

<sup>22</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 27, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (20 December 1894).

<sup>23</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 24, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (19 October 1894).

<sup>24</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 16, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 February 1894).

<sup>25</sup> Stanford J. Shaw, “The Population of Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10, no. 2 (1979): 266.



Cevat Bey, unable to secure any administrative position in Aziziye or Sivas that he coveted, agreed and soon turned his thoughts to entrepreneurship. He reasoned that he could turn his connections in Russia to his advantage and establish a transnational business. He planned to travel to the Russian Caucasus and purchase commercial goods, likely textiles. To maximize his profits, he aspired to circumvent Russian customs and smuggle the goods into eastern Anatolia by way of North Caucasian Muslims, either muhajirs emigrating out of Russia or muhajirs who crossed the Russo-Ottoman frontier back into the Caucasus to visit their families.<sup>26</sup> Fuat Bey, his cool-headed older brother, was quick to point out the many flaws in this daring undertaking: Cevat had no business experience in either country; would not be taken seriously by Caucasus-based manufacturers; would likely not get a Russian visa to go to the Caucasus; could not rely on the unsteady traffic of muhajir “mules” across the border; and, overall, faced high odds of going to prison, either Russian or Ottoman, or going bankrupt. He also coached him on the social costs of cross-border travel: “Have you not thought about what kind of men are those who go there [back to Russia] with Tatar passports and what kinds of insults they are subjected to [on the border]?”<sup>27</sup>

As such critique likely took a toll on the men’s relationship, Fuat Bey sought to appease his brother in his subsequent letters. He commended him on his burgeoning interest in business as a way to alleviate the family’s financial woes. “Really, trade is the sole means for leading a good life,” he wrote.<sup>28</sup> Fuat Bey urged his brother to purchase a house and to set up a legal and respectable business in Aziziye. He advised Cevat Bey to

---

<sup>26</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 15, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (14 February 1894).

<sup>27</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 15, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (14 February 1894).

<sup>28</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 18, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 April 1894).

choose a good business partner, preferably a Christian who would have business experience and mercantile connections across the empire.<sup>29</sup> Fuat Bey likely referred to the Armenian community in Aziziye. As the brothers exchanged letters on what a prospective family business could involve, Fuat Bey suggested that Cevat Bey could come to Istanbul to engage in lucrative oil trade or could stay in Aziziye and pursue horse trade.<sup>30</sup>

Fuat Bey, upon his graduation from the Military Academy in Istanbul, was commissioned to Erzincan, in Erzurum Province, in 1893.<sup>31</sup> Erzincan hosted the headquarters of the Fourth Army: strategically located deep enough in the Anatolian interior and right outside of Kurdistan, this small town lay close to the Russian and Iranian borders and sat in the heart of the “six Armenian provinces.” After two years of service, Fuat Bey received an assignment to patrol the Russian border.<sup>32</sup> His military command must have considered his familiarity with the Russian Empire and fluency in Circassian, and perhaps even Russian, to be assets for the job at hand. Fuat Bey never clarified in his letters what work he conducted on the Ottoman Empire’s long eastern frontier, but it is likely that, at the time of peace between the three (Ottoman, Russian, and Qajar) empires, his primary concern was the suppression of arms contraband traffic and cross-border Armenian revolutionary activities.<sup>33</sup> In 1894-96, the Hamidian massacres broke out in the eastern Ottoman provinces. Several hundred thousand Armenians and Assyrians lost their

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 34, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 August 1895).

<sup>31</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 8, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (13 March 1893).

<sup>32</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 34, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 August 1895).

<sup>33</sup> On Armenian politics of the day, see Louise Z. Nalbandian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties Through the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963); Moumdjian, “Struggling for a Constitutional Regime.”

lives in mass atrocities perpetrated by the Hamidiye cavalry and private Kurdish militias.<sup>34</sup> As sectarian lines hardened within the Ottoman society, in 1896, Fuat Bey wrote to his brother, “Here [around Erzincan] Armenian commotion (Ott. Tur *Ermeni igtışaşat*) appears to be quiet.”<sup>35</sup>

In 1898, Fuat Bey received the Order of the Mecidiye of the third class for his duty on the Iranian border.<sup>36</sup> He was shortly reassigned to a military desk job in Erzurum but, soon thereafter, returned to patrolling the Russian frontier.<sup>37</sup> Fuat Bey was part of the Ottoman border commission and traveled to the Russian Caucasus to work with his tsarist counterparts on what he referred to as border-related problems.<sup>38</sup> Likely as a result of that mission, he received a promotion from the rank of *kolağası* [major] to *binbaşı* [lieutenant colonel] in 1900.<sup>39</sup>

Meanwhile, the Khutatzades reconsidered their plans to permanently settle down in Aziziye after Cevat Bey received a letter from the Habjokas, another Kabardin aristocratic family, to whom they were related. The Habjokas had settled in the small refugee village of Amman, in Damascus Province.<sup>40</sup> The Habjokas invited the Khutatzades to travel to Jerusalem and, from there, explore what the interior of southern Syria had to offer new immigrants.<sup>41</sup> Cevat Bey, with the reluctant blessing of his brother, departed for the Levant

---

<sup>34</sup> See Akçam, *A Shameful Act*, 41-46; Melson, “A Theoretical Enquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894–1896.”

<sup>35</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896).

<sup>36</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 40, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (9 July 1898).

<sup>37</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 43, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (21 October 1898).

<sup>38</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 48, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (22 November 1899); Letter no. 49, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 January 1900).

<sup>39</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 50, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 April 1900).

<sup>40</sup> Cevat Bey copied the name of the family as “Hafjoka.” The identity of the family was confirmed in the interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017).

<sup>41</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 21, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (12 July 1894).

in early 1895.<sup>42</sup> The trip proved to be more than an exploratory visit. Cevat Bey was so impressed with Amman that he telegraphed his relatives in Aziziye and his brother in Erzincan for an express money order of 50 Ottoman liras to immediately invest in local real estate.<sup>43</sup> In 1895, he purchased land, tying the Khutatzade family to its new properties in Transjordan.<sup>44</sup>

By the winter of 1896, the Khutatzades moved from Aziziye to Amman. Most of them likely took a sea route via Beirut, while others traveled by land via Aleppo.<sup>45</sup> The Khutatzades settled in Amman's Qabartay [Kabardin] neighborhood, among their co-ethnic immigrants. That same year, Cevat Bey – whom Arabic-speaking officials called Jawad Bey – in accordance with the 1857 Immigration Law, as the head of a muhajir household, received usufruct rights to 120 *dönüm* of land for free from the government.<sup>46</sup>

Fuat Bey, still in the Armenian Highlands at the convergence of three imperial borders, petitioned the military high command to relocate him to the Fifth Army headquartered in Damascus, so that he could be closer to his family. His requests were denied.<sup>47</sup> In the meantime, he became an ardent supporter of his family's settlement in distant Transjordan after his colleagues in the military had conveyed to him that the area would likely thrive after the government completes the construction of the Hejaz

---

<sup>42</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 26, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (14 December 1894).

<sup>43</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 28, Fuat Bey to Hanife Hanım (undated, c. March 1895).

<sup>44</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 29, Fuat Bey to Selim Girey Bey (27 March 1895).

<sup>45</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896).

<sup>46</sup> DLS 19/1/1, ff. 43-44, #29 (*kanun-ı evvel* 1312, Dec 1896/Jan 1897).

<sup>47</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 38, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (5 March 1898); Letter no. 55, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (3 May 1902).

Railway.<sup>48</sup> In anticipation of the economic boom, Fuat Bey enthusiastically pushed for the family's investment in a diverse land portfolio in Amman:

However much you can save, put it back into the soil immediately. That is, you can turn it into real estate. Do not think that owning land sufficient for your own farming is enough. Buy more land, do not sow it, let it stay empty for a while. When there is an opportunity, try to add more land to your estate and make an effort to purchase the adjoining land. The day may come when you acquire advanced farm equipment, the kind that exists in the civilized countries today, and you would be able to do the farm work that takes you a month in only four or five days.<sup>49</sup>

He later followed up, "There is nothing more valuable than land in order to get by in this world," adding that, perhaps, buying up land that was not adjoining to the Khutatzades' property was not such a bad investment idea either.<sup>50</sup>

Cevat Bey, who had initially hoped to find an administrative position in Amman or even in Damascus, embraced the role of a real estate entrepreneur and a farmer. His brother was supportive, saying, "A single *kuruş* that you earn through your own effort and endeavor is more blessed and beneficial than a thousand *kuruş* earned from the government's treasury by holding a bureaucratic position."<sup>51</sup> Cevat Bey's business strategy was simple: he would produce wheat on the family's land, sell grain for export to Salti merchants, reinvest the capital into more land, and sow the new land with wheat or open it up for sharecropping by fellow Circassians.<sup>52</sup> In Transjordan in the 1890s, the land was cheap, and this strategy proved effective for many.<sup>53</sup> Cevat Bey faced several early

---

<sup>48</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896); Letter no. 36, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (2 December 1897).

<sup>49</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 46, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (17 June 1899).

<sup>50</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 48, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (22 November 1899).

<sup>51</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 52, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (16 November 1900).

<sup>52</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letters no. 46-49, 51-52, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (June 1899 – November 1900). In the 1900s, grain of the Balqa' was resold in the interior Levantine markets of Damascus and Nablus; see Chapter 2.

<sup>53</sup> On prices for land in Amman, see Chapter 2, Table 6 and Table 10.

obstacles: his first harvest was destroyed by locust; he lacked proper agricultural tools to till all his land; and his oxen were stolen by his neighbor, a case that was investigated by the Salt shari‘a court.<sup>54</sup> His fortunes improved, and a few years later, he produced enough grain to sell it for profit and to fix up his farm. His brother encouraged this turn to agriculture, calling it “the most honorable, most profitable, and most sacred of all industries and occupations.”<sup>55</sup>

Cevat Bey planned to import a stallion from Uzunyayla to breed Kabarda horses in Transjordan and invested in two more pairs of oxen.<sup>56</sup> He also asked his brother where he could get a rifle – likely, to safeguard his property from the Balqawiyya bedouin, with whom Circassians of Amman were heading into a conflict over land usufruct rights and access to the Amman springs.<sup>57</sup>

Ottoman land records reveal that, by 1898-99, in addition to the government-issued land and the estates that he purchased privately, Cevat Bey acquired four shops from a fellow Circassian for 563 *kuruş* each.<sup>58</sup> It was a sagacious investment considering that, following the 1903 opening of the Hejaz Railway, the average price of a shop in the Qabartay quarter would top 4,000 *kuruş* in the 1904-09 period and approach 7,000 *kuruş* in the 1910-12 period.<sup>59</sup> He likely built more shops and intended to rent out these shops to Syrian and Palestinian merchants and to use the profit to fund his agricultural enterprise.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 40, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (9 July 1898); CDM Defter Salt 5, #31 (15 *şaban* 1315, 9 January 1898).

<sup>55</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 40, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (9 July 1898).

<sup>56</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 48, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (22 November 1899); Letter no. 49, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 January 1900).

<sup>57</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 49, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 January 1900). On the conflict between Circassians and the Balqawiyya bedouin, see Chapter 4.

<sup>58</sup> DLS Defter 19/1/1, ff. 361-62, #98-101 (1898-99).

<sup>59</sup> For my average estimates on the price of shops in Amman, see Chapter 2, Table 8.

<sup>60</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 49, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 January 1900).

In the early years of the twentieth century, Fuat Bey remained in Kurdistan, patrolling the Ottoman eastern frontier, from Tortum to Muş to Diyarbekir. In 1901, he went to Sason in pursuit of Armenian fugitives.<sup>61</sup> Fuat Bey, a middle-ranking Ottoman officer, was swept up in a burgeoning conflict that involved Armenians, the Kurdish Hamidiye regiments, and the Ottoman state, and that, by 1915, would escalate into the Armenian Genocide.<sup>62</sup> In his letters, he never disclosed what he thought of the conflict or his assignments, but, around the same time, he married an Armenian woman, Shafiq.<sup>63</sup>

We must rely on oral history and archival records to establish what happened to Hanife Hanım and her children after 1905, the date of Fuat Bey's last surviving letter. Cevat Bey, the patriarch of the Transjordanian branch of the family, eventually found an opportunity to put his Istanbul legal education into practice. He improved his Arabic and became a legal representative for Amman's Circassian community, taking on a number of cases in the local court in Salt.<sup>64</sup> Among his clients was Sayetkhan bint Qurash bin Qoghuluq, a Circassian woman from the Golan Heights, whose claims to her family's real estate he defended in court, as described in Chapter 2. The Habjokas, the close allies and relatives of the Khutatzades, who had invited Cevat Bey to Amman, emerged as the foremost Circassian political dynasty in Transjordan. Their scion, Sa'id al-Mufti, struck a critical alliance between the Hashemite dynasty and Amman's Circassian community, and served as Prime Minister of Jordan four times.<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 54, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (11 June 1901).

<sup>62</sup> See Klein, *Margins of Empire*.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017).

<sup>64</sup> Interview with S. Khutat in Amman (15 September 2014).

<sup>65</sup> Upon Abdullah I bin al-Hussein's arrival in Transjordan, which he would rule as emir (1921-46) and king (1946-51), he first settled in the house of Sa'id al-Mufti, Amman's mayor at the time; see Wilson, *Making of Jordan*, 61, 238n47.

Şerife, the sister of Fuat and Cevat, married Azmi Bey, a young officer who served with Fuat Bey in Erzincan. His notable Circassian family, the Haghandoqas, was scattered between Anatolia, Transjordan, and Egypt. Azmi Bey asked the Khutatzade brothers for her hand in marriage. Fuat Bey wrote to Cevat Bey that the decision must be “basically, Şerife’s view on the matter.”<sup>66</sup> Şerife accepted Azmi Bey’s proposal.<sup>67</sup> Selim Girey’s son, Ghazi (born in 1890), after helping Cevat Bey to set up the family business in Amman, had left to receive an education in Istanbul, following in the footsteps of his two uncles. He then found work in Egypt, where he managed the estate of one of the royal princesses, a sister of Sultan Hussein Kamel (r. 1914-17) and Sultan/King Fuad I (r. 1917-36) in Banha District, in the Nile Delta. Upon his death in 1927, his family moved back to Amman.<sup>68</sup>

As for Fuat Bey, whose correspondence animated this family history, he left us another written artifact. The Erzurum archaeological museum preserves a detailed map of the city drawn in 1904 by one “Kafkasyalı Kur. Yb. Fuat Bey.” By that time, Fuat Bey must have been promoted from *binbaşı* to *yarbay* [Yb., higher-rank lieutenant colonel]. While stationed in Erzurum, which was the Ottomans’ critical eastern outpost after the loss of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan to Russia in 1878, Fuat Bey mapped out the city’s topography. On the map, he listed, with military precision, the names of the most prominent mosques, churches, hamams, markets, and schools, as well as documented the numbers of Erzurum shops (2,735), its watchmakers (17), jewelers (45), textile manufacturers (243), tanners (106), tinmen (40), and others.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>66</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 56, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 September 1902).

<sup>67</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 58, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (14 October 1905).

<sup>68</sup> Interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017).

<sup>69</sup> Hüseyin Yurttaş, “Fuat Bey’ in Erzurum Haritası,” *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 15 (2000): 49-71.



Fuat Bey eventually returned to Istanbul, the city he loved, where he found himself in the thick of a rapidly changing empire. Sometime after the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, which reinstated the Ottoman parliament, Fuat Bey received the position of superintendent in the Ottoman Military College (*Mekteb-i Erkan-ı Harbiye*). He trained a new generation of staff officers, whose duty was to defend the empire and its revised constitution. In January 1913, the CUP carried out a coup d'état against Grand Vizier Kamil Paşa's liberal government and installed Mahmut Şevket Paşa as the Grand Vizier. In June, the new Grand Vizier was assassinated, which the CUP used as a pretext to unleash a purge of the liberal opposition, primarily supporters of the dissolved Freedom and Accord Party.<sup>70</sup> During the purge, Fuat Bey was arrested and, shortly thereafter, was executed. According to family memories, all charges against him were false and politically motivated.<sup>71</sup> After his death, his widow and three children joined the rest of the Khutatzade family in Amman but then returned to Istanbul, where Fuat Bey's descendants have resided ever since.<sup>72</sup>

### *The Khutatzades' Networks*

The Khutatzades were muhajirs. They were not “refugees” in the common understanding of the term, which typically assumes forced wartime displacement. The Khutatzade family left Russia voluntarily long after the war in the Caucasus was over. Nor were the experiences of this family in the Ottoman domains typical of what earlier Circassian refugees had endured. The family had a choice about when and whether to

---

<sup>70</sup> Eugene L. Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East* (New York: Basic Books, 2015), 26.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017).

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

migrate and negotiated with the Ottoman Refugee Commission where they wished to settle. Their immigration represents a type of Ottoman resettlement that was often associated with muhajir notables. This model of resettlement accorded more agency to prospective immigrants and was different from others. For example, following the 1863-64 Circassian expulsions by the Russian army, the Ottoman government settled most muhajirs into villages in the Balkans and Anatolia, with little input from refugees as to where they wanted to go (see Chapter 1). In yet another type of resettlement, as it unfolded, for example, in Uzunyayla in 1859-62 and in Greater Syria after the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the state directed refugees to certain areas, where muhajirs could choose sites for their villages (see Chapters 2 and 3).

The resettlement history of the Khutatzade family underscores the historical specificities of the nineteenth-century hijra from the Caucasus and the inadequacy of both translating the term “muhajir” and defining any migration resulting from military occupation and settler colonialism as “voluntary.”<sup>73</sup> The family’s migration, as that of all post-1878 muhajirs from the Caucasus, was “voluntary” in the sense that they were free to leave Russia and to immigrate in the Ottoman domains.<sup>74</sup> Yet their relocation had only occurred due to Russian occupation, complete with a demographic and economic overhaul of the Caucasus. Their emigration also came with a caveat: after six months in the Ottoman domains, they could not return to the Caucasus because of Russia’s administrative

---

<sup>73</sup> See Alexander Morrison, “Russian Settler Colonialism,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (New York: Routledge, 2017), 313-26.

<sup>74</sup> As Chapter 6 will demonstrate, since the late 1860s, North Caucasian Muslims were free to leave Russia after satisfying stringent administrative requirements, including paying taxes for ten years ahead. Formally, the Ottomans accepted those muhajirs who had Russian-issued permissions to emigrate. In practice, many families emigrated without notifying Russian authorities and were still resettled in the Ottoman Empire.

obstacles to return migration; and their freedom to choose residence in the Ottoman Empire was constrained by Ottoman immigration regulations.<sup>75</sup> The Khutatzades spent over a decade securing proper resettlement permission from the Ottoman Refugee Commission.

The Khutatzades' correspondence allows us to theorize about the family's networks and social capital. We can think of the social relations of muhajirs, and those of other immigrants, in several registers: their relations with the state or a formal organization performing the functions of the state; with neighboring communities; and within their own community, or, more specifically, their kin and extended social circles. In the historiography of Ottoman and modern Middle Eastern migration, the primary focus has been on the first register, owing to the fact that most of our sources have been produced by state-sanctioned institutions, be they the Ottoman Refugee Commission, the League of Nations' Nansen International Office for Refugees, or the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Scholars of the Middle East usually turn to the second register, also narrated primarily through state sources, when there is a need to explain a social or political upheaval that could be attributed to immigration. The third register is the most elusive one for historians because the state could rarely "see," or think to look at, intra-communal networks. Yet it is the third register that was crucial to the successful integration of immigrants, especially those who moved voluntarily. Fuat Bey's letters afford insight into some of these intra-communal social networks.

---

<sup>75</sup> Russian Muslims who expressed a wish to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire were issued the same six-month passports as Muslims leaving for a hajj; see Chapter 6. The immigration of muhajirs was governed by the 1857 Ottoman Immigration Law and subsequent statutes that prohibited muhajirs from settling in cities and conditioned all subsidies and aid upon immigrants' continued rural residence and farming; see Chapter 1.

Scholars of immigration, particularly sociologists, have long acknowledged the primacy of kinship networks in migration.<sup>76</sup> The networks based on one's familial, ethnic, or regional ties often lower the costs, whether social, economic, or emotional, of immigrants' resettlement.<sup>77</sup> The access to earlier immigrants' knowledge facilitates the social mobility of those following in their footsteps. These kinship networks, in addition to practical benefits upon resettlement, reinforce immigrants' cultural identity in exile and expand their connections to the countries they left. For refugees and immigrants, kinship networks often transmit social capital, reconstructing the familiar social dynamics.<sup>78</sup> Social capital is also crucial in mobilizing other forms of capital, including economic and political capital.<sup>79</sup> Thus, for wealthier immigrants, such as the Khutatzades, their existing networks could reproduce some of the privilege that they enjoyed prior to migration.

In their correspondence, the Khutatzades had distinct audiences. Their most intimate group included family members: Fuat Bey's siblings, mother, uncles, and cousins, forming a familial network, from Russia's Kuban Province to Istanbul, Aziziye, and Amman. When writing to each other, family members shared details of their financial

---

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Cecilia Menjívar, *Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000); Monica Boyd, "Family and Personal Networks in International Migration: Recent Developments and New Agendas," *International Migration Review* 23 (1989): 638-70; Harvey M. Choldin, "Kinship Networks in the Migration Process," *International Migration Review* 7 (1973): 163-76.

<sup>77</sup> See Floya Anthias, "Ethnic Ties, Social Capital and the Question of Mobilisability," *The Sociological Review* 55, no. 4 (2007): 788-805.

<sup>78</sup> On immigrant networks and social capital, see Douglas S. Massey et al., *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990); Kristin Espinosa and Douglas S. Massey, "Undocumented Migration and the Quantity and Quality of Social Capital," in *Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*, ed. Ludger Pries (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 106-37.

<sup>79</sup> On different kinds of capital, see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241-58.

struggles and personal frustrations, and discussed to whom they could reach out outside of their family for help.

The Khutatzades' immediate social circle spanned patron-client networks, which the Khutatzades had cultivated since their time in the Caucasus. They preserved connections with many western Circassian and Kabardin families of notables that now resided across the empire, many of them similarly trying to establish themselves within the Ottoman military or bureaucracy. They also fostered networks of lower-status Circassian families who used to rely on their patronage back in the Caucasus. Throughout the Ottoman Empire, Circassian notables commonly lived surrounded by families that had emigrated with them and expected a degree of support from them. The Khutatzades, for example, had six families that closely allied with them and followed them in their migration from the Caucasus and then across the Ottoman Empire; the Refugee Commission reportedly referred to them as the "Khutat group."<sup>80</sup> The Kuls were one such family that moved to Amman with the Khutatzades. Having settled in the Abzakh quarter of Amman, they registered usufruct rights to 80 *dönüm* of land in 1893.<sup>81</sup> They later built or purchased three houses and two shops.<sup>82</sup> The Kuls continued their association with the Khutatzades and did business with them. In 1910, the Kuls sold 20 *dönüm* of land by the Amman springs to Cevat Bey and Ghazi Bey, Selim Girey's son, for 1,300 *kuruş*.<sup>83</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 5, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (12 August 1892).

<sup>81</sup> DLS Defter 31/1/2, ff. 7-8, #5-7 (*yoklama* in *temmuz* 1309, July/Aug 1893); Defter 32/1/2, ff. 79-82, #71-73 (*da'imi* in *haziran* 1326, June/July 1910). Other families were Başkan, Hacı Bayram, Yakubzade, Bud, and Tarkan; Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 2, Fuat Bey to Hanife Hanım (26 February 1891).

<sup>82</sup> DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 77-78, #53-57 (*yoklama* in *temmuz* 1309, July/Aug 1893), #58-60 (*da'imi* in *haziran* 1326, June/July 1910)

<sup>83</sup> CDM Defter Salt 15, #76 (16 *rebiülahir* 1328, 27 April 1910); DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 81-82, #74 (*haziran* 1326, June/July 1910). The Kul family also sold some of its land and at least one of its shops to the Damascene merchants of the Hetakhet and Darwish families; DLS Defter 32/1/2, ff. 81-82, #4-5 (*da'imi* in *temmuz* 1326, July/Aug 1910).

Fuat Bey valued trust that was implicit in tight-knit kinship networks.<sup>84</sup> When his brother briefly returned to Aziziye after purchasing a property in Amman, Fuat Bey urged him to persuade their closest friends, related to them by blood or marital ties, to move to Transjordan with the Khutatzade family:

My brother, are there any of our old in-laws (Ott. Tur. *eski hukukdaşlarımız*)<sup>85</sup> who wish to go there with you? If such friends are available, accept them nicely and ease their business. Do not hesitate to make sacrifices in this matter. Do not forget that, however much you trust in friendship, no [new] friends would measure up to the old in-laws. It has been proven. It is not possible to find people like them again in distant places.<sup>86</sup>

Resettling together with an extended family was not only a matter of emotional relief but also a social and economic investment. It broadened the pool of potential business partners in the future, served as a support network in times of need, and raised the political capital of the family should it need to negotiate or contest its interests with third parties.

The Khutatzades' other audience included imperial and regional powerholders, with whom the family established relations after their immigration through recommendations and introductions by other Circassian notables. It was the least intimate circle and one that also included non-North Caucasians. By corresponding with members of the Refugee Commission and municipal authorities in Adana, Aziziye, and Amman, the Khutatzades negotiated permissions and privileges for themselves and their clients and cultivated a professional network for potential career opportunities.

---

<sup>84</sup> See Charles Tilly, "Trust Networks in Transnational Migration," *Sociological Forum* 22, no. 1 (2007): 3-24. On the notion of trust within transnational intra-ethnic networks, see Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 166-201.

<sup>85</sup> Fuat Bey uses a rare term *hukukdaşlar*, "fellows in law". He likely meant families that intermarried with the Khutatzades in previous generations. In his letter, he names specific Circassian families who remained "most loyal" to the Khutatzades and to whom he often sent greetings.

<sup>86</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 33, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (15 August 1895).

The Khutatzade family history is telling of both the power of personal connections in the resettlement process and the limits of their influence. In order to leave the original settlement in Adana, Hanife Hanım and her family needed to obtain formal permission from the Refugee Commission. They required similar permissions to settle in, and to leave, Aziziye. Throughout the 1890s, Fuat Bey had petitioned the Refugee Commission to expedite the issuance of residency papers, permissions to leave, and release of immigrant subsidies for his family and its allies. Dozens of family letters reveal frustration with the slow pace of the Istanbul-based Refugee Commission and its regional branches. The family likely obtained the approval to move to Aziziye and to Amman post factum and only through the direct involvement of local office-holders, the Aziziye district governor and the Amman township head.<sup>87</sup> Thus, it proved easier for the Khutatzades to formalize their resettlement by establishing connections with regional officials, who were interested in cultivating relations with well-connected muhajir notables, than to wait for the Refugee Commission to make necessary decisions. Remarkably, Fuat Bey had Istanbul-based patrons, including a higher-up military officer, lobbying the Refugee Commission on the Khutatzades' behalf, but that seemed to have little effect on the Khutatzades' progress with the imperial bureaucracy.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 12, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (31 August 1893); Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896).

<sup>88</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letters no. 3, 5, 11-14, 18-20, 25, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (July 1892 – November 1894).

Cevat Bey preserved the contents of 58 letters from his brother. In his letters, Fuat Bey also referenced other letters that he and his family members wrote. Overall, I traced 180 epistolary connections of the Khutatzades within their social circles: 92 dated letters and telegrams and 88 undated ones,

Figure 13: Map of the Khutatzades' correspondence, 1890-1905



including a few that Fuat Bey alluded to as yet to be written. The locations of all senders and recipients are known, which allows for a cartographic visualization of the Khutatzades' correspondence between 1890 and 1905.<sup>89</sup> [See Figure 13.] On this map, circles represent the locations of senders and recipients of letters; sizes of circles are proportional to the number of letters sent or received at that location.

The Khutatzades' social networks spanned an enormous territory, from Istanbul to Amman, with central nodes in Adana, Aziziye, and Erzincan, and outlying connections in the Russian Caucasus and British Egypt. The family's social connections extended farther. We only know the contents of letters that Fuat Bey sent to his immediate family, not to his

---

<sup>89</sup> I utilize the Palladio toolset, designed at Stanford University as part of the spatial and digital humanities projects, "Networks in History" and "Mapping the Republic of Letters."  
<hdlab.stanford.edu/projects/palladio/>



coworkers or former classmates. Fuat Bey mentioned his colleagues traveling to London, and he likely visited Tiflis and may have gone to Baghdad as part of his job.<sup>90</sup>

The Khutatzades' relocation to the Levant affected the temporality of familial correspondence. Before the Khutatzades moved to Transjordan, they used the regular Ottoman postal service to exchange letters between Istanbul and Anatolian cities that took a couple of weeks to arrive. After they moved to Transjordan, Fuat Bey's letters took 45 days to reach Amman from eastern Anatolia, especially small garrison towns along the Ottoman frontier – Eleşkirt Karakilise (Ağrı), Bayazıt (Doğubeyazıt), Hasankale (Pasinler), and Muş.<sup>91</sup> Yet the linear distance between Istanbul and Adana was roughly equivalent to that between Erzincan and Amman. The former route, however, was served by boat, whereas on the latter route letters traveled overland, in guarded caravans. Due to geography and insufficient infrastructure, the communication between family members slowed down to only a few letters a year; some letters were delayed or lost en route. In 1899, to accelerate their letter exchange, Fuat Bey instructed his family to write on the envelopes that they wished their letters to go to Erzincan via Istanbul.<sup>92</sup> Such was the paradox of trans-provincial (trans-peripheral) communication that letters would arrive faster if the distance was increased almost threefold but proceeded mostly by sea.

The 1903 opening of the Hejaz Railway, which ran from Damascus to Medina, connected the isolated Amman settlement to the emerging trans-Ottoman railway grid. Fuat Bey, for example, recommended to Cevat Bey that he take a break from his farming activities and take a train to Ankara, to obtain a curious remedy from locusts:

---

<sup>90</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 7, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (1 January 1893); Letter no. 49, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 January 1900); Letter no. 6, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (14 October 1892).

<sup>91</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 45, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 March 1899).

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

In Ankara, four to five hours away from the center of the province, lies [a source of] water. This water is carried to distant countries by men of Mecca and darwishes, and many villages and cities damaged [by locust] had been saved by this water. ... The reason for the [qualities of the] water is that wherever this water flows, different types of speckled starlings that damage and destroy the locust follow, carrying out their duty. ... Because there is the train, it is not difficult to go to Ankara.<sup>93</sup>

This curious recommendation by Fuat Bey must have been a common belief.

Richard H. Sanger, a former U.S. diplomat in Jordan, confirmed the account, based on his conversations with Jordanian Circassians:

[Up until World War I] In addition to beating drums and burning smoky fires, [Circassians] regularly dispatched missions to Turkey, who brought back “locust water.” This liquid came from areas in Turkey which were free of locusts and have been blessed by persons known to have special powers against insects. Fields properly treated with “locust water” were believed to be locust repellent, and farmers whose fathers spent good money for this remarkable liquid still boast of its potency.<sup>94</sup>

The railway system transformed how Ottoman subjects imagined and planned mobility within their empire, bringing faraway frontier settlements, such as Amman, closer into the coastal and Anatolian orbit. Likewise, expanding telegraph services changed how families conducted business transactions, while reinforcing urban-rural hierarchies.<sup>95</sup> The Khutatzades used telegraph services sparingly, reflective of their high cost. They sent telegrams for urgent matters, such as communicating updates from the Refugee Commission and placing money orders for land purchases in Amman. To send or receive

---

<sup>93</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 42, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (4 August 1898).

<sup>94</sup> Richard H. Sanger, *Where the Jordan Flows* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1963), 265-66.

<sup>95</sup> Roderic H. Davison, “The Advent of the Electric Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire,” in *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923*, ed. Roderic H. Davison (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990), 133-65; Eugene L. Rogan, “Instant Communication: The Impact of the Telegraph in Ottoman Syria,” in *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience*, ed. Thomas Philipp (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 113-28.

a telegram, family members made regular trips to Sivas (from Aziziye) and Jerusalem and Damascus (from Amman).

Fuat Bey's correspondence reveals a certain hierarchy of place, depending on its suitability for muhajirs' comfortable living and access to high culture. Shaped by Fuat Bey's individual experiences, this mental mapping betrayed his belonging to the North Caucasian muhajir community and his socialization within Istanbul's urban classes. Thus, the Ottoman capital city, as host to Fuat Bey's high-profile connections, was the pinnacle of such hierarchy. But so it was for ordinary muhajirs, even those who were expelled from Circassia and those who had few connections on the Ottoman side. In popular memory and culture, many muhajirs envisioned their hijra to the Ottoman state as "going to Istanbul."<sup>96</sup> North Caucasian refugees' more distant places of settlement, such as Uzunyayla or Transjordan, which were away from major urban centers and associated with nomadism, occupied a less privileged position in this hierarchy. Their desirability could be increased by access to railway and telegraph, abundant agricultural land, and friendly bureaucracy. Fuat Bey assigned other areas, such as "an uncivilized place like Kurdistan," an even lower status, reflective of prevailing views of the elite Ottoman society at the time.<sup>97</sup>

The Caucasus occupied a special place in the family's geographic hierarchy as the homeland of its ancestors. Later in life, Fuat Bey developed a keen interest in tracing his family's genealogy. He urged his brother and older relatives to help him to reconstruct their

---

<sup>96</sup> One of the most popular songs (*ghybzä/zbyb3ä*, or lament) in the Turkish-based Circassian diaspora is called *Istambylakw'ä/Истамбылакiүэ*, or "Exodus to Istanbul"; see *Adygskie pesni vremion Kavkazskoi voiny*, eds. Adam M. Gutov et al., 606-10. On the Russian side of the border, Kabardins and others also preserved songs about muhajirs' traumatic "relocation to Istanbul"; see *Ibid.*, 598-600.

<sup>97</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 51, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (10 July 1900). See Makdisi, "Ottoman Orientalism"; Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery."

genealogical list (*silsilename*) and family tree (*şecerename*).<sup>98</sup> “Our family was known and esteemed in Circassia (*Çerkezistan*) and distinguished in prestige,” he wrote.<sup>99</sup> As no written documents survived to attest for the family’s history, he sought to gather evidence himself. Fuat Bey even traveled to Russian Kabarda, which his family had left for western Circassia almost a century prior, to meet his long-lost relatives and to learn about his ancestors. He excitedly related to Cevat what he had found out: that their family was one of three branches of a larger kin and that one of their forefathers owned a “famous grey horse,” still fondly remembered in Kabarda.<sup>100</sup> A century later, after the fall of communism, the Jordanian-based Khutats would use Fuat Bey’s family tree to trace their extended family in Russia.<sup>101</sup>

A recurring theme in Fuat Bey’s letter was education. The Khutatzades sought to secure their family’s future and increase their social capital by providing the best possible education to the family’s offspring. As Cevat Bey moved from Adana to Aziziye to Amman, his brother relentlessly reminded him that his primary duty was to educate his own children, nieces, and nephews so that they could gain admission to good schools and, therefore, entrance into the Ottoman establishment. Fuat Bey wrote, “My first wish is that the Khutat family, with God’s help, is successful the way it was in the previous century and enjoys a good living the way it used to.”<sup>102</sup> Like many immigrants elsewhere, he held good education to be paramount for younger generations of his family to advance in life.

---

<sup>98</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 50, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (27 April 1900).

<sup>99</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 52, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (16 November 1900).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with S. Khutat (Davis, CA – Amman, 10 January 2017).

<sup>102</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 51, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (10 July 1900).

In Aziziye, Fuat Bey urged his brother to rent a house with a large salon to be used as a school for the Khutatzade children. He instructed Cevat Bey to purchase desks and a blackboard and devised an elaborate curriculum for homeschooling the children. Each class would take two hours, divided between a lecture and pupils' recitations. The children would study five subjects: Ottoman Turkish grammar, Ottoman history, arithmetic, geography, and calligraphy. Fuat Bey emphasized that, in geography lessons, the "whole world, that is the five continents, should be discussed equally."<sup>103</sup>

Fuat Bey stressed that young Ghazi, a future leader of the family, must master horsemanship and swordsmanship, as expected from a Circassian young man, in addition to writing ability in Ottoman Turkish. He lamented the fact that Cevat Bey abandoned Ghazi's schooling in "scientific education" (mathematics, geography, and history) and that the nine-year-old boy had only learned to recite the Qur'an.<sup>104</sup> He also advocated for girls' primary education and training in "one or two of the fine arts."<sup>105</sup> While serving in Kurdistan, Fuat Bey sent children books as gifts and instructed his brother to deliver him, monthly, the Khutatzade children's writing samples so that he could assess their penmanship and progress in Ottoman Turkish.<sup>106</sup> Fuat Bey's advice on language training for his Circassian nephews and nieces in Transjordan was reflective of his times (and his Ottomanness) but, perhaps, not perceptive in retrospect. In 1896, he wrote, "Don't assign importance to the mistaken Arabic [sic] there. Make every effort to give [children] education in Turkish."<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>103</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 11, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (16 August 1893).

<sup>104</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 46, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (17 June 1899).

<sup>105</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 51, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (10 July 1900).

<sup>106</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 19, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (24 May 1894).

<sup>107</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896).

Fuat Bey hoped that the Khutatzade boys would gain admission to a school in a provincial capital, in either Sivas or Damascus.<sup>108</sup> In the case of Damascus, he referred to the newly opened Maktab ‘Anbar, the city’s most prestigious school. Its students, mostly from Ottoman Levantine Muslim elites, studied liberal arts and sciences, in addition to French, English, Persian, Arabic, and Ottoman Turkish.<sup>109</sup> They would often continue their education in Istanbul’s Imperial Civil Service School (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*), the Syrian Protestant College (now the American University in Beirut), or medical institutions, including one in Damascus.<sup>110</sup>

The Khutatzades’ emphasis on receiving good education, particularly in secular subjects, was, by and large, representative of the Ottoman urban elites’ approach. Yet Fuat Bey’s letters betray the situation in which his family – albeit in a much better position than most muhajirs – found themselves. They homeschooled children primarily because they could not afford to send them to private schools in big cities, and the kind of training that Cevat Bey could provide – note the absence of French – lagged behind what established Ottoman Muslim and Christian elites came to expect of an elite education.<sup>111</sup>

It was no coincidence that, by the time of the early Turkish republic and the Transjordan and Syria mandates, North Caucasian muhajirs were associated with the military and security apparatus, rather than civil administration, arts, or commerce. In the

---

<sup>108</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 16, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (25 February 1894); Letter no. 35, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 February 1896).

<sup>109</sup> See Randi Deguilhem, “State Civil Education in Late Ottoman Damascus: A Unifying or a Separating Force?” in *Syrian Land*, eds. Philipp and Schaebler, 221-50.

<sup>110</sup> See Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005), 39-40. See also Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

<sup>111</sup> See Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99-112.

late Ottoman period, military education, subsidized by the state, was the primary vehicle of social mobility for many muhajirs. Most of them struggled financially and had few connections in the urban worlds of those who attended Christian missionary schools or state medical establishments. By the 1870s, however, a significant number of North Caucasian muhajirs were employed in the Ottoman military; the Ottomans valued their experience of either having fought the Russians or having served in the Russian army (see Chapter 4). Those officers, rising through the ranks, encouraged other muhajirs to pursue military service and may have served as valuable connections for admissions to military schools and career assignments. Fuat Bey was one such example. In military service himself, he benefited from his connections to higher-ranked Circassian officers in the army, brokered a marriage between his sister and another Circassian officer, and established a military legacy within his immediate family; his grandnephew, Ghazi's son, pursued military service and was in charge of the finances of the Jordanian Armed Forces in the 1960s-80s.<sup>112</sup>

Muhajirs' private social networks facilitated refugees' resettlement and integration into their new communities. These networks also laid the basis for another form of social affiliation for North Caucasian communities, that of muhajir village networks in the Ottoman state.

---

<sup>112</sup> Natho, *Circassian History*, 492, 502-03.

## *Village Networks*

Between 1860 and 1914, North Caucasian muhajirs established hundreds of villages throughout the Ottoman Empire. Most villages were inhabited exclusively by one or several ethnic groups from the North Caucasus. How did heterogeneous groups of muhajirs view the space of the Ottoman Empire? Was it a monochrome empire, with static borders, as we see it on two-dimensional maps? Probably not. What muhajirs could have known, through their travel, correspondence, and hearsay, was a multitude of North Caucasian islets lying across the vast territory from the Danubian delta to the Syrian desert. We know little about connections between muhajir villages and their populations across the empire, but those ties were paramount in keeping those villages “Kabardin,” “Chechen,” and “Ossetian” and in evolving what those designations meant to the new Ottoman subjects and their neighbors.

Muhajir communities commonly sought to establish their settlements close to each other in order to preserve familial and kinship ties, a common pattern in global migration.<sup>113</sup> The aspirations for such ethnic in-gathering were often thwarted by the authorities. Since the beginning of mass migration in the early 1860s, the government could rarely locate enough land in one place to satisfy the needs of a large incoming group of

---

<sup>113</sup> Consider, for example, compact settlement of smaller ethnic communities in the United States, whether rural (Swedish, Finnish, Dutch) or urban (Italian, Jewish, Cuban, Armenian); see, for example, Kate A. Berry and Martha L. Henderson, eds., *Geographical Identities of Ethnic America: Race, Space, and Place* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2002).



refugees.<sup>114</sup> In later years, the Ottoman Refugee Commission made a concerted effort not to settle many muhajirs together to break up the power of their notables.<sup>115</sup>

Many muhajirs, particularly those with some control over the timing and direction of their migration, attempted to recreate their homelands in the Ottoman state.<sup>116</sup> Thus, in 1865-66, a large emigrating group of Chechens looked for a suitable settlement area in eastern Anatolia to build “another Chechnya [Tchetchenaia (sic)]” or, at least, such was the impression of a reporting British consul.<sup>117</sup> Chechen muhajirs rioted and besieged Muş when the authorities attempted to split them up and resettle them in dispersed locations (see Chapter 6). In Bursa Province, in western Anatolia, Daghestani muhajirs established the village of Reşadiye, known as “little Daghestan” (*Küçük Dağistan*), which became a prominent Sufi center and attracted Daghestani pilgrims from Russia (see Chapter 7).<sup>118</sup>

Sivas Province hosted one of the largest and most ethnically diverse North Caucasian muhajirs populations in the empire. In the south of the province, over seventy villages of North Caucasian muhajirs – western Circassians, Kabardins, Abazins, Chechens, Ossetians, and Karachays – could be found in Uzunayla, which is still known by its inhabitants as the “little Caucasus” (see Chapter 3).<sup>119</sup> Large North Caucasian

---

<sup>114</sup> See Terzibaşoğlu, “Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics,” 167.

<sup>115</sup> Yücel Terzibaşoğlu notes that the policy change came in 1869-70. The Refugee Commission was to confiscate firearms of incoming muhajirs, redistribute muhajirs into existing villages, and encourage interethnic marriages; “Landlords, Nomads and Refugees,” 132.

<sup>116</sup> The scope of these diasporic projects depended, in large measure, on the size of an ethnic muhajir community, both in absolute numbers and relative to the population left in the Caucasus. Georgy Chochiev, in his study of Ossetian villages in Anatolia, calls them “islets” in a nearly complete separation from their “cultural metropolis,” which was “Ossetia or, more broadly, the Caucasus”; “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 111-12.

<sup>117</sup> TNA FO 195/799, Finn to Lyons, f. 283r (Erzurum, 19 March 1866).

<sup>118</sup> See Zaira B. Ibragimova, “Muhammad-Hajji and Sharapuddin of Kikuni,” in *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan*, ed. Moshe Gammer (Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2009), 71-77. The Daghestani village of Deir Ful, northeast of Homs, Syria, is also cited as *Küçük Dağistan*; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 72.

<sup>119</sup> See Miyazawa, “Reconstruction of the Landscape of Homeland”; Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 15.

communities also lived in the northern subprovinces of Amasya and Tokat. Early on, North Caucasian muhajirs in Sivas Province formed an inter-village network of local governance that was specific to their communities. In 1868, the Sivas governor summoned over 300 North Caucasian notables to discuss the rising number of muhajir-perpetrated thefts and methods of their prevention.<sup>120</sup> In response, muhajir leaders, under the leadership of Musa Paşa [Kundukhov], drafted a set of rules that would govern their communities. This legal code laid out punishments for committed crimes and urged inter-village cooperation in fighting crime. The set of rules, endorsed by 127 muhajir leaders, was to be distributed “to all kaymakams [district governors], müdürs [subdistrict governors], imams, and muhtars [village headmen]” in the province.<sup>121</sup> The document included the following obligations:

Article 3. After a stolen animal is found and returned to its owner, the thief must pay a fine: for stealing a horse, 400 *kuruş* to its owner and 200 *kuruş* to the treasury; for stealing an ox, respectively 200 *kuruş* and 100 *kuruş*; for stealing a cow, respectively 100 *kuruş* and 100 *kuruş*. For stealing cheaper animals, like sheep and goats, or goods, the thief must pay the cost of the stolen property to its owner and about 50 *kuruş* to the treasury.

Article 6. Should the government discover that a muhtar or his deputy knew and did not disclose that someone in their village engaged in theft or other illegal activities, the muhtar would be fined 200 *kuruş* and his deputy 100 *kuruş*. If the muhtar or his deputy receive information that leads to locating stolen cattle, the informant will receive a quarter of the thief’s fine as a reward.

Article 11. To prevent further crimes in their areas, muhajir villages will contribute manpower to boost local law enforcement. In Amasya Subprovince, 15 muhajir horsemen will join the gendarmerie’s one *çavuş* [sergeant] and five soldiers. In the Tokat and Niksar districts, which have become a hotbed of turmoil and robbery, 20 muhajir horsemen will join the gendarmerie’s one *çavuş* and five soldiers. In Uzunyayla, 15 muhajir horsemen will join the gendarmerie’s one *çavuş* and five soldiers. These muhajir horsemen should be on active military duty, and their salaries would come out of the aforementioned fines from muhajir villages. If those fines prove insufficient, every muhajir household would annually pay 20 *kuruş* for the upkeep of muhajir horsemen.<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>120</sup> BOA İ.MMS 36/1481 (12 *cemaziyelevvel* 1285, 31 August 1868); see Chochiev, “General Musa Kundukhov,” 79-82.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-79.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-79.

This curious immigrant pledge in self-policing, partially demanded from them by the state, demonstrates that both muhajirs and provincial powerholders thought of North Caucasian villages as a separate domain within their province – distinct enough to be singled out for tailor-made obligations and punishments.<sup>123</sup>

Ottoman sources – court records, provincial correspondence, and muhajirs’ petitions – attest to the strength of links between North Caucasian villages, particularly within the same district or subprovince but also at greater distances. Muhajirs visited their extended families;<sup>124</sup> traveled around in search of a prospective spouse;<sup>125</sup> and traded between their villages.<sup>126</sup> North Caucasian village communities, allegedly in intra-ethnic cooperation, established routes of horse and cattle trade between the Russian Caucasus, and Ottoman Kars, Sivas, and Damascus.<sup>127</sup> Some village networks were more extensive and tight-knit than others, depending on the geography of resettlement. Muhajirs’ village networks, especially at an early stage, may have been more self-contained and exclusive

---

<sup>123</sup> Another known association, however loosely organized, of 24 North Caucasian villages, including Chechen, Ossetian, Daghestani, and Circassian villages, was established in the Muş, Bitlis, and Van provinces. Much of its population were North Caucasian muhajirs from Kars District, who fled further into the Ottoman territory after Russia’s annexation of Kars in 1878. See Harry F.B. Lynch, *Armenia: Travels and Studies* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), vol. 2, 340-41; Chochiev and Koç, “Migrants from the North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia,” 101.

<sup>124</sup> See NBKM 170/323 (6 *teşrin-i evvel* 1289, 18 October 1873). This and other examples are from Dobruja, Danube Province.

<sup>125</sup> See, for example, NBKM 119/1003 (24 *mart* 1290, 5 April 1874), 170/317 (26 *mayıs* 1289, 7 June 1873). The preferred intra-ethnic endogamy weakened the role that one’s origin (slave, freeborn, or notable) played in some muhajir communities (but not all – see Chapter 3 on slavery in Uzunyayla). According to Chochiev, in Ossetian communities, former restrictions on intra-class marriage “were gradually lifted in order to expand the range of potential conjugal partners”; “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 113.

<sup>126</sup> See, for example, NBKM Tulça 52/1 (h. 1285, 1869-70).

<sup>127</sup> Chochiev, “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 109.

than village networks of other Ottoman communities due to language barriers, compact settlement, and limited opportunities for integration.

Foreign consular officials also occasionally noticed muhajirs' village networks, albeit in the non-flattering context of discussing banditry in the Balkans prior to the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. The British vice-consuls in Edirne and Burgas mentioned the "Circassian cattle-stealing organization" operating in their subprovinces.<sup>128</sup> Reportedly, some muhajirs trafficked stolen horses and farm animals to safe houses in other muhajirs' villages to avoid apprehension and to resell the loot at a later date. The Ottoman authorities in the neighboring Danube Province reported the same phenomenon and sent out warnings to muhajirs' village councils not to harbor fugitives or criminals from other villages.<sup>129</sup>

Muhajir villages were connected not only through familial connections, village councils, and economic exchange. Many communities from the North Caucasus shared a set of social and legal practices to which they adhered within their ethnic groups. One manifestation of that was a complex system of customary law, or 'adat, that traditionally governed relations throughout the North Caucasus. The 'adat was rooted in social and economic practices of different groups; in Daghestan, for example, customary legal agreements bound together groups of villages.<sup>130</sup> Another cultural legacy, shared widely among North Caucasian communities, with regional variations, were unwritten moral

---

<sup>128</sup> TNA FO 195/1001, Brophy to Elliot, f. 403 (Burgas, 28 January 1871). The Edirne consul referred to them as "secret societies affiliated to each other and managed by chiefs under certain rules and maxims of the trade"; FO 195/934, Blunt to Elliot, #18 (Edirne, 25 April 1870).

<sup>129</sup> NBKM OAK Collection 91/92 (8 *mart* 1291, 20 March 1875); Babadağ 9/13 (*cemaziyelahir* 1285, September/October 1868); 22/287 (9 *şevval* 1288, 22 December 1871); Silistre 30/6 (h. 1293, 1876-77).

<sup>130</sup> On Daghestani 'adat law, see Michael Kemper, "Communal Agreements (Ittifaqat) and 'Adat-Books from Daghestani Villages and Confederacies (18th-19th Centuries)," *Der Islam* 81 (2004): 115-51. On Circassian 'adat law, see Leontovich, *Adaty Kavkazskikh gortsev*; Talia M. Katanchiev, *Kabardinskoe obychnoe pravo: ego osobennosti* (Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2003).

codes. Known as Adyghe Khabze by Circassians, Tau Adet among Karachays and Balkars, Nokhchalla among Chechens, and Iron Aghdau among Ossetians, these codes incorporated mythologies and prehistories of their communities.<sup>131</sup> They contained prescriptions about gender relations, class hierarchies, norms of hospitality, wedding etiquette, blood revenge, and other subjects. Customary law and communal moral codes coalesced in multiple ways and also intersected (and occasionally contended) with local interpretations of the shari‘a.<sup>132</sup>

Muhajir communities adhered to many North Caucasian cultural practices, which reinforced their identities in exile. For example, a common practice was setting up a guest house (Circ. *xäk’äs/xьэкиэу*) in every village or every household that could afford it. Travelers passing through villages could stay and rest in guest houses, availing themselves of collectively shared norms of hospitality. When the North Caucasians were transplanted to, and dispersed across, the Ottoman Empire, their guest houses enabled greater mobility and communication between muhajir villages.<sup>133</sup>

North Caucasian villages also constituted a job market for educated muhajirs. Most muhajir villages had a place of worship, a *mescit* or a larger *cami* in the center of the village.<sup>134</sup> Charitable endowments (*vakıf*), set up by wealthy members of the community,

---

<sup>131</sup> See Amjad Jaimoukha, *The Chechens: A Handbook* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 129-45; idem., *The Circassians: A Handbook*, 172-89; Galina M. Yemelianova, *Radical Islam in the Former Soviet Union* (London: Routledge, 2011), 114-15; Chochiev, “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 112.

<sup>132</sup> See Michael Kemper, “Adat Against Shari‘a.”

<sup>133</sup> See John A. Longworth, *A Year Among the Circassians* (London: H. Colburn, 1840), 42-44; Madina M. Pashtova, “Cherkesskii gostinyi dom: opyt issledovaniia universal’nykh i lokal’nykh kul’turno-istoricheskikh form,” *Vestnik KBIGI 4* (2014): 26-41. Several Circassian and Chechen interviewees in Jordan emphasized the importance of guest houses upon muhajirs’ resettlement (11, 14, 16, 17 September 2014).

<sup>134</sup> Muhajirs often petitioned local authorities to compensate or offset some of the expenses they incurred in building a mosque. On mosque construction, see, for example, BOA A.MKT.MHM 529/55 (Na‘ur, Damascus Province, 23 *cemaziyelahir* 1324, 14 August 1906); İ.DH 492/33358 (Danube Province, 11 *muharrem* 1279, 9 July 1862).

supported the construction of mosques and the payment of salaries for imams.<sup>135</sup> The government often appointed imams for muhajir villages from within the same ethnic group who would speak the language of the immigrant community they would serve.<sup>136</sup> The North Caucasian ‘ulama were often educated in madrasas of Daghestan, Crimea, and Kazan, or in the Ottoman Empire. Some received training in Cairo’s al-Azhar, the Muslim world’s premier center of learning.<sup>137</sup> The North Caucasian ‘ulama commonly sought employment in muhajir villages. For example, in 1876, the authorities of Maçin District, on the Danube River, received a petition from a young Circassian, ‘Ali Efendi, who became ill and required emergency funding to purchase medicine. It transpired that ‘Ali was one of locally settled muhajirs. He was born in Russia and moved to Ottoman Dobruja with his family. He was orphaned early and, with no family left, decided to travel to Egypt, with a group of other muhajirs, to study in a Cairene madrasa. Soon thereafter, in pursuit of gainful employment, he returned to Dobruja, where he grew up.<sup>138</sup> People like ‘Ali connected muhajir settlements to one another and disseminated their knowledge about the rest of their new empire.

In addition to mosques and imams, muhajirs sent petitions to district officials and the Ottoman Refugee Commission requesting the establishment of schools and the

---

<sup>135</sup> See Yüksel, “Kafkas Göçmen Vakıfları.”

<sup>136</sup> For appointments of village imams, see, for example, BOA MVL 711/73 (20 *rebiülevvel* 1282, 13 August 1865), A.MKT.MHM 239/22 (22 *muharrem* 1279, 20 July 1862), both in Hüdavendigâr Province. The practice may have had regional variations. David C. Cuthell confirms that, at the early stage of resettlement, the Ottomans often confirmed imams and *hocas* from among muhajirs; “The Circassian Sürgün,” *Ab Imperio* 2 (2003): 154-55. Georgy Chochiev, however, finds that, in Ossetian villages, imams were “usually not from among the settlers themselves,” an Ottoman policy to ensure proper “Islamization” of muhajirs; “The Case of Anatolian Ossetians,” 112.

<sup>137</sup> Alexandre Toumarkine, “Oulémas originaires du Lazistan, d’Adjarie, de Circassie et du Daguestan pendant les dernières décennies de l’Empire Ottoman,” in *Caucasia Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, 1555-1914*, eds. Raoul Motika and Michael Ursinus (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2000), 62.

<sup>138</sup> NBKM 169/1547 (2 *teşrin-i evvel* 1292, 14 October 1876).

appointment of teachers.<sup>139</sup> In 1901, another young muhajir, Cemaleddin Efendi, from a Daghestani family in Russia's Baku Province, left for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>140</sup> He pursued education enrolling in courses in both a madrasa and a civil school in Bursa, in western Anatolia. Cemaleddin wrote to his uncle, back in Russia, that his class of 25 students in a madrasa consisted almost entirely of muhajirs from the Caucasus and Crimea. Some of these students would continue advanced religious training in Istanbul to become *kadis*, and others would search for employment as village imams and teachers. Such mobility by the community's educated members reinforced social ties and facilitated an exchange of information between dispersed muhajir settlements. The religious and educational infrastructure was part of broader provincial and imperial networks, aiding muhajirs' integration into their host communities, while also creating new economic opportunities within, and space for interaction across, muhajirs' villages.

The networks of villages, dispersed from Vidin to Baghdad, provided muhajirs with "signposts" by which to navigate their new Ottoman surroundings. Through the circulation of people, goods, and information, they enabled North Caucasian muhajir communities to partially reconstruct the social and economic realities of their lives back in the Caucasus. Upon resettlement, village networks were primary conduits of North Caucasians' economic and cultural practices that sustained their communal characteristics across a vast territory. For most muhajirs, daily interactions proceeded within networks between

---

<sup>139</sup> See, for example, BOA İ.MVL 527/23655 (Danube Province, 13 *şevval* 1281, 11 March 1865). Petitions and donations for a school and a mosque often came together; see BOA A.MKT.MHM 202/24 (Sivas Province, 27 *cemaziyevvel* 1277, 11 December 1860); İ.DH 1043/82014 (İzmit Province, 28 *zilkade* 1304, 18 August 1887); NBKM 169/3010 (14 *ağustos* 1289, 26 August 1873); 169/3014 (27 *ağustos* 1289, 8 September 1873), both in Danube Province.

<sup>140</sup> National Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Tarix Arxivi, Baku) f. 45, op. 1, d. 35, ll. 17-24 (1901-02).

Amman and the Balqa' villages, or Aziziye and the Uzunyayla villages, and only then did their "North Caucasian" connections expand to Istanbul or the North Caucasus.

*North Caucasian Associations in the Ottoman Empire*

In the final decades of Ottoman rule, many Ottoman communities had been rethinking their collective identities, based on new political meanings that their distinct languages and faiths held and on their attachments to certain territories. The North Caucasian muhajirs were part of that process. For these heterogeneous Muslim communities, their displacement from the Russian-held Caucasus and physical dispersion throughout the Ottoman domains ensured that they could no longer imagine their identities as they did before their hijra. The vast geography of their resettlement prompted muhajir communities to forge broader and more inclusive self-designations

This section examines the formation and politics of the North Caucasian formal associations, which, unlike village networks, was largely an elite top-down undertaking. I hold that the elements of diasporic communities, particularly the notions of an idealized homeland and a shared culture that were to be protected, as theorized by Safran, Cohen, and others, were present in North Caucasian communities ever since they moved to the Ottoman Empire. Yet for a while, the North Caucasian communities retained and transmitted these diasporic elements in a non-centralized manner, through familial and village networks. By the late nineteenth century and especially after the 1908 Revolution, North Caucasian elites and their associations, based in urban centers and taking advantage of print media, constructed narratives that defined and reaffirmed the North Caucasian



communal identity, as part of the broader Ottoman nation and global umma [Muslim community].<sup>141</sup> Through an analysis of several identity-related concepts with which these associations operated, I investigate how the North Caucasian diaspora(s) was/were being made into a coherent ethno-political unit.

Many scholars have conceptualized what a diaspora is and is not, and what analytical value this term holds.<sup>142</sup> William Safran famously put forward six criteria of a diaspora: dispersal from the original center to at least two regions, retention of collective memory of the homeland, some alienation from host societies, a desire to return to one's homeland, commitment to the homeland, and ethno-communal consciousness.<sup>143</sup> The North Caucasian communities in the Ottoman Empire, although with some variations in attitudes among different ethnic groups, by and large exhibited elements of all six of Safran's criteria. As Zeynel Abidin Besleney astutely points out, what shaped the experiences of the North Caucasian diaspora, and particularly of western Circassians, the diaspora's numerically dominant constituent group, was the presence of a formative traumatic event – the 1863-64 ethnic cleansing – indeed, a primary criterion in Robin Cohen's conceptualization of what binds a diaspora together.<sup>144</sup>

The formal North Caucasian associations in the Ottoman Empire emerged several decades after the peak of refugee migration and immigration in the 1860s. By then, a new

---

<sup>141</sup> On the centrality of a printing press to the process of "imagining" communities, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). In the case of North Caucasians (and Kurds, and other Muslim Ottoman groups), newspapers helped "imagine" distinct cultural communities but not nations.

<sup>142</sup> For the rich literature on diaspora, see William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," *Diaspora* 1, no. 1 (1991): 83-99; James Clifford, "Diasporas," *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 302-38; Rogers Brubaker, "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1-19; Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>143</sup> Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies," 83-84.

<sup>144</sup> Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 13-14; Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 6.

generation of muhajirs grew up, many of them born as Ottoman subjects and with little familiarity with their ancestral lands, yet with a sense of belonging to the North Caucasian community. The formal associations, utilizing the power of print media, shaped muhajirs' perceptions of their political and cultural identities, and their place in the Ottoman state.

The first formal North Caucasian organization, the Society for Circassian Unity (Ott. Tur. *Cemiyet-i İttihadiye Çerakise*), was founded in Cairo in 1899.<sup>145</sup> Turn-of-the-century Egypt, under British occupation, served as a haven, alongside Paris and Geneva, for those Ottoman intellectuals and political activists who found themselves as dissidents in the Hamidian era.<sup>146</sup> Some members of the Ottoman-Caucasian intelligentsia, reportedly sympathetic to the Young Turks' ideas, gathered in Cairo to publish the first newspaper for the North Caucasian community, *İttihad Gazetesi* (1899).<sup>147</sup> The editorial team heavily criticized the Ottoman government for its inadequate handling of the refugee crisis in the 1860s and the subsequent resettlement of refugees.<sup>148</sup> The newspaper accused Ottoman officialdom of turning a blind eye to the enslavement of Circassian women and children,

---

<sup>145</sup> See Georgy Chochiev, "Caucasian Newspaper in the Late 19th-Century Cairo: 'İttihad Gazetesi'," *Folklor/Edebiyat Dergisi*, CIU 20, no. 2 (2014): 225-37. The Ottoman government did not resettle muhajirs in Egypt, not least because, by the 1860s, Istanbul had no control over Egypt's internal affairs. Small North Caucasian communities, resident in nineteenth-century Egypt, largely descended from the Circassian-Mamluk elites.

<sup>146</sup> See İlham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2010), 35-59.

<sup>147</sup> Chochiev, "İttihad Gazetesi," 228. Ottoman intellectuals of North Caucasian origin, including muhajirs, published newspapers in the earlier Hamidian period. Ahmet Mithat Efendi, an Istanbul-born Ottoman-Circassian writer, published *Tercüman-i Hakikat* (1878-1921), and Mizancı Murat, a Daghestan-born muhajir, published *Mizan* (1886-1909). These newspapers, however, were meant for general Ottoman readership.

<sup>148</sup> The Ottoman authorities issued an order to track and disrupt attempts to smuggle the newspaper into the Ottoman domains; see Chochiev, "İttihad Gazetesi," 234. On Ottoman censorship, see İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913," *The Turkish Studies Association Journal* 27, no. 1-2 (2003): 15-49.

the allotment of barren lands to muhajirs, and the economic exploitation of immigrant labor.<sup>149</sup>

The Cairo-based *İttihad Gazetesi*, in its only issue, published an editorial criticizing the continuing slave trade in Circassians and the failure to protect muhajirs by the Ottomans:

The evil fortune has brought many miserable muhajirs, who lamented their fate in swamplands of Anatolia, to the hands of coldhearted slave-traders who dispatched them from marshy swamps to hellishly hot deserts. They were sold, as if they were prisoners of war, to faraway lands such as Bornu, Wadai,<sup>150</sup> Cape of Good Hope, Zanzibar, Java, Sumatra, etc. ...

These ruthless [Ottoman] officials, through cunning and deception, misled desperate muhajirs and destroyed many notable families. They trafficked captured children not only here [to Egypt] but also to such distant countries as India, China, America, and Britain.<sup>151</sup>

The *İttihad Gazetesi* editors, from their vantage point in Cairo, formerly a major slave trade hub, must have been well-attuned to the trafficking of North Caucasian muhajirs.<sup>152</sup> The editorial speaks of a much broader geography of Circassian slavery than is conventionally assumed.<sup>153</sup> The editors constructed a narrative of how rank-and-file muhajirs felt about their migration and resettlement. In their interpretation, muhajirs moved to the foreign land (*gurbet*) for religious purposes but did not receive a warm welcome and were bitterly disappointed in their resettlement.<sup>154</sup> Nevertheless, the newspaper urged Circassians'

---

<sup>149</sup> Chochiev, "İttihad Gazetesi," 230-31.

<sup>150</sup> Bornu and Wadai were central African states that were independent in 1899 but would soon be occupied by the British and the French respectively and would later become parts of Nigeria and Chad. Both states held important entrepôts for slave trade; see Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire*, 57.

<sup>151</sup> "Kalimatayn," *İttihad Gazetesi* 1 (1899): 2-4; trans. by Georgy Chochiev, "Obshchestvo edinieniia cherkesov i ego pechatnyi organ gazeta 'İttihad' (Kair, 1899 g.)," unpublished appendix: [16-26].

<sup>152</sup> On multiple slave trade connections between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, see Troutt Powell, *Tell This in My Memory*.

<sup>153</sup> On post-1864 Circassian slavery, see Toledano, *Slavery and Abolition*, 81-111; Karamürsel, "In the Age of Freedom, in the Name of Justice," 64-107.

<sup>154</sup> Chochiev, "İttihad Gazetesi," 231.

loyalty to their “common Ottoman homeland” and advocated for a “strong alliance” between “the noble Ottomans” and “their brothers, the Circassians.”<sup>155</sup> Likewise, the 1899 statute of the Society for Circassian Unity committed to working towards benefiting the Ottoman and Muslim “nation” (*millet*) and protecting the “ethnicity” (*kavmiyet*)<sup>156</sup> of the Circassians (Article 2).<sup>157</sup> This first diasporic organization faced a logistical disadvantage of operating at a distance from its target Ottoman-based readership, and, in the Hamidian era, its emphasis on the North Caucasians’ ethnic difference from other Ottoman Muslims did not sit well with many muhajir elites; the organization likely slowly withered away.<sup>158</sup>

The 1908 Revolution enabled the establishment of many ethnic-based associations and committees that had not only played a crucial role in building up the Ottoman “civil society,” but also transformed how many Ottoman “minority” elites thought of their place within the empire. Shortly after the revolution, a group of North Caucasian notables and activists, primarily Circassians but also Abkhazians, Ossetians, Daghestanis, and others, founded the Circassian Union and Support Association (*Çerkes İttihad ve Teaviün Cemiyeti*, 1908-23; hereafter, the Association).<sup>159</sup> The largest and most influential North Caucasian organization in the late Ottoman era, it disseminated its views through the newspaper *Ğuaze* [Circassian: Guide] (1911-17). The Association, and its members, spurred satellite

---

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 232, 234. The Society for Circassian Unity used the concepts popularized by the Young Ottomans, who held the Ottoman nation to be a “union of the peoples” (*ittihad-ı anasır*); Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 65.

<sup>156</sup> In the late Ottoman context, *kavmiyet* referred to ethnic- or tribal-based forms of communal association (sometimes translated as “nationalism”). For many Ottomanist figures, it was a pejorative term, a form of factional belonging, as opposed to one’s devotion to *milliyet*; see Derya Bayır, *Minorities and Nationalism in Turkish Law* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 51-53; Karpat, *Politicization of Islam*, 177, 335.

<sup>157</sup> Chochiev, “İttihad Gazetesi,” 233.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., 234-35.

<sup>159</sup> Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 27-44; Vasfi Güsar, “Çerkes İttihad ve Teaviün Cemiyeti,” *Kafkasya* 47 (1975): 28-37.

groups, such as the Istanbul Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge Among Caucasians (*Istanbul'da Kafkasyalılar Arasında Neşr-i Maarif Cemiyeti*, 1914) and the Circassian Women's Support Association (*Çerkes Kadınları Teaviün Cemiyeti*, 1918-23).<sup>160</sup>

These organizations aimed to provide financial support to North Caucasian cultural initiatives in the capital and in the provinces, and to exert pressure, through formal and informal channels, for the Ottoman government to deliver on social issues most relevant to muhajirs, such as banning slave trade.<sup>161</sup> The Istanbul elites running these societies primarily consisted of scions of aristocratic houses from the Caucasus, who, thanks to their wealth and connections, received excellent education and found positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy and military. However, the societies also included the old Ottoman-Circassian elites, present in the empire long before the mass immigration in the 1860s, and lower-status muhajirs who, by the 1900s, rose through the ranks in the Ottoman service.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>160</sup> On North Caucasian diasporic organizations, see Georgy Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii v Turtsii (1908-1923 gg.)* (Vladikavkaz: SOIGSI, 2009); Arslan, "Circassian Organizations"; Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "Çerkes Kadınları Teaviün Cemiyeti," *Toplumsal Tarih* 88 (2001): 39-43. On constitutions and proclamations of different associations, see Sefer E. Berzeg, ed., *Gurbeteki Kafkasya'dan Belgeler* (Ankara, 1985), 10-35; Berezgov, "Cherkesskaia diaspora," 25-36; Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 143-85.

<sup>161</sup> See Ceyda Karamürsel, "The Uncertainties of Freedom: The Second Constitutional Era and the End of Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Women's History* 28, no. 3 (2016): 138-61; Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 63-87.

<sup>162</sup> Many members of the Association were active in politics both before and after the 1908 Revolution: Deli Fuat Paşa (1835-1931), chairman of the Association, was appointed to the Ottoman Senate in 1908; Hüseyin Tosun Bey (1875-1930), Hüseyin Kadri Bey (1870-1934), İsmail Canbulat Bey (1880-1926), and Tahir Hayrettin Bey (1875-1937) were elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1908-14; Mehmet Şemsettin Paşa (1855-1917) served as Minister for Vakıf in 1908-09 and, at various times, held positions of ambassador in Bucharest and Tehran and as Sultan's regent to Tripoli and Benghazi; Mehmet Reşit Bey (1873-1919), one of the four founders of the Committee of Union and Progress in 1889, was Governor of Diyarbakir in 1915 and among chief perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide; Bekir Sami Bey (1867-1933), Musa Kundukhov's son, held governorships of Van, Trabzon, Bursa, Beirut, and Aleppo and later became Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mustafa Kemal Paşa's first cabinet of ministers in 1920-21. A number of Circassian-descent ministers and generals, if not formal members of the Association, had ties to it: Salih Hulusi Paşa (1864-1939) was Minister of War in 1909, of Navy in 1910-11, and of Public Works in 1912 and served as the last Grand Vizier of the Second Constitutional Era in 1920; Hüseyin Nazım Paşa (1848-1913) was Minister of War in 1912-13 and was assassinated in the 1913 CUP coup. See Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 46-47. For biographies of some Association members, see Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 29-33, ff. 45-49, 52-64; Sefer E. Berzeg, *Kafkas Diasporası'nda*

In its first printed proclamation, the Association laid out its vision for socio-political identities of North Caucasian muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>163</sup> It promoted three overlapping affiliations: the North Caucasian community, Ottoman society, and global umma. The Association issued the proclamation in 1908 – perhaps, the single most remarkable year in late Ottoman history, when multiple communities across the empire publicly praised freedom, constitutionalism, and ethno-religious brotherhood.<sup>164</sup> The Association addressed all North Caucasians as “fellow countrymen” (*yurttaşlar*) and referred to the Caucasus as their “true country” (*gerçek yurdumuz*).<sup>165</sup> However, the Istanbul-based Association, similar to the earlier Cairene organization, advocated the idea that the Ottoman state was the North Caucasians’ new homeland, where muhajirs could freely profess their faith, preserve their cultural identities, and enjoy civic freedoms.<sup>166</sup> The Association constructed its own explicitly political “1908 narrative” of muhajirs’ migration, which read very differently from the one offered by the Egyptian organization:

May God Almighty preserve our sublime state as the Islamic caliphate and the Ottoman sultanate. Had a strong Muslim government, such as the Ottomans, not provided refuge to us, or rather had this sacred caliphate, this glorious government, and this holy land not accepted and protected us, we would have lost our religion. ... Had we lost our religion, we would have definitely lost our freedom too.<sup>167</sup>

The Association emphasized education as a means for muhajirs to discover what it meant to be a North Caucasian, an Ottoman, and a Muslim. First, in order to preserve their identity in exile, Circassians needed to educate their children in the Circassian language

---

*Edebiyatçılar ve Yazarlar Sözlüğü* (Samsun: Kafkasya Gerçeği, 1995); İzzet Aydemir, *Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları* (Ankara, 1991).

<sup>163</sup> “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti’nin Beyannamesi” (1908), in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 15-23.

<sup>164</sup> See Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*; Matossian, *Shattered Dreams*.

<sup>165</sup> “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti’nin Beyannamesi,” in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 15.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

and culture. The Association appealed to its members: “We, the Circassians, are the most backward people among all Ottoman communities in terms of education. Today, we cannot write in Circassian, and, with time, the number of Circassian speakers will only diminish.”<sup>168</sup> The association urged every family to assume responsibility for preserving their cultural identity. Second, the Association asserted that it was every muhajir’s duty to “serve the Ottoman constitutional government, which ensures protection of our community (*milliyetimiz*), justice, and prosperity.”<sup>169</sup> Through better education, muhajirs would contribute to advancing Ottoman social progress. Third, the Association reminded its members that furthering one’s education was a duty of every good Muslim. It cited a hadith that says “seek knowledge even if one must go to China” and Imam ‘Ali’s saying “I would be the slave of anyone who teaches me one letter.”<sup>170</sup>

The Association enshrined its commitment to education in its 1908 bylaws.<sup>171</sup> The Istanbul-based organization drew on the intra-imperial social infrastructure that muhajirs had constructed in prior decades, inclusive of village councils and networks. The Association’s declared aim was for every North Caucasian village in the empire to have its own primary school – a tall order for up to a thousand immigrant villages. It encouraged village councils to apply for funds to repair existing schools or to establish new ones, and committed to distributing textbooks to muhajir schools across the country (Article 15). The Association, as a self-appointed representative of North Caucasian muhajirs, set out to

---

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>169</sup> “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti’nin Beyannamesi,” in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 15. *Milliyet*, sometimes translated as “nationality” was a new term in late Ottoman usage, derived from *millet*, and could denote either communal identity based on one’s ethnicity or the “Ottoman nation”; see Kent Schull, *Prisons in the Late Ottoman Empire: Microcosms of Modernity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 93-98; Meyer, *Turks Across Empires*, 121, 137n32.

<sup>170</sup> “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti’nin Beyannamesi,” in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 17.

<sup>171</sup> “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti Talimatnamesi” (4 *teşrin-i sani* 1324; 17 November 1908), in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 10-14.

petition the Ottoman government and provincial authorities with requests to issue funding to build new schools and appoint teachers (Article 15). In the areas of compact settlement of North Caucasian muhajirs, the Association planned to open vocational schools, and, in Istanbul, to establish a private high school for North Caucasian children (Article 16).

In 1910, the Association founded a private school for boys, *Çerkes Teavün Mektebi*. It was likely the first school, in either the Ottoman or the Russian empires, to officially provide education in Circassian.<sup>172</sup> In 1918, the Association's satellite organization, the Circassian Women's Support Association, established a Circassian school, *Çerkes Kız Numune Mektebi*, in Beşiktaş, Istanbul.<sup>173</sup> This private six-year school for 150-180 girls and boys was among the first coeducational institutions in the empire.<sup>174</sup> The school taught, among traditional arts and sciences, history and geography of the Caucasus, and Circassian language and folklore. In 1923, the Turkish republican government shut down the school.<sup>175</sup> In addition to this school, the Beşiktaş district hosted the Bereket[iko] Gymnastics Club (1903), founded by a group of individuals, among whom were many prominent Ottoman-Circassians.<sup>176</sup> The club was renamed Beşiktaş in 1908 and is now internationally renowned for its football team.

The Association fostered the notion of a shared culture among its members by educating its newspaper subscribers about traditions and arts in the North Caucasus and in its Middle Eastern diaspora. The journal solicited and published contributions on the

---

<sup>172</sup> Nuri Güçtekin, "Çerkes Teavün Mektebi (1910-1914)," *Yakın Dönem Türkiye Araştırmaları* 12, no. 1 (2013): 1-21. Chochiev mentions a boys' school founded by the Association in 1908; *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 37.

<sup>173</sup> Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 191-99; Vasfi Güsar, "İstanbul Çerkes Kadınları Teavün Cemiyeti," *Kafkasya Kültürel Dergi* 148, no. 2 (1975): 21-26.

<sup>174</sup> Arslan, "Circassian Organizations," 193.

<sup>175</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 136.

<sup>176</sup> Jiy Zafer Süren, "Bereketiko'dan Beşiktaş'a," *Jineps* (1 April 2012).

<[www.jinepsgazetesi.com/makale/bereketikodan-besiktasa-1207](http://www.jinepsgazetesi.com/makale/bereketikodan-besiktasa-1207)> (accessed on 30 May 2018).



Caucasus history, ethnography, and folklore. The Association drew on earlier scholarly initiatives of Ottoman-Caucasian intellectuals. In the 1880s, Circassian notables in Istanbul founded a commission that set out to write a “Circassian history,” primarily based on oral history. Mehmed Said Paşa, an eight-time Grand Vizier, headed the commission. According to his memoirs, Sultan Abdülhamid II misinterpreted private meetings of prominent North Caucasian notables as an attempt of a coup and ordered all commission members to be arrested, which marked the end of their scholarly enterprise.<sup>177</sup>

The 1908 Revolution ushered a new age for print media; in Istanbul alone, over two hundred new publications appeared in the year after the revolution.<sup>178</sup> Many newspapers were published in Arabic, Ladino, Bulgarian, Greek, Armenian, and other languages of the empire. The *Ğuaze*, shortly after its foundation in 1911, was a bilingual publication in Ottoman Turkish and Adyghe/Circassian – the first Circassian-language newspaper in history.<sup>179</sup> It was remarkable among many Ottoman newspapers in that, in order to publish in another language, it needed to teach its readers to read their native language first.<sup>180</sup>

First, late Ottoman Circassian activists needed to agree on an alphabet that would lay a basis for the Circassian-language schooling and literature. Attempts to write in Circassian were made earlier, including back in the Caucasus, but the burgeoning print

---

<sup>177</sup> Aydemir, *Göç*, 183-84. Another commission to write Circassian history, likely established later, included Ahmet Mithat, known as a founder of the Ottoman novel, Deli Fuat Paşa, chairman of the Association, and Ghazi Muhammad Paşa, Imam Shamil’s son; see Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 55; Mustafa Oral, “Sultan II. Abdülhamit Döneminde Bir “Çerkes Tarihi” Yazılması Girişimi,” *ÇTTA Dergisi* 7, no. 16-17 (2008): 71-88.

<sup>178</sup> Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 136.

<sup>179</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 36.

<sup>180</sup> The linguistic changes of the *Ğuaze* may have been similar to those of the first Kurdish newspaper, *Kürdistan* (1898-1902), which was also bilingual, in Ottoman Turkish and Kurmanji. Similarly to the first North Caucasian newspaper, *İttihad Gazetesi*, *Kürdistan* was published in Cairo; see Michael Eppel, *A People Without a State: The Kurds from the Rise of Islam to the Dawn of Nationalism* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2016), 85-86.

scene in the late Ottoman Empire, coupled with a the Association's drive to forge ethnic unity among Adyghe-speaking communities, propelled new efforts to devise an alphabet.<sup>181</sup> In 1897, Ahmed Cavid Paşa, an Ottoman-Ubykh civil administrator, developed an Arabic script-based alphabet for the Circassian language.<sup>182</sup> In 1911, the Association formed a commission to develop a new alphabet to utilize in its publications. The commission was deciding between an Arabic-based script, a Latin-based script, or a combination of the two.<sup>183</sup> The same year, the *Ğuaze* unveiled the commission's new alphabet, on an Arabic basis and with 55 letter combinations – the Association hoped that familiar Arabic letters would speed up the cultural production and enable greater literacy in Circassian.<sup>184</sup>

The alphabet issue, however, was not settled, and the newspaper published several articles critical of the chosen alphabet, introduced alternative alphabets, including one with unique “Circassian letters,” and, in 1913, several intellectuals developed the first Latin-script alphabet, arguably a better phonetic match for the Circassian language.<sup>185</sup> In its

---

<sup>181</sup> See Sefer E. Berzeg, *Adige-Çerkes Alfabesinin Tarihçesi* (Ankara: Şenyuva Matbaası, 1969).

<sup>182</sup> Aydemir, *Göç*, 183-84; Berzeg, *Edebiyatçılar ve Yazarlar Sözlüğü*, 9-10. In 1898, the Cairo-based *İttihad Gazetesi* mentioned the existence of several versions of an alphabet developed for Abaza [Abkhaz-Abazin], Abzakh [a dialect of western Circassian], Ubykh, and Ossetian. Georgy Chochiev suggests that the newspaper referred to the work of Ahmed Cavid Paşa and other intellectuals in Istanbul; Chochiev, “İttihad Gazetesi,” 232.

<sup>183</sup> Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 88-94.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-95.

<sup>185</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 35-36; Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 96-98. Speakers of Adyghe/Circassian, and other major North Caucasian languages, have three historical alphabets: the Cyrillic-based, gradually endorsed by the Soviet authorities and culturally dominant today; the Arabic-based, from the times of their Ottoman/tsarist early literary movements; and the Latin-based, marking the transitional period in the late Ottoman/tsarist and early Soviet periods. The alphabet remains a source of both political unity and division within transnational North Caucasian communities. In 2015, the Federation of Caucasian Associations (KAFFED), the largest umbrella group for North Caucasian organizations in Turkey, protested the Turkish government's endorsement of teaching Circassian in its Latin-based script. KAFFED, which favors the Cyrillic-based script, feared that the government's decision would undermine diasporic unity and circumscribe Turkish Circassians' access to Circassian literature produced in Russia.

search for the optimal tool for cultural expression, the Association tried different alphabets in its publications, which included the first Circassian dictionary.<sup>186</sup> This internal communal debate surrounding the alphabet was reflected in the school curriculum: the Istanbul boys' school (1910) taught Circassian in Arabic letters, whereas the co-educational school (1918) opted for the Latin-script Circassian writing.<sup>187</sup>

The alphabet issue aside, Circassian communities had different dialects and no agreed-upon “literary” version of the language, which slowed down the Association’s educational efforts. This also meant that the Association made early efforts to codify the Circassian language and elevated the vocabulary of certain Circassian subdivisions, well-represented in diaspora, as preferred literary norms.<sup>188</sup> Non-Adyghe communities (Abkhazians, Chechens, Daghestanis, etc.), although part of the Association’s larger ideological project, were unable to read Circassian-language publications. Printed literary production in their languages remained limited or non-existent in the late Ottoman period.

The impact of the Association is open to debate. It was an elite organization that claimed to represent one of the most consistently rural, poor, and illiterate populations in the empire. Yet the organization included prominent North Caucasian notables, both in Istanbul and throughout provinces, who maintained authority and support within their broader rural-based communities. Through local notables and village networks, the

---

<sup>186</sup> The Ottoman-Circassian dictionary, prepared by Mehmet ‘Ali and Ahmed Cavid Paşa, was published in *Ğuaze* issues starting in 1912; Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 97.

<sup>187</sup> *Çerkes Kız Numune Mektebi* was the first Ottoman school established by/for a Muslim community that utilized the Latin script in its core curriculum; Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 193.

<sup>188</sup> Among twelve Circassian “tribes,” rates of expulsion and emigration differed, often reflective of how close the communities lived to the coast or tsarist front lines in the early 1860s. This spatial reordering resulted in the Kabardin, Abzakh, and Shapsugh communities being the most numerous subdivisions in the Ottoman Empire and its successor states, and Kabardin, Temirgoy, and Bzhedugh communities most populous in Russia. Four Circassian “tribes” were expelled from the Caucasus in their entirety.

Association's views and priorities likely spread among muhajir communities.<sup>189</sup> Moreover, reading newspapers, particularly after the 1908 Revolution, was not an exclusively urban and elite phenomenon in the Ottoman Empire, and print media could effectively reach rural areas and different social strata.<sup>190</sup>

In addition to fostering a shared cultural domain that would unite Circassian muhajir communities across the empire, the Association envisioned an organized muhajir economy, arguing for the creation of North Caucasian monopolies within the broader Ottoman economy.<sup>191</sup> The Association recognized that most muhajirs toiled in agriculture and encouraged them to diversify their skill sets in order to supplement their seasonal and unsteady income. It urged muhajirs to take up their old North Caucasian trades that might be in demand on the Ottoman market: as goldsmiths, blacksmiths, skimmers, and furriers.<sup>192</sup> This appeal envisioned the development of a “muhajir economy” that would produce and sustain local jobs. For example, the Association called on muhajirs to don their traditional headdress:

Absolutely refuse to wear a *fez* [red Ottoman headdress] ... and opt for wearing a *kalpak* [high fur hat]. Because a *kalpak* is our sole national headdress. Make *kalpaks* yourselves. Furthermore, every village could establish local monopolies in the production of *yamçıl* [thick woolen coats] and saddles and trade them on the market.<sup>193</sup>

The Association encouraged muhajirs to carve out a niche in the Ottoman economy, while preserving – and even bolstering – their separate cultural identities. Fuat Bey Khutatzade,

---

<sup>189</sup> For example, the Association set out to send a copy of its bylaws to every Circassian village in the empire (Article 19); “Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti Talimatnamesi,” in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 14.

<sup>190</sup> See Campos, *Ottoman Brothers*, 134-41.

<sup>191</sup> “Çerkes Teavün Cemiyeti'nin Beyannamesi,” in *Belgeler*, ed. Berzeg, 18-23.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

the industrious letter-writer who was introduced earlier in this chapter, held similar views. He wrote to his family, “In a new country with different conditions and customs, we must choose a way of life that fits local development and that also allows us to protect honor and dignity that remain from our ancestors.”<sup>194</sup>

The Association concluded that horses were the most profitable article of muhajirs’ trade. The Ottoman state required an ever-growing number of horses to transport soldiers and ammunition to the front lines in the Balkans and eastern Anatolia. The Association reasoned that muhajirs, who already enjoyed a reputation for horse-riding back in the Caucasus, had a rare economic opportunity, and issued a call to action:

Proceed to improving the breed of [our] horses. Grow the most thoroughbred stallions and mares from Russia and, especially, from Hungary and Arabia, and provide the necessary number of horses for the army. Today, those of you who own herds ought to establish a company. Found stud farms and ranches! Do not let this extraordinary trade slip out of your hands because of your quarrels and disagreements with each other. Know that foreigners, especially Hungarians, who [own] capital and stud farms, intend to breed large herds and to create horse trading establishments inside the Ottoman state. Before they start all this and seize trade in their hands, ... establish a large company. ... Include in your administration one or two veterinary surgeons and someone with foreign language skills and send them to Russia and, especially, to Hungary. Let them study their methods of horse care and breeding and how they operate their stud farms, so that they could acquire necessary knowledge and apply it in our country.<sup>195</sup>

The Association, a product of the 1908 Revolution and a brainchild of Ottomanist policy-makers, considered horse-breeding an industry that would enrich muhajirs but also a patriotic act, the North Caucasians’ contribution to the imperial economy and military success. In Sivas and Konya provinces, Circassians, indeed, founded large horse-breeding

---

<sup>194</sup> Khutatzade Collection. Letter no. 18, Fuat Bey to Cevat Bey (6 April 1894).

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

enterprises that secured contracts for supplying riding and pack horses for the Ottoman army, around the time of the 1912-13 Balkan Wars.<sup>196</sup>

The diasporic associations set in motion two particularly important developments for Circassian and North Caucasian national movements. First, the common plight of poverty and the need to amplify muhajirs' voices on the imperial stage toned down regional, class, and ethnic distinctions carried from the Caucasus. Through the experience of exile, many Adyghe-speaking communities that had been separated into Shapsugh, Kabardins, Abzakhs, and others became "Circassians" (*Çerkesler*) – an Ottoman-preferred designation and a communally-embraced identification.<sup>197</sup> Non-Adyghe communities, such as Abkhaz, Chechens, and Ossetians, were often called Circassians, and, on some occasions, they even acquiesced to that designation when it served to promote their communal goals in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>198</sup>

The Circassian Union and Support Association itself, having "Circassian" in its name, epitomized the ideological problem of communal self-designation. The majority of North Caucasian muhajirs were western Circassians; Circassians were also the only North Caucasian ethnic group most of whose members now lived in the Ottoman Empire and not in Russia. The Istanbul-based North Caucasian elites were more diverse, featuring prominent Daghestani, Chechen, Ossetian, and Kabardin families, many of whom were in the empire long before 1864 or emigrated voluntarily after 1864. The experiences of the dominant muhajir group, western Circassians, particularly its narrative of traumatic displacement (by the Russians) and an imperfect resettlement (by the Ottomans), however,

---

<sup>196</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 40-41.

<sup>197</sup> On the meanings of "Circassian" in Turkish-based diaspora, see Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 20-22, 54.

<sup>198</sup> Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 21, 54; Chochiev, "The Case of Anatolian Ossetians," 113-14.

provided an ideological core, applicable to other North Caucasian communities. Overall, the Association used the term “Circassian” in both inclusive and exclusive ways, subject to its interests and one’s interpretations. The clan-based and subethnic heterogeneity within Circassian, Chechen, Ossetian, and other communities remained important and continues to be contested and renegotiated in the North Caucasus and the diaspora. Yet muhajirs’ ethno-linguistic identities, such as Circassians and Abkhaz, and supra-ethnic regional identities, such as “North Caucasians” (*Şimali Kafkasyalılar* or *Kuzey Kafkasyalılar*), had been forged into meaningful socio-political categories in the two final decades of Ottoman rule.<sup>199</sup>

Second, North Caucasian diaspora organizations in the late Ottoman Empire maintained a trans-imperial dimension in their work. Their immediate focus was on the Ottoman-based communities, but they also fostered engagement with communities that remained in the Russian Caucasus. The *Ğuaze*, published by the Association, has subscribers in, and published letters from, the Caucasus. It printed direct appeals to its readers in the Caucasus, and funded “teaching missions” by Ottoman-educated muhajirs to the Caucasus, which experienced a scarcity of native teachers.<sup>200</sup> The Association’s work further solidified Istanbul’s position as the political and cultural center for the Circassian and North Caucasian community in the Ottoman Empire and beyond.

These developments came together in the post-World War I period, when the Anatolian-based North Caucasian diaspora evolved and transmitted its ideas of supra-

---

<sup>199</sup> On the identity and politics of the contemporary North Caucasian diaspora, see Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*; Ayhan Kaya, *Türkiye’de Çerkesler*; idem, “Political Participation Strategies of the Circassian Diaspora in Turkey,” *Mediterranean Politics* 9, no. 2 (2004): 221-39; Zhemukhov, “The Birth of Modern Circassian Nationalism.”

<sup>200</sup> See Aydemir, *Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları*, 127-30, 135. On Nuri Tsagov, editor of *Ğuaze*, who was born in the Golan Heights and then “returned” to Kabarda, where he emerged as one of the most prominent educators during the Circassian/Kabarda “Enlightenment,” see Chapter 7.

ethnic political unity to the Caucasus. During World War I, some members of the Association established the Society for Caucasus Unity (*Kafkasya İttihad Cemiyeti*, 1915) and the Caucasus Independence Committee (*Kafkasya İstiklal Komitesi*, 1915), which advocated for independence of the entire Caucasus, inclusive of Georgian, Armenian, and Azeri territories, from Russia.<sup>201</sup> This fairly new pan-Caucasus and anti-Russian orientation was actively supported and, perhaps, driven by the Porte, which was fighting Russia during World War I. Yet such a broad focus and cooperation with South Caucasian activists (at the time of the Armenian Genocide!) did not prove feasible. The Caucasus Independence Committee soon became the Committee of Turkey's North Caucasian Political Emigrants (*Türkiye'deki Kuzey Kafkasya Siyasi Göçmenleri Komitesi*, 1916-19).<sup>202</sup> Ottoman-based North Caucasian activists now pressed for the autonomous or independent North Caucasus. Following the 1917 Russian Revolution, some of its members traveled to the North Caucasus to fight for its independence.<sup>203</sup> Muhajir elites also established the North Caucasus Society (*Şimali Kafkas Cemiyeti*, 1918), which acted as an Ottoman-based advocate and lobbyist for the North Caucasus-based national movements.<sup>204</sup> These avowedly political diasporic organizations helped to establish and

---

<sup>201</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 68-81.

<sup>202</sup> In the name of the latter organization, note the use of the term "Turkey," not Anatolia or the Ottoman Empire, and *göçmenler*, not *muhacirler*. Following the 1908 Revolution and especially after the 1913 CUP coup and the Ottoman entrance into World War I, the Ottoman society – and the North Caucasian intelligentsia as part of it – had been learning new ways to think about territory and identity. See Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 71.

<sup>203</sup> On the post-1917 politics in the North Caucasus, see Mitat Çelikpala, "Search for a Common North Caucasian Identity: The Mountaineers' Attempts for Survival and Unity in Response to the Russian Rule," Ph.D. dissertation (Bilkent University, 2002); idem, "North Caucasian Émigré Movements Between the Two World Wars," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003): 287-314; Alexandre Bennigsen, "Muslim Guerrilla Warfare in the Caucasus (1918-1928)," *Central Asian Survey* 2, no. 1 (1983): 45-56.

<sup>204</sup> Chochiev, *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii*, 80-82; M. Aydın Turan, "Osmanlı Dönemi Kuzey Kafkasya Diasporası Tarihinden Şimali Kafkas Cemiyeti," *Tarih ve Toplum* 172 (1998): 50-59.



legitimize the short-lived Mountainous Republic of the North Caucasus (1918-20), which included most of the territory of the former Russian Empire's Terek and Daghestan provinces.<sup>205</sup> In global history, the instances of diaspora-nurtured forms of nationalism being transplanted to the "homeland" are not uncommon. For example, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Polish, and Irish immigrants evolved and transferred nationalist ideals from North America to Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>206</sup>

The diasporic organizations played a critical role in the development of ethnic and supra-ethnic forms of North Caucasian nationalist movements.<sup>207</sup> Their activities were short-lived, with opportunities for non-Turkish forms of nationalism extinguished by Atatürk's government by 1923.<sup>208</sup> However, the ideas expounded by members of the muhajir intelligentsia in the 1900s and 1910s lived on among North Caucasian communities in Turkey, Syria, and Jordan.<sup>209</sup> They took a life of their own in the North

---

<sup>205</sup> See Sefer E. Berzeg, *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti 1917-1922*, vols. 1-3 (Istanbul: Birleşik Kafkasya Derneği, 2003-06); Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, 201, 235-37. The Republic, whose origins lay in the Union of the Peoples of the North Caucasus (1917), was recognized by the Ottoman Empire, Germany, and three short-lived post-1917 republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kuban. Soviet Russia annexed the Republic and transformed it into the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (1921-24), which was later reorganized into autonomous ethnic units.

<sup>206</sup> See Nina Glick Schiller et al., "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (1995): 51.

<sup>207</sup> Zeyden Abidin Besleney calls the Ottoman- and Turkish-based muhajirs' politics of supra-ethnic unity "United Caucasianism," which, during the twentieth century, coexisted with other diasporic ideologies: Islamic-oriented activism and the Centralist tradition, subdivided into Returnism (*dönüşçülük*) and "Diasporism" (*kalışçılık*); see *Circassian Diaspora*, 83-142.

<sup>208</sup> On a complex relationship between North Caucasian leaders and Turkish nationalists, see Gingeras, "Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens"; Bilmez, "A Nationalist Discourse of Heroism and Treason."

<sup>209</sup> On North Caucasian associations in modern Turkey, see Besleney, *Circassian Diaspora*, 83-178; Lars Funch Hansen, "Frontier Zones of Diaspora-Making: Circassian Organizations in Turkey," in *Alternative Spaces*, eds. Dahl and Fihl, 85-109; Alexandre Toumarkine, "Kafkas ve Balkan Göçmen Dernekleri: Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik," in *Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik*, eds. Stéphane Yerasimos et al. (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 425-50; Erol Taymaz, "Kuzey Kafkas Dernekleri," in *Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik*, 451-60.

Caucasus, where ethnic identities, languages, and territories were reformulated, reimagined, and remapped under the Soviet nationalities policy (1928-34) and beyond.<sup>210</sup>

*Conclusion: Becoming North Caucasians*

This chapter focused on muhajirs' mobility and networks within the Ottoman Empire. Kinship ties, village networks, and formal associations provided a parallel support structure to muhajirs, in addition to the relations that muhajirs forged with state institutions and networks. Muhajirs' familial and social networks helped muhajirs during migration and resettlement. The social capital implicit in familial and kinship ties was a valuable resource for high-status and underprivileged muhajirs alike when rebuilding their lives as Ottoman subjects. Village networks were conduits of exchange of commodities and information between rural communities. They fostered a sense of communal affiliation at a time when many muhajirs had been adapting to their new neighbors, occupations, and landscapes. The formal associations, through their publications and charitable activities, promoted mass education, literacy in native languages, cultural production, and commercial enterprises.

The dispersion of muhajirs throughout the Ottoman domains guided the emergence of new communal North Caucasian identities. Prior to the early 1860s, North Caucasians, by and large, did not have clearly-articulated collective identities based on a shared language, ethnicity, or origin. Circassians alone were divided into at least twelve communities and self-identified mostly by their extended kins. Their hijra to and successive

---

<sup>210</sup> On the early Soviet "nationalities policy," see Hirsch, *Empire of Nations*; Martin, *Affirmative Action Empire*; Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment."

resettlement in the Ottoman Empire mobilized the notion of their shared identity as muhajirs, who fled because they were persecuted by Russia and wished to preserve their Muslim identities in the caliphate. While in dispersion across Anatolia, the Balkans, and the Levant, muhajirs' social and economic practices underwent changes as they came into contact with different Ottoman communities and environments. In the process, muhajirs embraced new collective designations, which referred to their origins in the Caucasus but were a product of their new lives in the Ottoman Empire.

## CHAPTER 6

### **Return Migration to the Russian Empire**

In January 1907, young Khazizet and her three brothers – Nagoi, Talib, and Hajibekir – arrived in the Kabardin village of Babyguei, in the Northcentral Caucasus. The exhausted travelers told village residents who gathered around to greet them that they were born in that village. Their family had then emigrated to the Ottoman Empire and, after having settled in Syria, their parents died. The siblings, ranging in age from twelve to twenty-three, found themselves alone in a foreign country and, with little means to survive, decided to return to the Caucasus. The Russian consul in Damascus issued them documents, and in late autumn the siblings set out for Kabarda. They walked and rode across Syria, Kurdistan, Georgia, and the Caucasus Mountains in order to return home. Moved by their story, village elders petitioned the government to allow the children to stay. Their petition was approved.<sup>1</sup>

The siblings' story is unusual but not exceptional. In the late tsarist period, thousands of North Caucasian Muslims returned to the Russian Empire from the Ottoman domains. Some muhajirs petitioned Russian consuls to allow them to return, whereas others clandestinely crossed the border back into the Caucasus. Return migration remains a little-known subject in the historiography of Muslim emigration and among the contemporary North Caucasian diaspora in the Middle East.<sup>2</sup> It was rare for western Circassians, who had

---

<sup>1</sup> TsGA KBR f. 6, op. 1, d. 693, ll. 37, 41 (1 March – 28 September 1907).

<sup>2</sup> James H. Meyer addressed the phenomenon, particularly for Crimean Tatars, in "Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship," 20-26. In the Russian-language historiography, see Inal Kanukov, "Gortsy-pere selentsy," *Sbornik svedenii o kavkazskikh gortsakh* 9 (Tiflis, 1876): 84-103; Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 381-406; Anzor V. Kushkhabiev, *Problemy repatriatsii zarubezhnykh cherkesov: istoriia, politika, sotsial'naia praktika* (Nalchik: KBNTs RAN, 2013), 19-31.

been disproportionately targeted for expulsion in 1860-64, to return to Russia. Yet return migration was a sizeable and lasting phenomenon, throughout the late tsarist rule, for other Muslim communities in the North Caucasus who had primarily chosen to emigrate from the Russian Empire: eastern Circassians, Abkhaz, Nogai Tatars, Chechens, Ingush, Ossetians, and Daghestanis.

This chapter explores return migration of North Caucasian Muslims from the Ottoman Empire and the evolution of reimmigration policies in Imperial Russia between 1860 and 1914. The Russian and Ottoman governments generally regarded return migration of North Caucasian muhajirs as detrimental to their interests. Russia, after having completed the conquest of the North Caucasus by 1864, was apprehensive to allow the reimmigration of thousands of Muslims, some of whom may have previously fought tsarist rule and most of whom have become Ottoman subjects. For much of the period, the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Caucasus Viceroyalty authorities in Tiflis maintained an official ban on return migration. The Ottomans, experiencing a shortage of labor in Anatolia and Syria, did not wish to lose their newly arrived North Caucasian immigrants to Russia. The Ottoman government tied muhajirs to the land by making state subsidies and exemptions from taxation contingent on muhajirs' uninterrupted residency in their Ottoman villages.

I argue that the Russian administration exercised considerable flexibility in adjusting its no-return policy in accordance with its evolving perceptions of threat or benefit represented by the return of North Caucasian Muslims. Thousands of muhajirs succeeded in returning home, although the government chose not to publicize its readmittance policies. Based on petitions, police interrogation statements, and other types of first-person refugee accounts, I demonstrate that North Caucasian refugees collectively

and individually employed various methods to regain admission to the countries of their birthplace, with unsanctioned reimmigration being the most daring and often successful strategy.

### *Return Migration in Historical Writing and Memory*

Return migration is an essential but often overlooked component of global migration.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it is said that “each main current of migration produces a compensating counter-current.”<sup>4</sup> Even migration to the United States, often regarded as a one-way journey, itself a hallmark of the American exceptionalism narrative, was accompanied by return migration of a quarter to a third of all immigrants, reaching as high as 89 percent for Bulgarians and Serbs and 60 percent for southern Italians in 1908-23.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, return migration and its effects on all communities involved – returnees, their former host society, and the population of their destination country – are little known by the general public. Perhaps, a common false assumption that homecoming is “an act of unproblematic and natural reinsertion in the local or national community once left behind” obscures the transformative impact of return migration flows.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, scholarship on return

---

<sup>3</sup> Return migration is also referred to in historiography as counter stream migration, reflex migration, retro-migration, U-turn migration, homeward migration, back migration, second-time migration or remigration. In this paper, I use the term *return migration* for a comprehensive process that involved one’s planning to return, the physical process of going back, and resettlement. I utilize the terms *repatriation* when speaking of refugees’ requests to the Russian government for a mass return, and *reimmigration* for the late stages of return migration when refugees crossed the border into Russia.

<sup>4</sup> E.G. Ravenstein, “The Laws of Migration” (1885) in George Gmelch, “Return Migration,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9 (1980): 135.

<sup>5</sup> Marc Wyman, *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 6, 11.

<sup>6</sup> See Anders H. Stefansson, “Homecomings to the Future: From Diaspora Mythographies to Social Projects of Return,” in *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, eds. Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 5.

migration is held back by insufficient evidence because states rarely possess the ability or, sometimes, desire to count those who return.

Scholarly interest in return migration increased since the 1990s, a decade rocked by the collapse of the Soviet Union and a series of ethnic conflicts in eastern Europe and central Africa, which produced massive flows of refugees. Historians and anthropologists primarily focus on three types of return migration: self-initiated return, repatriation, and refoulement. *Self-initiated return* presupposes a minimum involvement of state and non-governmental agencies in organizing expatriates' or refugees' return home. It covers cases as diverse as return migration of Italian American immigrants from the United States, Filipino domestic workers from Europe and the Gulf countries, and Ethiopian refugees from Sudan.<sup>7</sup> *Repatriation* is usually spearheaded or encouraged by a national or international agency, following a breakdown in the country of residence or stabilization of the country of origin. Prominent cases involve the migration of ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union to Germany after 1991, and the repatriation of refugees to Mozambique from its neighboring states in 1994.<sup>8</sup> *Refoulement*, or forcible repatriation, involves moving

---

<sup>7</sup> For a foray into scholarship on self-initiated return, see Wyman, *Round-Trip to America*; José Angel Hernández, *Mexican American Colonization During the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Takeyuki Tsuda, ed., *Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); Marjory Harper, ed., *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); Robert B. Potter et al., eds., *The Experience of Return Migration: Caribbean Perspectives* (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Akram Fouad Khater, *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> On repatriation, see Tim Allen and Hubert Morsink, eds., *When Refugees Go Home: African Experiences* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1994); Lynellyn D. Long and Ellen Oxfeld, eds., *Coming Home? Refugees, Migrants, and Those Who Stayed Behind* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 127-205; Khalid Koser, "Information and Repatriation: The Case of Mozambican Refugees in Malawi," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 10, no. 1 (1997): 1-17; Rainer Münz and Rainer Ohliger, eds., *Diasporas and Ethnic Migrants: German, Israel, and Post-Soviet Successor States in Comparative Perspective* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003), 259-400.

communities, against their will, to their country of origin, which occurred, for example, in the Allied repatriation of Soviet prisoners of war by the Nazis back to the Soviet Union and the contemporary expulsion of Rohingya Muslims from Bangladesh to Myanmar.<sup>9</sup> Notably, the types of return migration outlined above are premised upon the country of origin being willing, and often eager, to accept incoming migrants.<sup>10</sup>

The case of North Caucasian returnees to the Russian Empire does not adhere to the above models because the destination country was unwilling to accept returnees and criminalized their reimmigration. This type of return migration, self-initiated return that is perceived as “illegal” from the perspective of the state, is less common in global history and rarely theorized in historiography. Analogies to North Caucasians’ return to Russia in 1860-1914 could be found in the clandestine return of Palestinians to Israel shortly after 1948 or that of Turks to Bulgaria and Serbia after 1878.<sup>11</sup> What these cases share is the “minority” status of returnees. In modern history, refugees belonging to minority groups have been less likely to return home than those from an ethno-religious majority.<sup>12</sup> This chapter examines a rare case of self-initiated and unsanctioned return migration.

The notion of return is an important issue for the contemporary North Caucasian diaspora. In the past century, the North Caucasian community in the Middle East employed

---

<sup>9</sup> On refoulement, see Julius Epstein, *Operation Keelhaul: The Story of Forced Repatriation from 1944 to the Present* (Old Greenwich, CT: Devin-Adair Co, 1973); Pia A. Oberoi, *Exile and Belonging: Refugees and State Policy in South Asia* (New Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> For theoretical studies and different categorizations of return migration, see Russell King, “Generalizations from the History of Return Migration,” in *Return Migration: Journey of Hope and Despair?*, ed. Bimal Ghosh (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2000), 7-55; George Gmelch, “Return Migration.”

<sup>11</sup> See Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), especially chapters 5, 6, and 9.

<sup>12</sup> Elazar Barkan, “The Politics of Return: When Rights Become Rites,” in *Rites of Return: Diaspora Poetics and the Politics of Memory*, eds. Marianne Hirsch and Nancy K. Miller (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 230.



two powerful concepts in crafting its diasporic narrative – those of hijra into the Ottoman state and a “myth of return” to the Caucasus. The hijra could be seen as a rhetorical tool and a retrospective mechanism for refugees to cope with their exile and integration. It was also a legitimate motivation that was an essential part of many muhajirs’ worldview (see Chapter 7). The first generations of North Caucasian immigrants commonly stressed that they emigrated “for Islam.”<sup>13</sup> North Caucasian communities also developed a “myth of return,” a central tenet for preserving their languages and customs abroad and a socio-cultural mechanism that is not uncommon in other diasporas.<sup>14</sup> The “myth of return” gained popularity with later generations; in the late 1970s, many diaspora activists in Turkey embraced the “returnist” (in Turkish: *dönüşcü*) ideology, whereby the only way to reverse a loss of language and culture was to return to the Caucasus.<sup>15</sup> Although not necessarily in contention with each other, the two narratives maintain an uneasy dynamic that reflects generational change and different approaches to integration and assimilation.

### *Who Came Back and Why?*

No universal type of a North Caucasian returnee exists. People returned for various reasons, reflecting the nature of their emigration from Russia, resettlement in the Ottoman Empire, and personal circumstances. This chapter includes stories of returnees who were expelled from Circassia in 1863-64, participated in the state-organized emigration from

---

<sup>13</sup> Seteney Shami, “Prehistories of Globalization: Circassian Identity in Motion,” *Public Culture* 12, no. 1 (2000): 183-84.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Safran, “Diasporas in Modern Societies”; Madawi al-Rasheed, “The Myth of Return: Iraqi Arab and Assyrian Refugees in London,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7, no. 2-3 (1994): 199-219; Roger Zetter, “Reconceptualizing the Myth of Return: Continuity and Transition Amongst the Greek-Cypriot Refugees of 1974,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12, no. 1 (1999): 1-22.

<sup>15</sup> Shami, “Prehistories of Globalization,” 183.

Chechnya in 1865, or voluntarily emigrated from unincorporated, Russian-occupied, or Ottoman-occupied territories. In general, those who emigrated voluntarily were more likely to return than those who were forcibly pushed out. Muhajirs were also more likely to return within the first few years after their departure. Sometimes, entire families would return to the Caucasus, but often men were the ones who undertook the dangerous journey hoping that, once they regained their legal status in Russia, they would be able to repatriate their entire families.

The “push” factors, related to conditions in the Ottoman Empire, were more important than the “pull” factors in the Russian Caucasus for return migration of North Caucasians, especially in the first years of emigration from Russia. Early returnees often complained about insufficient or infertile land and a lack of Ottoman support, which reduced muhajirs to poverty. For example, Ibrahim Boziev, a Kabardin muhajir and returnee, provided the following testimony to the Russian authorities about the reasons for his return in 1864:

In 1860, I departed for permanent residence in Turkey, together with my family. Upon our arrival, we and other emigrating Kabardins, were settled in a place near Kars. Land is infertile there. I had only 100 rubles and spent all money quickly. I then had to beg for alms to survive. Last year, I moved closer to Kars, at a three-hour ride from the city. ... I lived in misery there. I was paid two kopeks in silver for my labor and could not support my family on this salary. I then decided to return to Kabarda, taking my wife and three children. I arrived [in Russia] last month, without authorization. I crossed the border under the pretext of begging for bread from Russian subjects, which was allowed. On the 21st day, I reached my home village of Makianov in Kabarda. I could not come to see the authorities sooner [to properly apply for reimmigration] because I am destitute and had no decent clothes to wear.<sup>16</sup>

Other accounts from this period mirror that of Ibrahim. Another Kabardin returnee, Makha Kaspotov, told a similar story:

---

<sup>16</sup> TsGA KBR, f. 2, op. 1, d. 712, l. 5 (22 August 1864).

In 1860, our village of [the notable] Pshemakho Zhamborov, except for three households, moved to Turkey. My family was among the muhajirs. Upon arrival [to the Ottoman Empire], I had only 70 rubles, which I had spent quickly, and then I lived by begging for alms. I decided to return [to Russia], taking seven members of my family, including my fifty-year-old mother. We walked for 21 days until we reached Vladikavkaz. During our journey, no one stopped us or asked us who we were because we were beggars. Upon my return, I stayed with relatives in the village of Shugany Kozhokov.<sup>17</sup>

Both Ibrahim and Makha were former slaves or dependent peasants who had been liberated sometime before their emigration from Kabarda (Rus. *vol'nootpushchennik*). Their decision to return to the Caucasus had an economic rationale. They could not support their families in the Ottoman Empire, which was the most common reason for return to Russia. Very rarely, if ever, did people return in a better financial shape than when they left. Usually, return migration was a desperate measure taken by refugees to either survive or be “less worse off” than in the Ottoman Empire.

Some muhajirs returned when they found out where the Ottoman Refugee Commission had planned to send them. Chechen returnees, for example, often cited their unwillingness to move to Syria as their reason for returning to Russia.<sup>18</sup> Thus, Nur Dadaev, a Chechen muhajir, had emigrated to the Ottoman Empire in 1865, and the Refugee Commission temporarily settled him in a village near Erzurum. Yet the following year, the Russian authorities detained him within Russian borders. He provided the following explanation for his return:

I feared that the Turkish government would send me and my family to Arabistan [sic], where it had already sent many Chechens. To avoid being sent to a distant and unknown country, I, along with thirteen other people, decided to return to Chechnya. ... Trying to avoid running into Turkish troops, we reached the

---

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., ll. 6-6ob (22 August 1864).

<sup>18</sup> Central State Archive of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Severnaia Osetiia - Alaniia, Vladikavkaz, hereafter cited as TsGA RSO-A) f. 12, op. 5, d. 30, ll. 72-72ob, 80-81, 86-86ob, 108-108ob (1866); d. 32, ll. 28-28ob, 31-31a (1867).

[Russian] border at night. Then, unnoticed by anyone, we crossed the border near Aleksandropol.<sup>19</sup>

Many muhajirs returned to the Caucasus because they faced hostility of local communities, typically over land, or could not obtain good enough land due to corruption of local officials. Many of them also lost their family members to epidemics or were separated from their kin and, therefore, lacked a support network in their new Ottoman villages. Those who returned later could have been pushed out by an expiration of Ottoman tax exemptions. Although motivations for return varied, most of them point towards a mismatch between their expectations from the land of the Caliph, or the “country of Istanbul,” and the realities of life in refugee villages in interior provinces of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>20</sup> In global histories of return migration, a lack of credible information about the recipient country, its economy, and its infrastructure to support immigrants are common reasons for reimmigration.<sup>21</sup>

The “pull” factors played a role when refugees weighed the possibility of returning to the Caucasus against relocating to a new area within the Ottoman Empire. People were more likely to return if their families and friends remained in the Caucasus, thus providing a safety net for the reintegration of returnees. For example, in 1866, the Russian authorities considered the petition of a young Kabardin man to return to Russia. The man, whose name the authorities never recorded, was a son of a well-known notable Muhammad Amin. He studied in a military school in Istanbul and, according to his testimony to the Russian

---

<sup>19</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 30, ll. 72-72ob (25 September 1866).

<sup>20</sup> Kanukov, “Gortsy-pereselentsy.”

<sup>21</sup> King, “Generalizations from the History of Return Migration,” 29-30.

embassy, “never ceased being a Russian subject.”<sup>22</sup> He complained that his father, who once was Shamil’s na’ib [deputy] to the Circassians, left him with no money. His wealthy uncle in Kabarda invited his nephew to stay with him, and Muhammad Amin’s son wished to pursue that offer.<sup>23</sup>

Many Kabardin and Chechen muhajirs had families back in the Caucasus, who were willing to accept them, which was a significant factor in their return migration. It also partially explains why western Circassians rarely succeeded in returning to their homeland. In the Kuban region that underwent heavy Slavic colonization, most Circassian muhajirs had no homes or families to return to. Traumatization of Circassian refugees over the nature of their expulsion and Russia’s greater military presence in Kuban than in other areas of the North Caucasus further deterred return migration by western Circassians.

Upon their return to the Caucasus, many muhajirs voluntarily reported to local police stations in the hope to gain a residence permit and legal status. They were then ordered to make an oral statement, translated and recorded in Russian by an interpreter. Returnees’ statements often reveal emotional hardship that refugees suffered in exile and that prompted their reimmigration. One such account came from a Kabardin slave, Ogurli, who returned to the North Caucasus and pleaded for resettlement. He testified:

In 1861, I followed my owner, *Uzden*<sup>24</sup> Nasran Kozhev, of my own will, to a permanent settlement in Turkey. After a short while, my owner kept my wife and children but sold me to some Arab [man] whose name I do not know. Considering myself to having been improperly sold and not knowing the language of my new owner, I decided to escape to my homeland. I arrived in Nalchik ... not having been stopped by anyone on my way here.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> TsGA KBR f. 2, op. 1, d. 954, l. 2 (7 November 1866).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> *Uzden* is an aristocratic title, commonly used in the North Caucasus among Circassians, Daghestanis, Karachays, and Balkars.

<sup>25</sup> TsGA KBR f. 2, op. 1, d. 652, ll. 2-3 (25 August 1862).

Ogurli showed tremendous resolve to better his fate by taking matters into his own hands and becoming an escapee and, therefore, a fugitive in the Ottoman Empire. He sought to redress injustice inflicted upon him and his family by fleeing to Russia, which abolished serfdom in her Slavic provinces in the very year he left. He may have even known this because the 1861 emigration stemmed, in large part, from Kabardin nobles' insecurity in their slaveholding future in Russia. The Russian administration banned slavery in Kabarda in 1866.

Former slaves and poor peasants constituted the bulk of returnees. However, the authorities also received petitions from aristocratic Muslim families who wished to return. Thus, in 1865, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul lobbied on behalf of Prince Shikhvali-Khamzaev of Kumyk District:

The prince, who previously served as a lieutenant (Rus. *poruchik*) in the Russian military, fully regrets the hastiness of his actions and cannot comprehend himself what force drove him to emigration. He claims that his family had been Russian subjects for over 200 years now and never had a reason to be dissatisfied with the Caucasus authorities. All his relatives who accompanied him in exile died; he is lonely and misses his homeland. He swears that he never entered the Ottoman service and does not adhere to any political or religious movements.<sup>26</sup>

The prince maximized the favorability of his appeal by securing the support of the Russian ambassador, who dispelled any potential misgivings about the prince's politics, and stressed his high-status family's record at a time when the Russian administration looked for Muslim allies in the Caucasus.

Female voices are difficult to find in histories of Russo-Ottoman migrations. All the more remarkable is to discover an account by a woman who secured a divorce in the Ottoman Empire and then returned to Russia. Suydukh Vali Kızı arrived with her two

---

<sup>26</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 29, ll. 3-4 (4 September 1865).

children in her ancestral village of Erpeli in central Daghestan in 1870. Her petition to remain indefinitely in Russia read as follows:

My husband, for an unauthorized (Rus. *samovol'nyi*) arrival from Turkey to Daghestan in 1867 was exiled to Siberia for a permanent settlement. He ran away from there. ... [Upon his secret return to Daghestan, he ordered me] to go to Talgam [on the Caspian coast] by horse, and from there by sea. We did not stop in villages, rode at night, and in the daytime waited in forests and steppes, away from the road. ... We passed Derbent, Kuba, Shemakh (Şamahı), and Aleksandropol. We crossed the border at the Arpachay River and arrived in Kars. There ... my husband joined the Turkish infantry, and I worked as a servant in the Paşa's family. Longing for my homeland, I asked my husband to grant me a divorce, so that I could return to Daghestan. ... Finally, he agreed, and together with pilgrims returning from Mecca, I left from Kars for Tiflis. There, I presented myself [to the Caucasus authorities] ... and received a temporary travel permission. I now arrived in Temir-Khan-Shura [capital of Daghestan Province] and would like to live in the village of Erpeli again.<sup>27</sup>

Suydukh Vali Kızı asserted that longing for one's homeland was the most powerful motivation for a return. The account of her husband's journey also demonstrates the scope of North Caucasian Muslims' dispersal: from Anatolia, through Daghestan, to Siberia, and, via the South Caucasus, back to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>28</sup> Return migration both challenged and sustained this abruptly expanded territoriality of North Caucasian communities in the second half of the nineteenth century.

---

<sup>27</sup> Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan (Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Dagestan, Makhachkala, hereafter cited as TsGA RD) f. 126, op. 3, d. 77, ll. 2-3 (15 June 1870).

<sup>28</sup> As hundreds of thousands of North Caucasians emigrated southward and westward, into Anatolia and Syria, thousands were exiled by tsarist authorities north- and eastward, into Russia's European provinces or Siberia, especially after the unsuccessful insurrection in Chechnya and Daghestan in 1877. On North Caucasian Muslims' exile in Russia, see Michael Kemper, "Daghestani Shaykhs and Scholars in Russian Exile: Networks of Sufism, Fatwas and Poetry," in *Daghestan and the World of Islam*, eds. Moshe Gammer and David J. Wasserstein (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2006), 95-107; Austin Jersild, "Imperial Russification: Daghestani Mountaineers in Russian Exile, 1877-83," *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 1 (2000): 5-16.

*How Legal Was Return Migration and Who Said So?*

Muslim migration from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire commenced before the conclusion of the Caucasus War (1817-1864) and was closely accompanied by return migration. Already by the early 1860s, many muhajirs, who were resettled in villages throughout the Ottoman Balkans and Anatolia, petitioned Russian consuls for repatriation. Petitions were submitted on behalf of one family, a village, or a group of villages. In one exceptional case, in 1863, a Shapsugh Circassian, Muhammad Sheretlugov, initiated a mass signature-gathering campaign in favor of a return to Russia. He traveled from village to village in northern Bulgaria, collecting signatures from Crimean Tatar, Nogai Tatar, and Circassian muhajirs. He planned to travel to Istanbul and deliver that mass petition to Ottoman officials and the Russian ambassador. His campaigning, however, displeased local authorities, and the Varna district governor put him in jail before he could depart for Istanbul.<sup>29</sup> Following Sheretlugov's arrest, the authorities summoned hundreds of local Tatars and Circassians for an explanation, and they all affirmed their demand for an immediate return to Russia.<sup>30</sup>

Many refugees returned to their villages in the Caucasus without notifying the Ottoman or Russian authorities in advance. The Russians granted many early returnees permission to re-enter.<sup>31</sup> Between June and September 1861, at least 54 Chechen, 97

---

<sup>29</sup> MnV f. 5, op. 2, d. 24, no. 1615, ll. 147-50 (4 July 1863).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., f. 5, op. 2, d. 23, no. 1615, ll. 1506-08 (22 July 1863).

<sup>31</sup> On Russian policies toward returnees in the early 1860s, see Pinson, "Demographic Warfare," 109-111. On respective Ottoman policies, see Cuthell, "Muhacirin Komisyonu," 178-85.



Kumyk, and 49 Nogai Tatar families returned and were resettled in the North Caucasus.<sup>32</sup> Overall, several thousand Muslim families returned to Russia in the 1860-64 period.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps, the return of those emigrants stemmed a greater exodus of Muslims, especially from the Northcentral and Northeast Caucasus, because returnees painted a picture of a difficult and hungry life in the Ottoman Empire.

The government's relatively lenient approach in the early 1860s, if compared to its policies in later decades, was a result of competing sets of legislation and practices by local authorities. The involvement of multiple governmental actors complicated the resolution of return migration cases. The Russian government administered the Caucasus region through the Caucasus Viceroyalty, with its seat in Tiflis. By the 1860s, after a series of administrative reorganizations, the region comprised six governorates or *guberniia* (five in the South Caucasus: Kutaisi, Tiflis, Erivan, Baku, and Elizavetpol, plus Stavropol), three provinces or *oblast'* (all in the North Caucasus: Kuban, Terek, and Daghestan), and three districts or *okrug* (Black Sea, Zakatala, and Sukhum).<sup>34</sup> The return migration, examined in this chapter, occurred primarily to the territories included in the three provinces and the three districts of the Caucasus Viceroyalty.

All governors reported to the Russian-appointed Caucasus Viceroy. The Tiflis-based Administration for the Mountaineers, under the Viceroy's jurisdiction, examined written and oral petitions to return. The Caucasus Army, local land-planning committees,

---

<sup>32</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 21, ll. 18-98 (28 June - 9 September 1861). The government particularly favored the return of Nogai Tatars to Stavropol Province, see SSSA f. 11, op. 1, d. 3239, ll. 176 (14 July 1862), 234-35 (6 December 1862).

<sup>33</sup> For lists of Ossetian, Kabardin, Chechen, and Daghestani returnees, see TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 21-27 (1860-64).

<sup>34</sup> Following the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, Russia annexed the Elviye-i Selâse, or the Ottoman administrative units of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum. The former two merged into Kars Province, and the latter joined Kutaisi Province until 1903, when it was reorganized into Batum Province.

and border patrols also exercised influence in deciding whether to allow reimmigration. The Foreign Ministry routinely intervened in high-profile repatriation cases, and the Interior Ministry operated a network of secret police in the Caucasus that, by the late nineteenth century, investigated returnees' connections to "Pan-Islamic propaganda."

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Russian and Ottoman empires had been evolving their "pre-modern" notions of subjecthood into the "modern" concept of citizenship, replete with a defined set of rights, freedoms, and obligations.<sup>35</sup> By the early 1860s, citizenship policies were not yet fully drawn out and, because they were primarily designed for static populations, were ill-adapted to frontier regions and peoples. Technically, all North Caucasian Muslims who came under Russian rule, either voluntarily or through conquest, became Russian subjects.

The Russian state did not allow dual subjecthood but would not offer a clear mechanism for its subjects to renounce Russian subjecthood either. This legal oddity resulted in a convoluted policy for emigration out of the North Caucasus. State administrators were aware that most Muslims petitioning to leave for the Ottoman Empire did not intend to return to Russia. Muhajirs-to-be explicitly told them so and also sold their houses, lands, and cattle, preparing for an expensive journey. The authorities found it

---

<sup>35</sup> The terms "subjecthood" and "citizenship" have different implications in the context of constitutionalism and civil society, but not for crossing borders in the late imperial period. For this reason, I use them interchangeably, as translations for the Russian term *poddanstvo* and the Ottoman term *tebi'yet*. On Russian citizenship, see Lohr, *Russian Citizenship*, 83-114; special issue in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 7, no. 2-3 (2006). On Russian citizenship in the Caucasus, see Austin Jersild, "From Savagery to Citizenship: Caucasian Mountaineers and Muslims in the Russian Empire," in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and People, 1900-1917*, eds. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 101-14. On Ottoman citizenship, see Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality*; Karen M. Kern, *Imperial Citizen: Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Provinces of Iraq* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2011); special issue in *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016).

administratively and legally easier to place Muslim emigration under the already existing legislation governing the hajj.<sup>36</sup> Muslims received travel documents authorizing their journey to Mecca, with the right to exit and re-enter the Russian Empire within a six-month period. If unforeseen circumstances delayed pilgrims' return, they had a right to request an extension through the nearest Russian consulate in the Ottoman Empire. Those who overstayed their travel documents or did not request an extension could be denied re-entrance. The final decision depended on how the authorities chose to interpret one's national status, an ambiguous concept in the imperial borderlands. In theory, if the government deemed returnees to be Russian subjects, they were readmitted, but, because they returned with expired documents, they were branded as "vagabonds" (Rus. *brodiagi*) and could be punished with the resettlement in Russia's interior provinces.<sup>37</sup> If the authorities suspected returnees of having accepted Ottoman citizenship, they were treated as foreign subjects and were deported to the Ottoman Empire.

The Caucasus authorities suspected that many returnees used the legal ambiguity surrounding muhajirs' and hajjis' terms of travel to their advantage. Specifically, officials regularly assumed that pilgrims who had overstayed their visit to the Ottoman Empire were, in fact, muhajirs who had emigrated but then chose to return to Russia. For example, in 1866, the authorities investigated the case of Yusuf Musa oğlu, a Chechen pilgrim. The following report is based on his testimony:

Five years ago, Yusuf Musa oğlu and his brother left for Mecca for one year. On their way home from Mecca, his brother died. Yusuf Musa oğlu was also ill and spent some time in different cities in Turkey. Nine months ago, he recovered sufficiently enough to undertake a journey to his motherland, but before reaching Erzurum he was robbed by bandits. The bandits took away his money, to the sum

---

<sup>36</sup> See Pinson, "Demographic Warfare," 100-06a.

<sup>37</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 2565, ll. 12-15 (27 December 1872); f. 7, op. 1, d. 2694, ll. 43-46 (27 December 1872).

of 500 rubles, and all his possessions, including his passport, and shot him in his right arm above elbow.<sup>38</sup>

The authorities questioned the veracity of Yusuf Musa oğlu's account and of those like him, who claimed to have gone on hajj and did not return for several years.

This procedure of a formal application to exit the Russian Empire was not uniformly enforced, interpreted, or communicated to Muslim residents.<sup>39</sup> On many occasions, the authorities issued only one passport per household; such a document did not qualify for re-entrance even within a six-month period. Besides, most emigrants never went through this procedure in the first place. Western Circassians who were expelled in 1863-64, and Chechens and Abkhaz who left en masse in 1865-67, never received travel documents and did not qualify for return to the Caucasus, as far as the Russian administration was concerned. As for those who emigrated voluntarily after 1867, many Muslims judged it to be cheaper and less cumbersome to cross the border into the Ottoman Empire without any paperwork and without notifying the Russian authorities of their departure.

At the time of mass migrations of North Caucasian Muslims, the Russian authorities had a simplistic and self-serving understanding of Ottoman naturalization. The Caucasus Viceroy instructed his subordinates that return migration was strictly prohibited for all those who accepted Ottoman citizenship. The Caucasus officials were to regard any indication that returnees had asked the Ottoman government for land, settled on that land,

---

<sup>38</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 30, l. 97 (10 June 1866).

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 2694, ll. 69-71 (15 August 1873).

or submitted their Russian passports to Ottoman authorities as proof of their Ottoman naturalization.<sup>40</sup>

The Ottomans generally used the 1857 Immigration Law for the purpose of naturalizing muhajirs. The law specified that immigrants would make an oath of allegiance to the Sultan prior to receiving any benefits (Article 1).<sup>41</sup> Because of that stipulation, the Ottoman Refugee Commission, which distributed land, cattle, and financial subsidies to muhajirs, considered all muhajirs to be Ottoman subjects. In 1869, the Ottoman government adopted the Law of Ottoman Nationality (*Tâbiyyet-i Osmaniye Kanunnamesi*) that outlined the general terms of naturalization. According to the new law, foreign citizens could obtain Ottoman citizenship after having lived in the Ottoman domains for five consecutive years (Article 3).<sup>42</sup> In all likelihood, the 1869 law complemented but did not supersede the privileges reserved for new immigrants in the 1857 law.

The Ottomans rejected the right of North Caucasian Muslims to return to Russia and were adamant not to allow their citizens to hold passports of another empire. Following the Crimean War (1853-56), Greek merchants in the Black Sea ports commonly held both Russian and Ottoman passports to avoid the payment of import and export tariffs.<sup>43</sup> Because of that and at a time when Serbs, Bulgarians, and Armenians demanded autonomy, the Porte wanted to be sure that North Caucasian muhajirs would not become a fluid trans-imperial population with divided political loyalties. Nevertheless, it was not uncommon for muhajir communities to demand a permission to return to the Caucasus. In those cases,

---

<sup>40</sup> RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, ll. 181-87ob (no date provided, likely 1862).

<sup>41</sup> "Conditions arrêtées par le Gouvernement Impérial au sujet de la colonisation en Turquie," in *Législation Ottomane*, ed. Aristarchi Bey, 16-19.

<sup>42</sup> For the text of the Law of Ottoman Nationality (19 January 1869), see Kern, *Imperial Citizen*, 157-58.

<sup>43</sup> RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, ll. 5-6ob (23 January 1860).

local Ottoman authorities tried to persuade muhajirs to stay through a combination of economic incentives and administrative red tape. If refugees refused and insisted on returning to Russia, the officials acquiesced out of fear that refugees might turn to crime.<sup>44</sup> The Ottomans required departing muhajirs to return all free land and cattle that were given to them.

*A Closed Border, Unrelenting Officials, and  
Chechens Who Wanted to Live in Russia, 1863-67*

The official Russian policy toward return migration was formalized by the end of the Caucasus War (1817-64) and mass expulsion/emigration from western Circassia (1863-64), Chechnya (1865), and Abkhazia (1867). Over a half million Circassians, around 40,000 Chechens, and 20,000 Abkhaz left in a span of a few years. The Russian administration favored emigration of Muslim populations under the guise of “pacifying” the region and backed the colonization of fertile Kuban, Sukhum, and Terek areas, which would increase the Christian (and therefore, supposedly, loyal) population throughout the region. Russia adopted a strict “no return” policy and approved very few requests by North Caucasian Muslims to return home in this period.

Imperial officials justified their ban on return migration in different ways. The most common argument against reimmigration was that returnees could be foreign “emissaries” sent by the Ottoman government to persuade North Caucasian Muslims to emigrate to the

---

<sup>44</sup> BOA Y.A. HUS. 411/97 (29 *cemaziyelahir* 1318, 24 October 1900); also A.MKT.MHM 272/18 (19 *safer* 1280, 5 August 1863). In one reported case in 1870, a group of Abkhaz muhajirs informed the Ottomans that they were willing to go anywhere but to remain in the Ottoman state: move to Russia, Egypt, or even Iran; see Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 61.

Ottoman Empire or to agitate against Russian rule.<sup>45</sup> Such allegations stemmed from a war legacy of treating all arrivals from the Ottoman Empire as military agents. The empires commonly suspected each other of sending spies to wage propaganda among their cross-border populations. In the same period, the Ottomans and the British complained of “Russian emissaries” who promoted emigration of Greeks and Armenians in eastern Anatolia.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the Russian authorities suspected that muhajirs may have internalized Ottoman ideologies of the time, whether Pan-Islamism during the reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909)<sup>47</sup> or dreaded constitutionalism of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution.<sup>48</sup>

The fear of foreign ideas that returnees may bring to the homeland was a Pan-European phenomenon at the time. Reactionary parties in Europe feared the corrupting influence not of the Ottoman Empire but of the United States of America. Hungarian officials considered blocking the return of Slovak-American returnees who could challenge the ethno-political status quo of the unstable Dual Monarchy; the Austrians and the Russians were wary of Polish returnees who may have been “radicalized” with Polish nationalist ideas in Chicago and New York; and the Unionist and Protestant leadership of

---

<sup>45</sup> See SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2836, ll. 2-5 (7 September 1870); GARF f. R5235, op. 4, d. 504, ll. 2-8 (1903-18). On individual cases of returnees being accused of pro-Ottoman propaganda, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 469, ll. 5-11 (30 April - 1 May 1869); d. 250, ll. 278-79, 367-68 (26 June - 5 November 1869).

<sup>46</sup> TNA FO 195/1315, Clayton to Layard, ff. 216-17 (Van, 22 November 1880), 252-53 (Van, 2 November 1880); FO 195/953, Palgrave to Villiers, ff. 27-28 (Trabzon, 4 February 1869).

<sup>47</sup> On Pan-Islamism and the Hamidian Caliphate, see Deringil, “Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State”; Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*. On Russian fears of Pan-Islamism, see SSSA f. 5, d. 3317, l. 4 (21 November 1874).

<sup>48</sup> In 1911, the Daghestan governor refused readmitting one refugee under the pretext that he spent too much time in the Ottoman Empire and “likely witnessed a recent coup there,” referring to the 1908 Young Turk Revolution; see TsGA RD f. 2, op. 5, d. 40, l. 6ob (3 March 1911). The Daghestan governor repeated similar accusations in another case, stating that “witnessing extraordinary political developments” in the Ottoman Empire makes one’s presence in Daghestan “extremely undesirable”; see TsGA RD f. 2, op. 8, d. 39, ll. 22, 24 (25 January - 16 March 1913).

Ireland feared a mass return of Catholics from the only country that successfully defied British rule.<sup>49</sup> A threat inherent in return migration, from the perspective of imperial administrations, was the risk of losing control over the flow of ideas and information in general, and specifically proliferation of cultural counter-narratives deemed incompatible with the empire's self-vision.

The Russian government also refused to accept returnees due to a lack of available land.<sup>50</sup> In the 1860s, the Russians passed comprehensive land reforms throughout the North Caucasus that drastically redrew the ethnic and political balance of power and mandated new forms of Russian-style capitalism and landownership across the region.<sup>51</sup> The land of muhajirs who had left for the Ottoman Empire was redistributed among Cossack troops, Christian settlers, and local Muslim communities. By 1897, Slavic colonists comprised 91 percent of the population in Kuban Province and 34 percent in Terek Province.<sup>52</sup> Those provinces still had enough free land to accommodate returnees. The authorities used the land issue as a pretext to justify the ban on return migration.

The internal governmental correspondence reveals that the perceived high cost of resettling returnees was a major reason to deny their readmittance to muhajirs. Notably, this justification came with a certain perception of who returnees were and what a drain on

---

<sup>49</sup> Wyman, *Round-Trip to America*, 151-68.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, ll. 148-51ob (29 May 1862); SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ll. 27-30 (25 October 1865).

<sup>51</sup> On Russian land reforms in the Caucasus, see Adol'f P. Berzhe et al., eds., *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoi arkheograficheskoi komissiei*, vol. 12 (Tiflis: Tipografiia Glavnogo upravleniia namestnika Kavkazskago, 1904); Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 211-28; Ibragimova, *Chechenskaia istoriia*, 126-65.

<sup>52</sup> The first and only all-Russian imperial census of 1897 collected ethnic data by native language. Slavic colonists in the Caucasus were native speakers of Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian, and smaller communities of Poles, Czechs, Serbs, and Bulgarians. German, Estonian, Scottish, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Moldovan settler communities also lived in the region. See Nikolai A. Troinitsky et al., eds., *Obshchii svod po Imperii rezul'tatov razrabotki dannykh Pervoi vseobshchei perepisi naseleniia* (Saint Petersburg: Parovaia tipo-litografiia N.L. Nyrkina, 1905), vol. 2, Table XIII.



state coffers they would be. In 1878, Chief of Staff of the Caucasus Viceroy bluntly stated that returnees tend to be “parasites and adventure-seekers” (Rus. *tuneiadtsy i iskateli prikliuchenii*), who “do not burden themselves with becoming settled and instead develop a habit of vagrancy, which leads to beggary, and in that state they return [to the Caucasus].”<sup>53</sup> The authorities assumed that, in order to prevent returnees from engaging in banditry, the state would need to supply them with free land, housing, and financial aid. Moreover, some officials reckoned that by allowing return migration, Russia would signal to her resident Muslim subjects that, should they emigrate to the Ottoman Empire and fail there, they would always be able to return.<sup>54</sup> In that line of thinking, approved cases of readmittance would lead to more return migration and, correspondingly, ever-greater costs of resettling returnees. Ultimately, the government justified its ban on return migration of Muslim muhajirs in terms of the greater public good, namely preserving the social order in the Caucasus and saving money in the treasury.

Russia’s attitude towards return migration is, perhaps, best epitomized by the 1865 Chechen “returnee crisis,” a landmark event in the Ottoman-Russian diplomacy but now a forgotten affair on both sides of the border. By 1865, the Russians and the Ottomans jointly agreed to let about 5,000 Chechen families emigrate from the North Caucasus to Anatolia.<sup>55</sup> The two empires signed a treaty, whereby the Ottomans were obliged not to resettle Chechens in their frontier regions with Russia. Chechens were divided into 28 emigrating

---

<sup>53</sup> For this attitude, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 1664, ll. 1-2 (23 May 1878).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Although all muhajir households were listed as Chechen by Russian officials, some of them were Karabulak, Ingush, Ossetian, Kabardin, and Nogai Tatar. The number cited by the government at the time was 4,990 families, or 23,057 people. Contemporary historians estimate the number to have been in excess of 40,000 people; see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 90 (1865), d. 2852, l. 65 (25 May 1871); Ibragimova, *Emigratsiia chechentsev*, 33-43.

parties and escorted by the Russian military to the Aleksandropol-Kars border post, where they were entrusted to the Ottoman authorities. [See Appendix IX.]

Upon the Chechens' arrival in eastern Anatolia, they learned that new villages were not yet built for them or were located in arid regions, which Chechen elders refused to accept. Early parties of Chechen muhajirs were then temporarily settled in villages around Muş and Erzurum, both towns lying within the Ottomans' frontier provinces with Russia. New incoming parties of Chechen muhajirs, when they discovered the whereabouts of their friends and families, categorically refused to go anywhere except Muş and Erzurum.

Unable to support themselves and without sufficient aid from the Ottoman Refugee Commission, some muhajirs turned to looting. In Muş Subprovince, which hosted up to 18,000-20,000 Chechen muhajirs, refugees raided local villages. One gang pillaged an Armenian monastery and killed a bishop at Madnavank, at which point British diplomats became involved and lobbied the Ottomans to promptly resettle Chechens elsewhere.<sup>56</sup> Reportedly, five to six thousand Chechen muhajirs moved toward Muş itself, determined to loot it. They besieged the town, and thereafter local authorities opened negotiations that prevented an armed clash between refugees and town folk.<sup>57</sup> The situation was not much better around Erzurum, as Chechen muhajirs there were dragged into a conflict with local Kurds. Although it remains unclear how the confrontation began, two Kurdish chiefs were murdered, and muhajirs found themselves in an escalating conflict with local populations.<sup>58</sup>

The British consul in Erzurum believed that Chechen chiefs acted under the influence of Musa Paşa [Kundukhov], who was “possessed with the chimera of establishing

---

<sup>56</sup> TNA FO 78/1875, Taylor to Lyons, #1 (Erzurum, 3 November 1865), f. 114.

<sup>57</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ll. 66-67 (14 September 1865).

<sup>58</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ll. 62-65 (29 September 1865).

an independent Circassian [sic] nation in Turkey subject to the payment of a yearly tribute to the Porte but independent of it in all matters relative to their internal policy as a distinct national body.”<sup>59</sup> In 1865, leaders of Chechen communities that were temporarily settled in Kurdistan penned a petition to Istanbul asking for their relocation to the Khabur River on the border between the Zor and Mardin subprovinces. They justified their geographic choice by citing the availability of agricultural land for their entire community. They considered it paramount to be settled together in one region.<sup>60</sup> The Ottomans, on the contrary, expected to divide Chechen refugees into several settlements at a large distance from each other, to reduce their chiefs’ power. Although Russian and Ottoman interests concerning the settlement of Chechen muhajirs largely coalesced, mutual accusations abounded as time passed by. Some Ottoman officials were convinced that muhajirs’ insubordination was instigated by the Russians who had long-term designs on the Ottoman eastern provinces, whereas the Russians thought that the Ottomans did not remove refugees farther from their border because they hoped to use them against Russia in the event of a future conflict.<sup>61</sup>

As winter approached and the Ottoman authorities and the Chechen chiefs had not agreed on the final place of settlement, Chechen muhajirs started moving back toward the Russian border with an intention to return to Chechnya. By October 1865, about 2,680 Chechens amassed at the Arpachay River, which was a natural frontier between the Ottoman province of Erzurum and the Russian province of Aleksandropol (now Gyumri, Armenia). Every other night, a number of people attempted to cross the border, only to be

---

<sup>59</sup> TNA FO 78/1875, Taylor to Lyons, #2 (Erzurum, 23 November 1865), ff. 118-21r.

<sup>60</sup> BOA İ.DH. 546/38018, f. 6 (17 *şevval* 1282, 5 March 1866).

<sup>61</sup> TNA FO 78/1875, Taylor to Russell, #5 (Erzurum, 25 November 1865), ff. 116-17.

pushed back by the Russian troops. Eventually, the Russian military agreed to accept several Chechen deputies for negotiations, and a few Chechens journeyed to Tiflis to present their requests.<sup>62</sup>

The negotiations between Chechen representatives and Russian officials reveal differences in their understanding of the notion of citizenship, as well as muhajirs' adept usage of legal ambiguities in their bid to reimmigrate. The Caucasus authorities justified their ban on Chechens' return by saying that Chechens had left the empire voluntarily and had lost all rights of Russian subjects; as Ottoman citizens, they needed proper documents to enter Russia. Chechen chiefs argued that, although they left Chechnya of their own will, they never stopped considering themselves Russian subjects, and because they were not given land by the Ottomans, they never became Ottoman citizens. Evidently, the two parties had differing interpretations of how Ottoman naturalization worked; both views could be supported by either the 1857 Ottoman Immigration Law or the 1869 Ottoman Citizenship Law, as previously described. Chechen deputies may have also been aware of inconsistencies in Russia's own legislation; because, in 1865, Chechen muhajirs had not signed, as far as we know, non-return statements prior to their emigration and returned within the six months, they had a legal basis to argue that they were still Russian citizens.

Moving on to practical obstacles to reimmigration, the Caucasus authorities claimed that Chechens' land had already been redistributed and there was no home that they could return to. In response, refugee chiefs made a statement that they would rather die on the Arpachay River, "with the Russians watching them die," than go back to the Ottoman Empire. Some Chechen deputies expressed willingness to be resettled in any

---

<sup>62</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ff. 80-83 (1 November 1865).

Russian province that the authorities would choose for them, even Siberia, and that, if needed, all refugees would convert from Islam to Orthodox Christianity right there, on the border.<sup>63</sup> This passionate exchange reveals not only the Chechens' desperation but also their expectations of a constitutive relationship between one's religion and subjecthood, or their suspicions of the Russians' bias against their Muslim identity. The conversion into the empire's dominant faith, for Chechens, symbolized an ultimate act of loyalty and submission to the Russian Tsar. The Russians thought differently and refused to let a single Chechen through.

In mid-November 1865, the Ottoman troops arrived at the scene. They cut off muhajirs' access to the riverbank and, after having failed to persuade people to leave the Russo-Ottoman border, fired a cannon at the camp. By the next day, all Chechen muhajirs were gone from the district, escorted by the Ottoman cavalry.<sup>64</sup> It took one more year for the Ottomans to remove Chechen muhajirs completely from the frontier provinces. The two major Chechen settlement areas were established in Ra's al-'Ayn in northern Syria and Sivas Province in central Anatolia.<sup>65</sup> The two empires came to regard the 1865 Chechen emigration as a successful operation and an excellent example of cross-border cooperation. The Ottoman government bestowed their Mecidiye military orders to eight Russian officials who were in charge of emigration. In response, the Russians awarded their own military orders (St. Anna and St. Stanislaus) to fourteen Ottoman officials, including

---

<sup>63</sup> At least one officer in the Caucasus Army expressed that embracing the Orthodox faith "would be essential" for returnees. However, this minority view was opposed by Russian civil authorities and never became official policy; see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ll. 16 (21 October 1865), 80-83 (1 November 1865).

<sup>64</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, ll. 191-96 (15 November 1865).

<sup>65</sup> According to Russian reports, 13,648 Chechens settled around Ra's al-'Ayn in Diyarbekir Subprovince, 7,196 in Sivas Subprovince, 621 in Biga Subprovince, 300 in Kahramanmaraş Subprovince, and 155 remained in Kars Subprovince; see RGVIA f. 400, op. 1, d. 49, ll. 22-26ob (20 October 1866), 34-34ob (31 January 1868).

officers responsible for defending Muş and dispersing the Arpachay camp with cannon fire.<sup>66</sup>

What Chechen muhajirs did not know and probably never found out, as this information had been buried in a Tiflis archive, was that the Caucasus authorities, lacking faith in the Ottomans' ability to resolve the border crisis, devised a plan to resettle Chechen returnees. They found land for returnees in Stavropol Province and Little Kabarda.<sup>67</sup> That would have been a solution of last resort, if Russian border troops could not hold muhajirs back any longer. Because the Ottoman cavalry had arrived and cleared the camp, the Russian resettlement plan for Chechens never needed to be implemented.

*How Fast Can You Run? A Compromise to Be Held Secret, 1867-78*

After 1867, mass Muslim emigration from the North Caucasus subsided. Departures of entire village communities from Kabarda, Chechnya, and Daghestan continued throughout tsarist rule, and a mass flight of Abkhaz occurred in 1877-78. However, these migrations never reached the proportions of the 1863-66 exodus, which more than halved the Muslim population of the North Caucasus. The Russian attitudes toward emigration were no longer encouraging. Old perceptions about "frontier Muslims" being a security threat remained, but the Caucasus officials believed that emptying the region of Muslims harmed Russian interests even more by decreasing the labor force required to modernize the Caucasus economy and by increasing the Muslim population of

---

<sup>66</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2786, ll. 40, 75-79, 103-06 (21 August 1866 - 4 January 1868).

<sup>67</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, l. 54 (30 October 1865).

the Ottoman state. The government instituted a series of policies to stem emigration of Muslims.<sup>68</sup> This change in the emigration policy did not upend the formal Russian ban on readmitting returnees, who, in the eyes of authorities, were still viewed as law-breakers and suspects, not victims, but it softened local-level policies toward them.

A new idea – that return migration would help the government’s anti-emigration efforts – gained traction among some Caucasus officials. The authorities hoped that returning emigrants, disillusioned with the Ottoman resettlement program and their quality of life in exile, would urge their brethren to remain in the Russian Empire. Most returnees were expected to do this in an ordinary fashion, by talking to their neighbors, but in some cases, the authorities engineered returnees’ engagement with target communities. In 1868, several parties of returning Chechens were sent home not through the Georgian Military Road, but by a longer route – via Zakatala District (now in Azerbaijan) and Daghestan, specifically so that they could visit areas that had been exhibiting too strong a desire to emigrate and dispel people’s pro-Ottoman views.<sup>69</sup> Reportedly, Zakatala and Daghestani residents regarded those Chechens as government agents and largely ignored their message. Whether this policy was more productive in Chechnya is unclear because officials cited both “positive” and “negative” effects of returnees on reducing or increasing the emigration zeal in their districts.<sup>70</sup>

The Russian government even encouraged some notables to return to the Caucasus, if they were seen as potential allies in stemming Muslim emigration into the Ottoman

---

<sup>68</sup> See Meyer, “Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship,” 17-23.

<sup>69</sup> See SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, l. 71 (25 May 1871). Already in 1865, Col. Zelenyi, a Russian Colonel overseeing Chechen emigration from the Ottoman side, petitioned the Caucasus authorities on behalf of three Chechen elders to allow them to return to Russia. The elders assured him they would impress upon Chechens in the Caucasus that “obeying orders by the Russian government was better than dying in Turkey”; see TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 29, l. 10 (15 November 1865).

<sup>70</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, l. 69ob (25 May 1871); f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 67-69 (27 March 1878).

Empire. In 1867, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul petitioned the Porte to allow Pshemakho Dzhambotov, a Kabardin prince, to return to Russia. He argued that the prince himself asked for his patronage. It later transpired that the prince never expressed intentions to return, but it was his relatives in the Caucasus who wanted him back. Kabarda’s nobility, indeed, heavily lobbied the Terek governor to secure Dzhambotov’s return. The Terek administration hoped to use the Kabarda Muslim notables’ request for its own purposes. The Terek governor wrote, “return migration of a person like Prince Dzhambotov would, without doubt, affect the entire population of Kabarda and destroy [local Muslims’] desire of moving to Turkey.”<sup>71</sup> The prince chose to remain in the Ottoman Empire.

From 1867 onwards, returnees were accepted on a case-by-case basis. In the 1867-71 period, Chechen muhajirs attempted at least 5,453 undocumented border crossings, and 3,510 Chechens were readmitted to Terek Province. [See Table 17.]

Table 17: Chechen returnees to Russia, 1867-71

Year	Apprehended returnees	Admitted		Deported	
1867	162	121	75%	41	25%
1868	664	422	64%	242	36%
1869	369	203	55%	166	45%
1870	1,282	453	35%	829	65%
1871	2,976	2,311	78%	665	22%
Total:	5,453	3,510	64%	1,943	36%

The estimates are based on SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, ll. 79-83 (1867-71). Individual cases are recorded in SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250 (1867-70).

<sup>71</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 3, d. 126, ll. 17-18ob (21 May 1871).



A turning point in the Russian government's policy came in 1871, coinciding with a dramatic spike in Chechens' attempts to return home. In September and October alone, almost a thousand Chechens crossed the Arpachay River into Russia. They were refugees of 1865, led out of the Caucasus by Musa Paşa [Kundukhov]. Recognizing that the status quo was untenable, the authorities settled on a compromise that would preserve Russia's ban on return migration, while providing a framework for an orderly resolution of pressing reimmigration cases. Officially, deportation remained the default policy toward returnees, as stated by law. Moreover, the authorities committed to bolstering imperial security by adding more Cossack troops on the border and lobbying the Ottomans to increase their own frontier guard. Mass petitions submitted by potential returnees from within the Ottoman state would still be declined.

Different rules applied, however, for returnees who already crossed the Russian border. The decision on whether to readmit them or not depended largely on how deep into the Russian territory returnees reached prior to their arrest. The returnees who were intercepted shortly after crossing the Russian frontier, in Aleksandropol Province or Akhalkalaki District, were deported. The authorities judged it to be difficult to deport those who made it too far; because returnees refused to go back to the Ottoman border voluntarily, the Russians required the military to escort them at a considerable expense to the treasury. Therefore, those returnees who managed to reach the internal South Caucasus

provinces or the Georgian Military Road leading into the North Caucasus were delivered to Tiflis for further consideration.<sup>72</sup>

When in Tiflis, returnees who had a prior criminal record within the Russian Empire or carried weapons were deported. Similarly, those who had enough money to afford a journey back to the Ottoman Empire were deported. Returnees' cases could have been bolstered by their voluntary surrender to the authorities rather than their being arrested on the road. All those who passed the first round of inspection in Tiflis were issued temporary travel documents to Vladikavkaz, the capital of Terek Province.<sup>73</sup>

In Vladikavkaz, returnees came up for a second round of review. To make a final decision, the Terek governor solicited the help of local village communities (Rus. *aul'nye obshchestva*). Since the late 1860s, the authorities had been inviting village councils to participate in local-level governance when it came to emigration and reimmigration matters. If someone wanted to leave for the Ottoman Empire, he or she had to secure a communal statement (*obshchestvennyi prigovor*), signed by village councillors, that guaranteed that village residents would pay ten years' worth of taxes on the petitioner's behalf, should he or she fail to return within six months.<sup>74</sup> For those returning from the Ottoman Empire, the council of their ancestral village was required to formally accept them back and provide them with a land plot, out of the shared land grant awarded to the village through the latest land reform.<sup>75</sup> In practice, returnees almost always received such communal statements, owing to deeply-rooted social customs and kinship loyalty.

---

<sup>72</sup> For the new policy, see SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 60-61 (August 1872). A variation of this policy was suggested by the Terek governor as early as 1867, when he admitted that it was impractical to deport those returnees who succeeded in crossing the Caucasus Mountains into his province; see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, l. 45ob (27 July 1867).

<sup>73</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 97-106 (May 1871).

<sup>74</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, ll. 389-96 (21 December 1872).

<sup>75</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, ll. 160-62 (31 May 1871).

Returnees who were officially readmitted into Russian citizenship often asked the authorities to help them to bring the rest of their families back from the Ottoman Empire. The Caucasus officials would then deliver a petition to the Ottoman Refugee Commission, via the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, asking to locate and return specific individuals. This official procedure took years and almost never succeeded; Ottoman authorities were either reluctant to let refugees go or could not locate the individuals in question. Russian officials were aware of this. In 1867, Terek authorities boldly advised Chechen returnees that the best way to accomplish family reunification was to send someone from Chechnya to smuggle their families out of the Ottoman Empire back into Russia, in contravention of Ottoman laws.<sup>76</sup> The provincial administration in Vladikavkaz offered to notify the Russian border guard about special circumstances of these families in order to guarantee their harassment-free readmittance. These cases of imperial support were exceptional, yet they demonstrate that the state could, theoretically, assume the position of an enabler and patron of Muslim return migration.

Humanitarianism, an ideology that was embedded in the European empires' *mission civilisatrice* at the time, had its role in facilitating return migration, although it should not be overstated. Many officials cited purely humanitarian concerns when permitting returnees to stay. Baron Aleksandr Nikolai, Chief of Staff to the Viceroy of the Caucasus, wrote that Circassian and Chechen refugees who emigrated unwillingly or under pressure had been returning to the Russian domains exhausted, hungry, and "almost naked," and should be welcomed back, "if only because [our] sense of humanity did not allow to send them back."<sup>77</sup> Some officials lobbied to readmit returnees who were too

---

<sup>76</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 32, ll. 3, 12-13 (18 July 1867).

<sup>77</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 1741, ll. 5-6 (24 December 1871).

sickly to survive a journey back to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>78</sup> Other returnees found sympathy for being slaves who escaped their masters in Anatolia.<sup>79</sup>

The policy of admitting refugees who made it too far never became official law so as not to circumscribe the autonomy of local administrations to assess individual cases. It extended to Muslims of the Terek and Daghestan provinces. The only group explicitly excluded was Karabulaks, whom the Russians refused to admit back under any circumstances.<sup>80</sup> It was also kept secret from the Ottoman government. In the following years, the Terek authorities resettled several thousands of returning Chechens, Ingush, Ossetians, and Kabardins. It is difficult to estimate a precise return rate for Terek Province, with no definitive numbers on either emigration or reimmigration, but Russian border reports suggest the return rate of 10-20 percent, with Chechens accounting for the higher range.<sup>81</sup>

A slight liberalization in the Russian policy did not go unnoticed among muhajir communities in the Ottoman Empire. In 1872, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul received a petition on behalf of 8,500 Circassian families who wished to return to Russia.<sup>82</sup> They complained of being duped into emigrating by their beys who preserved their lifestyle and privileges under Ottoman rule, whereas ordinary muhajirs suffered from poverty and

---

<sup>78</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, ll. 358, 381 (19 November 1869 - 14 July 1870).

<sup>79</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, ll. 345-46 (20 October 1869); d. 2073, ll. 40-41 (3 November 1879).

<sup>80</sup> Karabulaks were the third largest Vainakh tribe in the Northeast Caucasus, after the Chechens and the Ingush. The Russian military singled them out as a particularly rebellious group; most of them were pushed towards emigration to the Ottoman Empire, and their lands were distributed among Cossack troops. By 1865, 6,187 Karabulaks left for the Ottoman Empire; see Badaev, *Chechenskaia diaspora*, 101. In the Ottoman Empire, many Karabulaks settled in Ra's al-'Ayn, as mentioned in BOA DH.MHC 1/40, f. 2 (16 *zilkade* 1286, 17 February 1870). For a Russian imperial ban on their reimmigration, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, ll. 385-86 (20 July 1870). In the Soviet era, the remaining Karabulaks were claimed as a subgroup within either the Ingush or Chechen "nationalities."

<sup>81</sup> For individual petitions and decisions, see SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 1-57, 116-44 (1872-73); TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 3, d. 128-29, 131, 133-38 (14 January 1872 - 6 June 1880).

<sup>82</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 3011, ll. 3-5 (21 December 1872).

famine. In the following decades, Russian consuls complained of being inundated by North Caucasian petitioners who would sometimes refuse to leave consular premises until granted travel documents back into Russia; all such requests, in accordance with the secret “compromise,” were rejected.<sup>83</sup>

*“Making the Caspian Bloom Again,” or How the Empire Hoped to Use the Returnees*

At the height of mass Chechen return in 1871, the authorities decided that thousands of returnees might be put to good use in furthering Russia’s economic objectives. The Terek governor lobbied the Caucasus authorities to offer 2,200 returnees free land in Kizlyar District in northern Daghestan.<sup>84</sup> Those lands were either flooded or arid and, therefore, considered lost for agriculture. Kizlyar, once the largest city in the Russian south after Kiev and Astrakhan, was in steep decline by the late nineteenth century. With trans-Caucasus trade routes no longer passing through it, its only hope for revival was agricultural development. Through draining and irrigation works, returnees would open up this near-Caspian region to cultivation and thus reinvigorate its economy. In 1872, the government authorized land surveys to determine the feasibility of resettlement in Kizlyar. Three years later, a staggering price tag of constructing returnee villages and a decreasing volume of Chechen returnees prompted the authorities to shelve the project.<sup>85</sup>

The concept of a “returnee village” grew out of a “refugee settlement” – its ideological opposite that fulfills similar functions. In global practice, returnee villages are

---

<sup>83</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 2202, ll. 1-2 (7 August 1872); f. 12, op. 2, d. 469, l. 87 (2 May 1902).

<sup>84</sup> SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 212, ll. 2-3 (11 October 1871).

<sup>85</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 4, d. 48, ll. 38-42 (10 December 1874).

commonly used as a tool of governmental control over suspect populations and their remaking into “model citizens.” In the nineteenth century, the Mexican government promoted the establishment of villages for Mexican returnees alongside the border with the United States. It hoped that returnees would prevent Indian raids, stem territorial loss to the United States, and slow down further outflow of the Mexican population.<sup>86</sup> In the last couple of decades, returnee villages were set up as part of a national reconstruction program in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Serbia, and Bosnia.<sup>87</sup>

The Ottomans also planned to use North Caucasian muhajirs in reviving once profitable areas through land cultivation. In southern Anatolia, thousands of North Caucasian muhajirs were employed on cotton plantations of Çukurova. In northeastern Syria, Chechens settled in Ra’s al-‘Ayn and Circassians in al-Raqqqa, two ancient settlements that had been abandoned but, as oases, had an impressive agricultural potential. In 1912, the Ottoman subprovincial governor of Deir ez-Zor proposed an ambitious plan to construct irrigation canals between the Euphrates, Tigris, and Khabur Rivers to turn desert into agricultural land, where thousands of new muhajirs could be settled.<sup>88</sup>

In Russia, the government proposed to use returnees to colonize sparsely populated internal provinces that were in need of peasant labor. It was difficult to attract sufficient numbers of Christian Slavic immigrants to these regions, but desperate Muslim returnees had little choice but to accept such resettlement. As early as 1859, Circassians of the Natukhai tribe, were settled in Samara Province in the Volga region. Without governmental

---

<sup>86</sup> Hernández, *Mexican American Colonization*, 226.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Laura Hammond, *This Place Will Become Home: Refugee Repatriation to Ethiopia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 78-107; Kristi Anne Stolen, *Guatemalans in the Aftermath of Violence: The Refugees’ Return* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

<sup>88</sup> Dündar, “Pouring a People into the Desert,” 279-80.

aid, they had limited means of subsistence and soon fell victim to epidemic disease. Their relocation had been such a failure that, in the following year, the authorities resettled 81 survivors – slightly over half of the original community of 159 – back in the Caucasus.<sup>89</sup> In the 1860s, the Stavropol region and the lands of the Orenburg and Ural Cossack armies, and the Kuban region in the 1870s, were all considered for Muslim returnees’ resettlement.<sup>90</sup> Eventually, those destinations were abandoned due to financial and logistical complications, and most returnees were placed among their ethnic communities.

Tiflis authorities also viewed returnees as an experiment in social engineering. Some Caucasus officials suggested making resettlement conditional upon the returnees losing their right to own and carry weapons, a fundamental social norm and customary right of local societies. One Tiflis official claimed that it would constitute “an important step to a total disarmament of all Chechens [in Russia], which is exactly what the [Russian] administration pursues.”<sup>91</sup> This proposal was not put into action, so as not to provoke a counter-reaction in the region.

### *Lodges in the Borderlands, or How the Returnees Evaded the Two Empires*

In the second half of the nineteenth century, muhajirs, returnees, and their intermediaries created an entire infrastructure around the trafficking of people across the Russo-Ottoman frontier. Networks of guides, handlers, and hideout locations were hidden

---

<sup>89</sup> RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, l. 149ob (29 May 1862).

<sup>90</sup> RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, ll. 64 (26 July 1861), 181-87ob (1862); SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, l. 71ob (25 May 1871).

<sup>91</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2852, l. 77ob (25 May 1871).

from the view of government agents, and only rarely was this secretive world revealed in state records.<sup>92</sup> Transcripts of interrogations of returnees, initiated by the Tiflis police in 1864, hint not only at the scope of the trafficking enterprise but also at how essential these services were to those “illegally” emigrating from or returning to the Russian Empire. In coastal Trabzon Province, some villages founded by Abkhaz muhajirs had “safe houses” for returnees. Their residents returned to Russia, and their homes were taken up by a new group of Abkhaz returnees moving from Sivas to the Caucasus.<sup>93</sup> In 1865-66, up to 2,500 Circassians came from all over Anatolia to Trabzon Province and waited to cross over to Russia, if granted a chance.<sup>94</sup> The situation was similar in the eastern provinces of Erzurum and Bitlis, where authorities complained of non-local Chechens and Daghestanis (Lezgins) arriving and staying in their compatriots’ villages during winter, waiting for an opportunity to cross into Russia.<sup>95</sup>

Refugees would gather intelligence from the locals as to where the border security was the weakest.<sup>96</sup> Refugees normally crossed the Arpachay River, which separated the two empires, at night and then proceeded either to Tiflis, if they wanted to present their case to the Caucasus authorities, or to the Dariali Gorge, a mountain pass between the South and North Caucasus. They traveled in small groups, through forested and mountainous areas, avoiding roads and towns, unless necessary.

---

<sup>92</sup> For a study on Armenian networks of smugglers from the Ottoman Empire to the Americas, see David Gutman, “Agents of Mobility: Migrant Smuggling Networks, Transhemispheric Migration, and Time-Space Compression in Ottoman Anatolia, 1888-1908,” *InterDisciplines* 1 (2012): 48-84.

<sup>93</sup> TNA FO 195/1329, #37, Biliotti to Goschen (Çarşamba, 23 August 1880).

<sup>94</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 97, l. 61 (27 September 1865); d. 2787, l. 1 (9 March 1866).

<sup>95</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 2202, ll. 1-2, 5 (7 August - 30 September 1872). The Ottoman authorities suspected that the Ossetian village of Sarkamış, near Kars, attracted North Caucasian muhajirs from different Anatolian provinces who intended to return to Russia by slipping across the border; see Georgy Chochiev, “Neskol’ko osmanskikh dokumentov o poselenii osetin v Anatolii,” *Izvestiia SOIGSI* 23 (62) (2017): 71.

<sup>96</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, l. 240ob (May 1869).



Returnees received help from some local communities. The imperial border separated many peoples who were mobile and adept in trans-border trafficking. Reportedly, Armenian and Turkish villages on both sides of the border gave shelter and sold food to the migrants. The Russians also suspected that some refugees returned to the Russian territory with migrating Kurdish and Turkoman nomads.<sup>97</sup> Although evidence is circumstantial, it could be that some muhajirs who had previously undertaken a journey in or out of the Russian Empire later repeated their route as guides for either potential returnees or North Caucasian residents who wanted to visit their relatives in Anatolia.<sup>98</sup> North Caucasian returnees were but one element in an unceasing trans-imperial migration between the Caucasus, Kurdistan, and eastern Anatolia, but their traffic across the frontier triggered security alerts in both empires. The Ottomans, in their increasing persecution of Armenians, raised concerns that North Caucasian muhajirs might serve as guides for Armenian revolutionaries who crossed the Russo-Ottoman border.<sup>99</sup>

#### *The 1877-78 Abkhaz Flight and the Boat Returnee Drama*

During the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, the Caucasus Viceroy suspended acceptance of any Muslim returnees from the Ottoman Empire for security reasons.<sup>100</sup> In addition to thousands of North Caucasian muhajirs who were mobilized in the Ottoman army, many Russian Muslims raised rebellions in the Caucasus in support of the Ottoman war effort. In Abkhazia, local communities supported the Ottoman troops who briefly

---

<sup>97</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 250, ll. 188-91, 193-96 (25 October - 3 November 1868).

<sup>98</sup> TsGA RD f. 2, op. 2, d. 93, ll. 8-9 (19 February 1914).

<sup>99</sup> BOA Y.PRK.UM 58/42 (18 *muharrem* 1320, 27 April 1902).

<sup>100</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 73-74 (14 June 1878).

occupied the port of Sukhum. As the Ottomans evacuated the country, between 40,000 and 50,000 Abkhaz, mostly Muslims, or up to 60 percent of Abkhazia's population, left for Anatolia.<sup>101</sup> Shortly after their emigration, many muhajirs started coming back.

Abkhaz families would hire boats in Samsun or Trabzon and sail to Batum, which was a mid-way station between Anatolia and Abkhazia, or directly to Sukhum. During the war, the Russian authorities were deporting Abkhaz returnees. Meanwhile, the Ottoman authorities took a radically different position on accepting muhajirs than before. Due to a lack of funds to resettle new muhajirs, the Porte disavowed those Abkhaz who attempted to return to Russia. The Ottoman vice-consul in Batum explained his government's position to the Russians in no uncertain terms: returnees were Russian-subject Abkhaz who were currently present within Russian-held Abkhazia and had no Ottoman passports because they were never given any.<sup>102</sup> From the Ottoman perspective, those people were no longer their concern.

Some Abkhaz refugees went through the formal process of petitioning the Caucasus authorities through Russian consulates, before leaving the Ottoman Empire. Most petitioners claimed that they were captured by the enemy's army and taken to the Ottoman state against their will; many said that they were Christians.<sup>103</sup> Tiflis authorities made some

---

<sup>101</sup> Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 372.

<sup>102</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, ll. 39, 42 (23 July 1880).

<sup>103</sup> Abkhaz refugees that wanted to return to Russia often appealed directly to their potential patrons. One petition on behalf of 300 Abkhaz Christians in Anatolia was sent to the Georgia Exarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. Petitioners complained of being kidnapped and discriminated against for being Christians. They wrote that if they were not allowed to return by Sukhum authorities, they would have no choice but to convert to Islam; see *Tiflisskii Vestnik*, no. 98 (26 May 1879). In another instance, 24 Abkhaz in Samsun launched complaints about their mistreatment in the Ottoman state to the Italian and Greek consulates and the Greek Orthodox clergy, and petitioned to return to Russia via the German embassy. They claimed that the Ottoman troops kidnapped them, held them under guard, and forced them to convert from Christianity to Islam; see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 1466, ll. 19-22 (November 1877). For other claims by Christians, see ll. 60-62, 68-69, 80, 108, 148, 209, 295 (2 December 1877 - 31 May 1879). The British Consul in Samsun reported that about 1,600 Christian Abkhaz were stranded in Sinop and prevented from

exceptions to the wartime no-return policy, especially for noble men and women or those who had powerful protectors in Abkhazia vouching for them.<sup>104</sup> These singular cases of readmittance, conveyed through the Ottoman Foreign Ministry, may have encouraged mass return.

On 24 August 1880, *Aghios Petros*, a vessel under the British flag and with a Greek crew, sailed into the Batum harbor. The boat carried 1,200 Abkhaz muhajirs who requested reimmigration in Abkhazia. The Caucasus officials ordered immediate deportation of those returnees back to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman authorities, particularly the governor of the neighboring Trabzon province, categorically rejected this. The Trabzon administration detested having to spend its resources on providing for destitute refugees from the Caucasus for whom Trabzon was often their first stop but rarely an ultimate destination. The Trabzon governor gave orders to the Ottoman coastal guard to prevent Abkhaz refugees from disembarking by force.<sup>105</sup> In turn, the Russian military authorities refused to allow refugees to be housed in their newly captured Batum even temporarily and kept them on the ship.

As may be expected, having 1,200 refugees live on a ship that was meant for 200 passengers was a humanitarian disaster in the making. Although private charities provided some relief, refugees did not have sufficient food and medical supplies, and epidemics soon broke out among the refugee population. Meanwhile, the old vessel developed a leak. As the boat started sinking, the authorities moved refugees to the shore. They placed them in

---

returning to Russia by Ottoman authorities despite having offered to pay all expenses for their repatriation; see TNA FO 195/1187, Biliotti to Layard, #71 (Trabzon, 18 May 1878).

<sup>104</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 1466, ll. 60-62, 108, 295 (2 December 1877 - 31 May 1879); d. 2073, ll. 37-40, 78, 82 (29 November 1879 - 31 December 1880)

<sup>105</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, ll. 56-57, 60 (12 August 1880).

an ill-equipped, makeshift camp using boat sails as tents.<sup>106</sup> Up to 200 Abkhaz men managed to escape that temporary accommodation into the city before the boat was fixed and the rest of the refugees were escorted back to the vessel. Refugees sent their plea directly to the Caucasus Viceroy in Tiflis. Their telegram read as follows:

The Batum governor forces us to return to Turkey. We beg Your Excellency to take pity on us, Christians, as your co-religionists. Have mercy for our children who are innocent. There is nothing for us in Turkey but death and persecution from the merciless Turkish government. We beg you to send us to Sukhum District. Your refusal would condemn us to perishing at sea.<sup>107</sup>

The Christian identity of petitioners did not sway the government, as it was unwilling to set a precedent by publicly allowing a mass party of refugees to return. A few days later, a group of women on the boat sent one more petition to Tiflis, to no avail.<sup>108</sup> Ultimately, the military gave an order to the boat captain to leave Russian waters and to disembark refugees in Trabzon, despite Ottoman protests. The crew refused to raise the mainsail, and the boat had to be towed under the convoy of a Russian military schooner. Upon approaching Trabzon, it was met by gunshots, and the Russian convoy abandoned the ship. The boat with the refugees lingered in coastal waters, unable to anchor. The following night, the crew furtively sailed into Russian waters, twenty miles from Batum, and disembarked all refugees on a beach that was surrounded by cliffs and had no escape path. The crew then returned to Batum and falsely reported to the Russians that they had left the refugees on the Ottoman side. News of the crew's cruelty, however, spread quickly, and the Russians arrested them before they managed to escape to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> TNA FO 195/1329, Biliotti to Goschen, #43 (Trabzon, 9 September 1880).

<sup>107</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, l. 86 (18 August 1880).

<sup>108</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, l. 126 (4 September 1880).

<sup>109</sup> *Kavkaz*, no. 260, p. 2 (Tiflis, 28 September 1880).

Batum authorities then sent boats to rescue refugees from their coastal trap; survivors were delivered to Batum and shortly afterwards were allowed to return to Abkhazia.<sup>110</sup> This Russo-Ottoman refugee drama lasted 25 days and claimed the lives of 178 refugees.

Table 18: Written communal petitions to return to Russia, 1860-79

Date	Petition on behalf of	Language	Outcome	Reference
Feb 1860	Circassian (Ubykh) and Abkhaz communities in the Ottoman Empire; signed by 26 notables	French*	Petition declined.	RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 384, ll. 4-7.
July 1863	Circassians, Crimean Tatars, and Nogai Tatars in southern Dobruja, Danube Province	Likely Ottoman Turkish	Petition likely never submitted.	MnV f. 5, op. 2, d. 24, no. 1615, ll. 147-50.
Mar 1865	2,000 Circassians in Canik Subprovince, Trabzon Province	Likely Ottoman Turkish	Petition declined.	SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 1124.
Dec 1872	8,500 Circassian families, many of slave status, scattered throughout Anatolia	French*	Petition declined.	SSSA f. 5, d. 3011, ll. 3-5.
May 1879	Christian Abkhaz in Anatolia; signed by 300 deputies, sent to Georgian Exarch	Likely Georgian	Petition declined.	<i>Tiflisskii Vestnik</i> , no. 98.
Sep 1879	1,200 Abkhaz from Filios, near Amasra, on the <i>Aghios Petros</i> ship in the Batum harbor	Russian	Petition declined. Returnees admitted later.	SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, ll. 86, 123-24.

In addition to these written mass petitions to return to Russia, many households submitted individual oral and written requests to return.

\* Petitions were delivered to the Russian Foreign Ministry from the Russian embassy in Istanbul in French. It is possible that petitions were submitted in Ottoman Turkish and were then translated by the embassy staff.

<sup>110</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, l. 140 (10 September 1880).

The 1880 refugee crisis in Batum prompted reconsideration of the Russians' returnee policy for Abkhazia. The authorities adopted the same "compromise" that was in place in the rest of the North Caucasus (except western Circassia) since the early 1870s. All Abkhaz refugees who had managed to reach the Abkhaz shore were to be accepted and resettled. They would not be treated as "returnees" (Rus. *vozyrashchaiushchiesia*) but rather as "immigrants" (*prishel'tsy*), similar to Greek, Georgian, and Estonian colonists in Abkhazia. This new policy was not communicated to the Ottoman government, to prevent it from reaching Abkhaz muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, the scope of return migration in Abkhazia was immense. By June 1881, the district of Gudauta, Abkhazia's second largest town, had at least 1,487 returnee families, or over 46 percent of all households.<sup>112</sup> About a third of Abkhaz refugees returned by 1881, or 21 percent of the population of Abkhazia at the time, and people had been returning for years after that.<sup>113</sup>

#### *Returnees from Elviye-i Selâse*

Some muhajirs returned to the North Caucasus from the areas of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum, collectively known as Elviye-i Selâse, which Russia annexed during the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. Several Chechen and Circassian communities had settled in these Ottoman territories in the 1860s. In 1878, muhajirs who lived there found themselves, again, as Russian subjects. Some of them used the opportunity to return to the North Caucasus because the Russo-Ottoman border no longer stood in their way.

---

<sup>111</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2069, ll. 97-103, 193-95, 246 (17 August 1880 - 30 September 1881).

<sup>112</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2417, ll. 9-9ob, in Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 396.

<sup>113</sup> Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 396; SSSA f. 231, op. 1, d. 308 (March 1902).

In the early 1878, a young Circassian man, Khasan Akhnadin oğlu was brought to the Zakatala district authorities and told the following story:

I am 25 years of age, of Muslim faith, single, and was never on trial or fined (Rus. *pod sudom i shtrafakh ne byl*). During the time of Circassian emigration from the Caucasus to Turkey, my father, Akhnadin, emigrated with his family and settled in the village of Karugani [on the Ottoman side of the border] near Aleksandropol [which was on the Russian side]. My fellow Circassians settled in and around that village. A few years later, my father and mother died, and I was left an orphan. To earn a living, I worked as a laborer until the war between the Russians and the Turks. When the Russians took Kars, my fellow Circassians fled [beyond the Ottoman lines], whereas I decided to find my way to the Caucasus and settle in my former fatherland. Four months ago, I left for Aleksandropol and reached it within one day. I then followed the postal road, spending nights at road stations and nearby villages. I did not enter cities. In seven days, I reached Tiflis. ... I kept following the postal road, together with the 2nd Daghestani Cavalry regiment, which was returning home from Turkey. I passed Signaghi ... and then arrived in Zakatala.<sup>114</sup>

Khasan must have lost his way after reaching Tiflis. Zakatala, in the Southeast Caucasus, was in the opposite direction than his homeland on the Circassian coast, in the Northwest Caucasus. The Zakatala authorities, who must have been puzzled by this case, sent Khasan to Kuban Region for his resettlement to be approved by the local governor. We do not know what happened to Khasan after this, but considering the unwritten post-1867 compromise not to deport those who made it past the Caucasus Mountains and the fact that Khasan did not, in fact, cross the Russo-Ottoman border (rather it crossed him), one could be optimistic about the odds of his reimmigration.

Another group of muhajirs in Elviye-i Selâse, unlike Khasan, experienced difficulties returning home. Ten Chechen men wrote a communal petition on behalf of their village of Sag-chai in Kars Province to the Caucasus Viceroy in 1878:

Thirteen years ago, we moved here from Grozny District of Terek Province, having left our relatives behind. Repentant of our move, last year, when Your Imperial Highness visited the village of Tiksit, we asked for and received the permission of

---

<sup>114</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 94-95 (early 1878); also ll. 64-65 (7 March 1878).

Your Imperial Highness to resettle in our native Grozny District. Many of our fellow villagers already moved [to Chechnya]. However, because of the winter cold, we could not move last year. This year, the provincial authorities refuse to approve our relocation without your [written] order.<sup>115</sup>

The refusal by the Kars authorities to let Chechen muhajirs go was, unfortunately for petitioners, a Caucasus-wide reversal of policy. In 1877, the Russian military authorities authorized repatriation of muhajirs from the occupied Kars region, deeming it to be too volatile. In 1878, the Terek governor, displeased for not being consulted on the matter, urged the Viceroy to temporarily halt repatriation of Chechen muhajirs into his province.<sup>116</sup>

### *Homecomings: Making the Caucasus “Home” Again*

How did returnees fare after their reimmigration? Little archival evidence survives on the reintegration of returnees, who were resettled among their former communities or in new locations altogether. The government did not follow up on the progress of approved returnees and, of course, knew little of those who returned in secret.

It is likely that those returnees who had the support of remaining families in the Caucasus found it easier to rebuild their lives. Many prospective returnees petitioning the Russian authorities emphasized that they would not be a burden on the Russian treasury because their siblings would gladly cover all costs of their repatriation. The active lobbying by relatives in Russia played a role in returnees’ readmittance. Seeing that many individual petitions to grant amnesty to muhajir relatives went unanswered, some village communities sent mass petitions asking for reunification with their families. In 1870, the Ingush from

---

<sup>115</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 76-77 (8 July 1878).

<sup>116</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 67-69 (27 March 1878); ll. 73-74 (14 June 1878).



Nazran District asked the authorities to allow reimmigration of seventy-six Ingush families into twelve villages. The petition, written in impeccable Russian, was signed by those Ingush whose endorsement would have carried the most weight in the eyes of officials, namely fourteen active officers in the Russian Army. The Ingush guaranteed to take upon themselves all expenses associated with reimmigration and to provide returnees with their own land.<sup>117</sup>

Sometimes, the return of muhajirs to the Caucasus caused friction between them and their former neighbors. Thus, internal government correspondence reveals that, in 1878-80, conflicts over land erupted between Abkhaz returnees and local populations who had purchased or seized their land.<sup>118</sup> Some returnees found no legal avenue to reestablish their ownership and squatted on the land that once belonged to them.

Many returnees also contributed to the economic development of their regions. Some of them utilized their newly gained skills from the Ottoman Empire back in Russia. For example, many Chechen muhajirs learned to cultivate tobacco in their central Anatolian villages. When they returned to Chechnya, they found their skills in demand. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the North Caucasus became one of Russia's premier regions for cultivating tobacco. Between 1865 and 1878, the area of tobacco plantations in the North Caucasus increased over 30-fold to 11,808 acres.<sup>119</sup> In 1865, many Chechens left for the Ottoman Empire, two tobacco factories operated in the entire North Caucasus. In 1869, when many Chechens were returning, the region had eighteen tobacco factories, six of them in Terek Province. Local tobacco factories purchased Ottoman

---

<sup>117</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 46, ll. 4-5 (30 March 1870).

<sup>118</sup> SSSA f. 231, d. 132, ll. 9-10 (13-25 June 1887).

<sup>119</sup> Ibragimova, *Chechenskii narod*, 428-30.

tobacco seeds that Chechen returnees smuggled with them into Russia.<sup>120</sup> Ottoman tobacco varieties were highly prized on the Russian market. Thus, in 1872, the Grozny district governor asked the Caucasus authorities to import seeds of Ottoman tobacco, specifically of Trabzon and Samsun varieties for local plantations.<sup>121</sup> One could expect muhajirs with experience in cultivating Ottoman tobacco to have been employed in the burgeoning tobacco industry in Terek Province.

A rare autobiographical story published by Inal Kanukov, an Ossetian returnee, also points to a high social cost of return.<sup>122</sup> Kanukov's family emigrated in 1860 and returned soon afterwards, alongside ninety other families. The Kanukovs were a family of notables; the writer's father was a village headman and led an emigrating party to the Ottoman Empire. Upon the family's return to Ossetia, they discovered that the village where they used to live had been abandoned. They traveled to a neighboring village, where they were hosted by their former serfs (Rus. *khology*). Kanukov described the first days after their return as follows:

My father must have reminisced of the times when he was a village headman and everyone sought his patronage. Now, having returned from Turkey, he must seek patronage from his former serfs. ... Although everyone came out to greet us and welcomed us back with genuine happiness, we entered the village not as equal members, but as foreign strangers who had been excluded from the family and were accepted back as a favor.<sup>123</sup>

In addition to the loss of social and economic capital, one must take into account cultural codes, to which different ethnic groups adhered. Kanukov admits that what held many muhajirs from returning home was a sense of pride in standing by their decision to

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 429.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 429.

<sup>122</sup> Kanukov, "Gortsy-pereselentsy."

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

emigrate and a fear of being perceived as a failure should they return.<sup>124</sup> When Kanukov's father made a decision to return to the Caucasus, after having surveyed and found unsatisfactory the lands Ossetian muhajirs would receive near Kars, other elders sought to dissuade him: "Do not shame us all! What will our people back home think [of us] when they see that you, one of the best [high-status] muhajirs, returned back?"<sup>125</sup> Although some returnees saw little change to their ways of life upon their return, reimmigration often carried readjustment of the balance of power and communal dynamics within North Caucasian communities.

*Refugees' Children: Discovering the Caucasus for Themselves, 1878-1914*

In the final decades of tsarist and Ottoman rule, new types of returnees appeared in the Caucasus. In 1898, the Nalchik police arrested an Ottoman citizen under the name of Khorup Yaganov. Yaganov declared that his grandfather, father, and he himself were born and lived their entire lives in the Ottoman Empire. They were of Kabardin descent but had no immediate family in the Caucasus. He heard that in a village in Nalchik District a wealthy man from the Yaganov family had died without heirs. Yaganov told the authorities that, according to the shari'a, in the absence of direct heirs, another male from the same kin could claim that property. He figured that his claim would be as good as any other, and so he arrived in the Caucasus.<sup>126</sup> Whether the man's interpretation of Islamic law or even

---

<sup>124</sup> The notion of shame in acknowledging one's failure or insufficient success is a crucial factor in preventing return migration or curbing reintegration of returnees around the globe; see Gmelch, "Return Migration," 141-42.

<sup>125</sup> Kanukov, "Gortsy-pereselentsy."

<sup>126</sup> TsGA KBR f. 6, op. 1, d. 429, ll. 3-4 (4 July 1898).

Kabardin customary law was correct is beside the point. What his confession demonstrates is the durability of ties between North Caucasian muhajirs and their home region. In the case of Yaganov, he sought to utilize his familial ties to better his economic prospects.

Citing financial motives for visiting the Caucasus was probably not the best line of defense, when interrogated by Russian police, and yet Khorup Yaganov's case was not unique. In 1891, Muhammad (Magomet) Abdulov, a Kabardin muhajir, while awaiting a verdict on his deportation in the Vladikavkaz jail, made the following statement:

About a month ago, I arrived from Turkey to the village of Daguzhokovo in Nalchik District. I came with no criminal intentions but only to visit my family, whom I have not seen for several years. I brought different goods from Turkey, which I sold to the locals, but I did not yet collect their payments to the sum of 150 rubles. I own three horses that were presented to me in Kabarda, as well as goods to the total value of 270 rubles, confiscated from me at the Odessa customs.<sup>127</sup>

The two men, Yaganov and Abdulov, were apprehended and investigated by the authorities because their conduct in the Caucasus was conspicuous and, with financial gain at stake, may have crossed the interests of others. The authorities had limited ways of finding out about returnees, and local informants played a significant role in identifying Ottoman-subject North Caucasians. For example, in 1915, the police in southern Daghestan apprehended a returnee Jabrail Magoma oğlu. The police were tipped off by one of Jabrail's neighbors, whom he reportedly told that he had returned to Daghestan "to look for his enemy, the villager Bagadur Kadı oğlu, so that he could kill him."<sup>128</sup> He also disclosed that he had served in the Ottoman army during the suppression of the 1910 Albanian Revolt, was a sheikh [religious leader], and would soon return to the Ottoman Empire to prepare

---

<sup>127</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 7, d. 515, ll. 31-32 (3 October 1891).

<sup>128</sup> TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 50, l. 1 (2 February 1915).

for the coming war with Russia. When questioned by the police, Jabrail provided a different explanation, suggesting more noble reasons for arriving in Daghestan:

Twenty years ago, I left for a pilgrimage in Turkey and was forced to stay there because I spent all my money and had no means for a journey back. A year and a half ago, I found out that, back in Daghestan, my brother was killed and his underage kids were left as orphans. I departed from Turkey to return to my homeland in order to raise my brother's children and never to leave [Daghestan] again. I heard that Bagadur Kadı oğlu is my brother's murderer, but I had no plans of killing anyone and did not tell anyone otherwise. I never served in the Ottoman army, nor accepted Ottoman subjecthood. I never spread rumors about the war with Turkey and am not a sheikh...<sup>129</sup>

The authorities were particularly concerned about those returnees who came to visit their families and decided to stay for good. A legal loophole facilitated the traffic of permanent returnees. As previously discussed, under Russian law, North Caucasian emigrants had no right to return, either because they signed a statement to that effect or left the Russian Empire illegally. At the same time, however, Ottoman citizens were free to arrive in the Caucasus on temporary visas. Those North Caucasians knowledgeable enough to perceive this legal discrepancy and wealthy enough to obtain a Russia visa, traveled back to the Caucasus. Some of them returned to their ancestral villages and lived there for years as farmers; and others settled in towns and engaged in trade.<sup>130</sup> Some Ottoman-subject muhajirs found employment as imams and teachers in Muslim schools in Russia.<sup>131</sup>

In the 1880s, Russian authorities initiated a wide search for such “foreigners” who blended in and overstayed their visas. Most of these returnees were deported, but some were allowed to stay, especially if they established families and had the backing of local communities. One Kabardin man, Muhammad (Magomet) Ghassan, returned to Russia

---

<sup>129</sup> TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 50, ll. 26-28ob (5 March 1915).

<sup>130</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 7, d. 515, ll. 31-32 (3 October 1891); GARF f. 102, op. 208, d.1922, ll. 2-3 (14 September 1911).

<sup>131</sup> GARF f. 102, op. 242, d. 74, ch. 36, ll. 4ob, 7-7ob (20 October 1912 - 7 June 1913).

after having been orphaned in the Ottoman Empire. He fell in love with a local woman and asked her hand in marriage. His prospective father-in-law agreed under the condition that the village council register him as a local resident. This was done, and the young people got married. However, the council never applied for his naturalization as a Russian citizen. Ten years later, the government initiated deportation proceedings of Muhammad Ghassan. His father-in-law wrote an emotional petition to Vladikavkaz begging to release the man whom “he would have never given his only daughter had he known that Muhammad Ghassan would not gain a legal status in Russia.”<sup>132</sup>

Table 19: North Caucasian returnees, 1860-1914

Years	Destination	Number
1860-80	Terek Province: Chechens, Ingush, Kabardins, Ossetians, Kumyks, Nogai Tatars	c. 9,000
1865-73	Grozny District, Terek Province [Chechnya]	c. 7,000
1866-68	Sukhum District, Kutaisi Province [Abkhazia]	c. 2,100
1878-81	Sukhum District, Kutaisi Province [Abkhazia]	c. 15,000
1880-1914	all areas of the North Caucasus, except western Circassia	c. 7,000
	Total:	c. 40,100

This table provides an estimate of Muslim muhajirs who returned and were successfully readmitted to the North Caucasus.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>132</sup> TsGA RSO-A f.12, op. 3, d. 144, ll. 97-98 (14 June 1890); for another case, see op. 7, d. 515, ll. 15-16 (7 August 1891).

<sup>133</sup> The first three entries constitute my estimate of individual cases about resettlement and deportations preserved in archives in Tbilisi, Nalchik, and Vladikavkaz. The last entry is my estimate of the scope of return migration based on circumstantial evidence, in the absence of comprehensive lists of returnees. On return to Terek Province in 1860-80, see TsGA KBR f. 1209, op. 7, d. 31; TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 3, d. 127-29, 131, 133-38; op. 5, d. 21-22, 24-27, 29-30, 32, 41; op. 6, d. 1276. On return to Grozny District in 1865-73, see SSSA f. 7, op. 1, d. 1352, ll. 1-57, 116-44; f. 545, op. 1, d. 250; 2852, especially ll. 79-83; TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 4, d. 48; it must be noted that some groups of Chechens returned to their ancestral villages in other Terek districts and Daghestan; it is also likely that some Ingush and few Karabulaks

In 1885, the Terek government passed a law that restricted access to the province to Ottoman citizens of North Caucasian descent.<sup>134</sup> Of course, this rule was difficult to enforce because border officials had no way of knowing people's ancestry. Ottoman documents only listed one's personal name and patronymic (e.g. Ismail ibn Musa) but rarely recorded Ossetian or Chechen family names, which – a source of grievance for the contemporary North Caucasian diaspora – was a blessing in disguise for North Caucasian returnees.

In the final years of the two empires, Russian officials reported a number of second- and third-generation muhajirs arriving in Kabardin, Chechen, and Daghestani villages of their parents' birth and asking for permission to stay. Based on their statements, these young muhajirs viewed their return as an act of defiance to their parents' emigration, of which they disapproved. One petition to the Russian authorities asserted that a young Avar man who returned to Daghestan had "lost Russian citizenship not because of his own fault but because of his parents' fault."<sup>135</sup> Another Lezgin returnee, despite having been deported to the Ottoman Empire several times, repeatedly came back and insisted that, whatever his documents showed, he never considered himself an Ottoman subject.<sup>136</sup> Some members of the younger generation challenged the legal and territorial status quo imposed on them and, in some ways, aspired to reverse the previous generation's history.

---

returned alongside Chechens. On return to Sukhum District in 1866-68, see Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 295; in 1878-81, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 1466, 2069, 2073, 2453; Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 381-406. On return since the 1880s to Abkhazia, see Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 396-97; SSSA f. 231, op. 1, d. 308; to Kabarda, see TsGA KBR f. 6, op. 1, d. 693, 863; to various Terek districts, see TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 3, d. 144; to Daghestan, see TsGA RD f. 2, op. 5, d. 40; f. 126, op. 3, d. 100.

<sup>134</sup> TsGA KBR f. 6, op. 1, d. 589, ll. 90-90ob (10 September 1902).

<sup>135</sup> TsGA RD f. 2, op. 8, d. 39, ll. 11-11ob (6 August 1912).

<sup>136</sup> TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 36, l. 76 (November 1914).

*Return Migration to Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*

After the collapse of the Russian Empire and the consolidation of Bolshevik rule over the Caucasus, family visits and correspondence across the Soviet-Turkish border had ceased for several decades. In the 1960s, when the Middle East emerged as a primary arena for the Cold War, Soviet decision-makers reasoned that fostering connections with the North Caucasian diaspora, which disproportionately represented within the military and security apparatus in Jordan, Syria, and Turkey, could help in winning hearts and minds in the Middle East.

In 1963, the Soviet Committee for Cultural Relations with Compatriots Abroad was established in Moscow. In 1966, it opened a branch in Kabardino-Balkaria and later in other autonomous republics of the North Caucasus. Shortly afterwards, Kabardin Communists reached out to Circassian organizations in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, inviting their deputies to visit their republic.<sup>137</sup> Official delegations of Circassians from the Middle East arrived in the Soviet Caucasus in 1968. They were given the Communist Party-vetted guides and followed strict schedules that included such ideological delights as visits to new factories, hospitals, schools, and hydroelectric power stations. Foreign visitors were taught about industrial progress and socialist equality achieved for the benefit of North Caucasian populations, through the genius of the Communist revolutionary spirit and its planned economy. Some visitors, especially those who had already been part of Middle Eastern leftist movements, carried that message

---

<sup>137</sup> Center for Documentation of Modern History of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (Tsentri dokumentatsii noveishei istorii Kabardino-Balkarskoi Respubliki, Nalchik, hereafter cited as TsDNI KBR) f. R-865, op. 1, d. 7 (24 October - 23 November 1966), d. 21 (1968).



abroad and became “cultural agents” of the Soviet regime in Damascus and Ankara.<sup>138</sup>

Others had trouble appreciating the Soviet progress, at least as far as the Kabardin Communists were concerned. One Jordanian Circassian wrote the following letter to Nalchik upon his return home:

I regret deeply that my family made the journey [to Kabarda]. ... What will I tell people in Amman? I will, first of all, tell them that people there are kind, hard-working, and achieve seemingly unachievable, but I will also tell them that they drink a lot, that there are no mosques, and religion is relegated to the society's margins. ... After all the good and the bad that we saw, I doubt that my children and I would ever want to visit again. Prior to our visit, my children insisted that we ask your administration to let us immigrate and help us to build a house there, but we no longer feel that way.<sup>139</sup>

In their correspondence with the Soviets, North Caucasian diasporic organizations raised return migration as their primary issue of interest, as many of their members wished to return to their motherland. The Soviet authorities, however, viewed North Caucasian reimmigration as potentially subversive and did not allow it.<sup>140</sup> Circassians from Syria – and later from Turkey and Jordan – sent petitions to Moscow asking for mass repatriation since 1920 but all were rejected; only a dozen permissions were granted to individual Circassian families in the late 1960s.<sup>141</sup> The reestablishment of ties between North Caucasian Communist bureaus and the Middle East-based diaspora did not result in

---

<sup>138</sup> TsDNI KBR f. R-865, op. 1, d. 26 (7 June - 6 November 1968), d. 42 (5 January - 12 August 1869), d. 47 (30 April - 6 October 1869).

<sup>139</sup> TsDNI KBR f. R-865, op. 1, d. 33, ll. 1-7 (11 July 1968).

<sup>140</sup> The Soviet government's attitude toward the Armenian diaspora was different. In the 1920s, about 30,000 Armenian refugees, who had been temporarily staying in Greece, arrived in Soviet Armenia; see Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee*, 60. Between 1946 and 1949, about 90,000 Armenians, mostly from the Middle East, arrived in Soviet Armenia; see Sevan N. Yousefian, “The Postwar Repatriation Movement of Armenians to Soviet Armenia, 1945-1948,” Ph.D. dissertation (University of California, Los Angeles, 2011), 2-3.

<sup>141</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Problemy repatriatsii*, 71-75. Some Chechens returned in the Soviet period as well. The first three Chechen families left Jordan in 1963, 1967, and 1970; interview in al-Zarqa' (17 August 2014).

significant gains for the Soviet Union's foreign policy, nor did it particularly affect the diaspora's internal political and cultural development.

A promise of real change regarding reimmigration came in the 1990s, with the liberalization and strengthening of civil society in the North Caucasian republics, now within the Russian Federation. In the late 1980s, civil organizations and national movements in the three "Circassian republics" (Adygea, Karachay-Cherkessia, and Kabardino-Balkaria) and Abkhazia issued calls for allowing the repatriation of descendants of tsarist-era refugees. Indeed, for a short period of time, repatriation was the rallying cause of anti-Communist movements in the North Caucasus. The International Circassian Association, founded in Nalchik in 1991, considered the implementation of the "right of return" to be its major objective. The administrations of the three Circassian republics passed national-level legislation and founded institutions responsible for the resettlement of Middle Eastern Circassians. Nevertheless, a lack of federal support for reintegration programs and the collapse of social and economic security in the region made repatriation financially cumbersome for local powerholders, as well as weakened the enthusiasm for reimmigration of many in the diaspora.<sup>142</sup> By 2000, only 2,335 Circassians returned to Adygea and Kabardino-Balkaria.<sup>143</sup>

To date, mass reimmigration sanctioned by the Russian federal government occurred only once: the return of the Kosovo Circassians in 1998-99. Circassians in Kosovo were a remnant of the early wave of refugee migration to the Ottoman Empire in

---

<sup>142</sup> For returnees' motivations and experiences, see Shami, "Circassian Encounters"; idem., "Prehistories of Globalization"; Chen Bram, "Circassian Reimmigration to the Caucasus," in *Roots and Routes: Ethnicity and Migration in Global Perspective*, ed. Shalva Weil (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1999), 205-22. For the reimmigration legislation and political environment in the 1990s, see Kushkhabiev, *Ocherki istorii*, 260-70.

<sup>143</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Ocherki istorii*, 266.

the 1860s. Those muhajirs had attempted returning to Russia shortly after their arrival. In 1867, 400 Circassian families abandoned their settlements in Kosovo and headed toward the Danube River, which was the closest Russian frontier. They must have hoped to cross the river into Bessarabia and march across the entirety of Ukraine to their homeland. They only managed to reach districts in southern Serbia and Bulgaria because local Ottoman authorities destroyed bridges to prevent their further travel, and the Ottoman cavalry escorted them back to Kosovo.<sup>144</sup> Over 130 years later, during the Kosovo War, descendants of those refugees found themselves trapped in crossfire between Kosovar Albanian and Serbian forces. The International Circassian Association and the Adygea authorities lobbied the federal government for granting them asylum on humanitarian grounds, and the Russian authorities allowed 174 Kosovo Circassians to immigrate in Adygea.<sup>145</sup>

In the 2000s, the Russian federal government did not block the arrival of individual Circassians, as foreign immigrants, but would not accept their return as “repatriation.”<sup>146</sup> Likely, the government avoided any language that could be interpreted as its affirmation of the “right of return.” This concept is linked to the idea that the presence of refugees and their descendants outside of national borders was a result of forced migration.<sup>147</sup> The ethnic cleansing of Circassia in the 1860s remains a contentious issue for the Russian government

---

<sup>144</sup> TNA FO 195/877, Blunt to Lyons, #30, ff. 251-52r (Edirne, 6 June 1867); Kushkhabiev, *Problemy repatriatsii*, 26.

<sup>145</sup> Kushkhabiev, *Problemy repatriatsii*, 89.

<sup>146</sup> The Russian federal legislation pertaining to the restoration of citizenship, specifically the 2002 Citizenship Act and the 2006 Program for the Return of Compatriots, is ambiguous as to which foreign nationals qualify for Russian citizenship and resettlement benefits. In practice, few, if any, Circassians immigrated within this legislative framework, which is typically used by ethnic Russians from the former Soviet republics.

<sup>147</sup> On the right of return, see Howard Adelman, *No Return, No Refuge: Rites and Rights in Minority Repatriation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

not least because it does not fit well into the narratives of a “brotherhood of nations” and a “voluntary union,” lying at the heart of the Soviet internal legitimacy and, now, post-Soviet Russian federalism. Moreover, the Chechen-Russian conflict in the 1990s brought Islamism into the spotlight of Russian domestic politics. During the two Chechen wars and in their aftermath, the Chechen diaspora provided some financial and logistical support for an independent Chechnya, and some Middle Eastern Chechens came to the Caucasus as foreign fighters.<sup>148</sup> This may have cast the Chechen and, by proxy, North Caucasian diaspora under suspicion in the eyes of the federal authorities.

The Syrian Civil War, which broke out in 2011, initiated the second wave of Circassian return in the post-Soviet period. The Syrian Circassian community, which numbered around 100,000 before the war, traditionally supplied many military officers and civil administrators for the al-Asad regime.<sup>149</sup> The war split the community, with some supporting the Syrian government, others backing oppositional forces, and many remaining neutral. By November 2015, Circassian villages around Aleppo and Homs were caught amidst heavy fighting between the government troops, the Free Syrian Army, and the Kurdish forces. The town of al-Raqqa, which was a North Caucasian refugee village in the late Ottoman period, was lost to ISIS militants, who turned it into their headquarters. Thousands of Syrian Circassians, Chechens, and Daghestanis, fled to Turkey and Jordan. By early 2018, about 5,000 Syrian Circassians arrived in the North Caucasus on tourist and

---

<sup>148</sup> The foreign minister in Dzhokhar Dudayev’s government of the self-proclaimed Chechen Republic of Ichkeria was a Jordanian Chechen. On diaspora fighters, see Vanora Bennett, *Crying Wolf: The Return of War to Chechnya* (London: Picador, 1998), 445-58; Cerwyn Moore and Paul Tumelty, “Foreign Fighters and the Case of Chechnya: A Critical Assessment,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 31, no. 5 (2008): 412-33.

<sup>149</sup> See Kushkhabiev, *Cherkesy v Sirii*, 124-53; Ismail, *Dalil al-ansab al-sharkasiyya*.

work visas; 2,000 of them remained in Russia, whereas others moved on to Turkey and Europe.<sup>150</sup>

### *Conclusion: Return Migration and the Empire*

Between 1860 and 1914, over 40,000 Muslims succeeded in returning and resettling in the North Caucasus. [See Table 19.] Return migration flows were particularly significant after waves of emigration from Chechnya in 1865 and Abkhazia in 1877-78. An imperial archive, however, undercounts the number of people involved in return migration. Almost all data on returnees comes from Russian police records and returnees' petitions that have been preserved in Tiflis, Vladikavkaz, Nalchik, and Makhachkala. In addition to those returnees who were processed by Tiflis authorities and were resettled, there were many others: those who crossed the border unnoticed and never came to the attention of the government; those who were apprehended and deported immediately, with their names never having been written down; those who attempted to return but turned back, or died on their perilous journey; and those who delivered requests for repatriation to Russian consuls in the Ottoman Empire but were rejected. Furthermore, thousands of muhajirs considered return migration. Dreaming of, planning, executing, or deciding against a return was an integral part of muhajirs' experiences in the Ottoman Empire.

Return migration was crucial to consolidating Russia's rule in the Caucasus. An unsanctioned movement of people – often presented by governments both then and now as a threat to national and regional stability – did not loosen state borders or undermine public

---

<sup>150</sup> Murat Gukemukhov, "Cherkessia. Vozvrashchenie," *Ekho Kavkaza* (19 January 2018). <[www.ekhokavkaza.com/a/28985387.html](http://www.ekhokavkaza.com/a/28985387.html)> (accessed on 6 June 2018).

order in the Caucasus. In fact, the Russian government used the alleged threat of Muslim return to develop stricter requirements for re-entering the empire and increased its physical control of the frontier. The long Russo-Ottoman border was never sealed shut, even remotely so, but Russia's increased border patrol and ban on return migration (on paper, at least) may have deterred some muhajirs from attempting to return to the Caucasus. Furthermore, tsarist attempts to seek out undocumented returnees aided the government's penetration into outlying mountainous villages in Kabarda, Chechnya, and Daghestan. Indigenous Muslim communities now had to vouch for and were held responsible for mobility within their territories. Moreover, the government's delineation of rights of movement for Muslim residents was part of an evolution of the concept of Russian citizenship. In the second half of the nineteenth century, practices of Russian citizenship were contested and negotiated in the empire's frontier regions, places like Tiflis, Odessa, and Warsaw. The tsarist government's efforts to prevent return migration reinforced the notion of citizenship among Russia's Muslim population. North Caucasian Muslims, whatever their personal views on subjecthood or loyalty to the empire were, confronted real-life privileges and limitations, depending on whether one was a Russian, Ottoman, or indeterminate subject. Contestation of one's right to return further entrenched the notion of difference – between “us” and “them,” or Russian and Ottoman citizens.

Return migration challenges ethno-nationalist historiographies and sectarian explanations of mass migrations in the long nineteenth century. In the age of confessional ingathering and political sectarianism, many Muslims voluntarily emigrated out of the Caliphate to a Christian state. A particularly striking example is that in the aftermath of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, some Nogai Turks and Abkhaz asked the Porte to allow

them to return to Russia – the state that expelled or prompted them to emigrate from the Caucasus in the 1860s and whose army displaced them from their new homes in the Ottoman Balkans months earlier.<sup>151</sup> Moreover, return migration was not specific to Muslims who chose the Tsar over the Sultan. In a reverse process, thousands of Bulgarian refugees who left the Ottoman Balkans for Russian-held Bessarabia and Crimea returned home; Armenians and Greeks who emigrated from eastern Anatolia for the Caucasus also returned to their Ottoman homeland in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>152</sup> Returnees, whether consciously or not, challenged the emerging sectarian order that was taking root in the Middle East and eastern Europe.

Intricacies of undocumented reimmigration and one's identity and citizenship in the Caucasus invite broader questions of what "return" was and whether we should reevaluate how we view migration as such. Our thinking about migration (and, indeed, about history) is biased in favor of the settled condition and the homogeneity of nation-states: being static and having a permanent home in one place are considered "normal," whereas any mobility is seen as a deviation from that norm. Liisa Malkki investigated the anthropology of the "rooting of peoples" into the "soil" of their homeland, and James Clifford noted that one's cultural identity is seen to imply "an expectation of roots, of a stable, territorialized existence."<sup>153</sup> One who finds himself or herself outside of their ancestral birthplace is perceived as being "uprooted" and having the purity of his or her

---

<sup>151</sup> TNA FO 195/1187, Biliotti to Layard, #180 (Trabzon, 9 November 1878).

<sup>152</sup> On Bulgarians, see Pinson, "Demographic Warfare," 154-69. On Greeks, see TNA FO 195/953, Palgrave to Villiers, ff. 27-28 (Trabzon, 4 February 1869); SSSA f. 5, d. 2197 (1872). On Armenians, see *Kavkaz*, no. 224 (22 August 1880), p. 2; no. 250 (18 September 1880), p. 2; BOA HR.SYS 2773/19 (6 April 1898), 2773/23 (12 June 1898), 2773/27 (18 July 1898).

<sup>153</sup> Liisa Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 24-44; James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 338.

cultural identity threatened. Return to the homeland is seen as something natural and logical because the “motherland” is perceived to be an ideal space in an ethno-national ordering of peoples. When it comes to refugees, their return is particularly idealized because their migration was an act of “uprooting” against their will – an act that could supposedly be mitigated by the restoration of the status quo, i.e. repatriation.

A return to the homeland left behind is not always unambiguous though, as the case of North Caucasian Muslims demonstrates. Is it truly a return if the place of birth is under a different political order and a system of law? Is it a return if one was internally displaced before emigration, or if one is resettled in a different area after reimmigration? What about those who saw their once-homogenous “home” split into several parts: a physical and cultural landscape that was left behind, the family and neighbors who moved to the Ottoman Empire, and a co-religionist *dār al-islām* that shifted southward. Emigration does not always amount to the loss of one’s identity, just as return migration does not guarantee its preservation.<sup>154</sup> Nor was travel from Anatolia to the Caucasus necessarily a final leg of migrants’ journey; some people ended up leaving Russia for good for the second and third time. Going back to the Caucasus was certainly expressed as a return to the homeland by many historical subjects in this chapter, but the qualities of their return and what migration meant to them enhance and contest a bi-directional vision of refugee migration. In the imperial age, return migration to the North Caucasus was a tribute to the complexity of Muslim subjects’ mobility and identity within the Russian and Ottoman empires.

---

<sup>154</sup> See Finn Stepputat, “Repatriation and the Politics of Space: The Case of the Mayan Diaspora and Return Movement,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7, no. 2-3 (1994): 176.



## CHAPTER 7

### **Crafting the Russo-Ottoman Muslim World: Communication of North Caucasians Between the Two Empires**

In 1869, a Daghestani muhajir, Gassan-Dibir, wrote a letter back home. Gassan-Dibir was part of a group of ‘ulama who had previously emigrated to the Ottoman Empire and temporarily settled in eastern Anatolia. Gassan-Dibir instructed that his letter – written in Arabic – be delivered to his father’s shop in Zakatala District (in modern-day Azerbaijan) and addressed it to the entire village. He wrote:

We have arrived in the Muslim city of Kars in the first days of Ramadan and entered the realm of the great Ottoman government without any hardship or harm from hunger or cold. For that we bless Allah a million times every hour. We were very well received, given luxurious and spacious premises, and granted all we need in excess from the Treasury. The Ottomans recognized our stature and accorded us more respect than we were worth. From dusk till dawn, renowned men wait outside our door, so that they can learn astronomy, mathematics, and logic from us. Beyond that, we have so many students that we lost count. They all seek our favor and beg us to stay in Kars. In this vast and beautiful city, one can find good houses and buy them for 150 rubles. One can buy as much land as they wish. This is in the city. If one wishes to settle outside of the city, there is no end to fields and meadows.<sup>1</sup>

This letter survives because it never arrived in the shop of Gassan-Dibir’s father. The Russian border patrol apprehended several Daghestani muhajirs who attempted to cross the Russo-Ottoman border into the Caucasus without authorization and discovered this letter, alongside a few similarly-worded ones sent to the same village.

Gassan-Dibir’s enticing account bears little resemblance to consular descriptions of poverty, famine, and disease that accompanied the expulsion and forced migration of

---

<sup>1</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 452, l. 10 (5 April 1869).

Circassians earlier in the same decade.<sup>2</sup> His writing drew on a pre-colonial and pre-modern legacy of North Caucasian Muslims' mobility and tapped into an ongoing debate on hijra. His letter serves as a vantage point to the realm of trans-imperial communication between Muslim refugees, returnees, and their families in the Caucasus, that was largely hidden from the view of Russian and Ottoman authorities. This chapter focuses on the communication of Muslims, particularly from the Northeast and Northcentral Caucasus, between the two empires in the 1860-1914 period. This trans-imperial communication occurred through private correspondence, a trans-border culture of rumors, and debates over hijra in the Ottoman and Russian empires. I employ a variety of sources: Arabic-language private letters formally sent or smuggled across the frontier; newspaper editorials by North Caucasian intellectuals in Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, and Russian; and tsarist official documentation.

I advance several arguments. The letters, exchanged by North Caucasian Muslims across the Russo-Ottoman frontier, not only connected geographically dispersed communities but facilitated the existence of a shared space across political boundaries. Written and oral communication between Ottoman and Russian Muslims fueled tsarist apprehension of "Pan-Islamism," which contributed to Russia's policing of its borderlands. Simultaneously, it exposed the limitations of the empire's control over its boundaries and frontier elites. In the early twentieth century, the debate over hijra, disseminated through newspapers, became more public. Initially consigned to a theological discussion about Muslims' obligations to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire, the debate increasingly turned to muhajirs' real-life experiences in the Ottoman Empire, fueling anti-hijra sentiments.

---

<sup>2</sup> See House of Commons, *Papers Respecting the Settlement of Circassian Emigrants in Turkey*; Édouard Dulaurier, "La Russie dans le Caucase."

The study of how refugees and their families talked about migration invites one to rethink the causality of mass migrations. Much of historical scholarship explains late Ottoman and tsarist refugee migrations through military, political, and economic factors, which, indeed, played a dominant role in guiding Muslim exodus. This chapter posits that social and cultural factors, such as a legacy of regional mobility and popular rumors, were critical in the making of the North Caucasian hijra in the post-1864 period.

The world of North Caucasian residents, refugees, and returnees straddled the Ottoman and Russian empires. This North Caucasian world expanded dramatically in the nineteenth century because of Russian imperialism. As a result of the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, many North Caucasians were dispersed, finding themselves as muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire or as soldiers, laborers, or prisoners elsewhere in the Russian Empire. I understand this trans-imperial world as one centered on people and their social relations. This world encompassed religious, economic, and family networks that North Caucasians maintained across the Ottoman and Russian empires. In physical terms, the North Caucasian world, by the 1880s, stretched from Nogai steppes of northern Daghestan towards Kosovo, Transjordan, and Iraq, and even included North Caucasian pilgrims' routes to Mecca and scattered colonies of Northeast Caucasian deportees in central Russia and Siberia.<sup>3</sup>

This North Caucasian world was part of the broader Russo-Ottoman Muslim world that emerged in the decades and centuries prior – through the mobility of Sufi scholars traversing the Eurasian steppe; slave trade networks tying the Circassian and Abkhaz coastlines to the Ottoman labor market; and the activities of Pan-Turanian intellectual

---

<sup>3</sup> On Daghestani deportees, see Kemper, “Daghestani Shaykhs and Scholars in Russian Exile”; Jersild, “Imperial Russification.”

circles from Bukhara and Kazan to Istanbul. The mass emigration and expulsion North Caucasian Muslims further amplified the scope of the Russo-Ottoman Muslim world. The term “Russo-Ottoman” denotes that Muslim residents, who operated within the two empires, engaged with imperially-imposed notions of borders, sovereign territoriality, and subjecthood/citizenship. The two empires were critical to the making of that world by imposing restrictions on the mobility of their residents. But the Russo-Ottoman Muslim world was sustained through interactions of Muslim subjects across great distances. This chapter contributes to the evolving corpus of literature on Ottoman frontiers<sup>4</sup> and borderlands,<sup>5</sup> and the evolution of the “Muslim world” in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Hajj and the Hijra*

A discussion of Muslim communication between the Ottoman and Russian empires must begin with its oldest and most durable medium, the hajj. The annual pilgrimage to Mecca held primary importance for mass refugee migrations in the second half of the

---

<sup>4</sup> See Andrew Peacock, ed., *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Rossitsa Gradeva, *Frontiers of Ottoman Space, Frontiers of Ottoman Society* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2014); Christine Woodhead, ed., *The Ottoman World* (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2012), part III; Colin Heywood, “The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths,” in *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, eds. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999); Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*.

<sup>5</sup> See Meyer, *Turks Across Empires*; Lucien J. Frary and Mara Kozelsky, eds., *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands: The Eastern Question Reconsidered* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014); Bartov and Weitz, *Shatterzone of Empires*; Sabri Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary, 1843-1914* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Claire Norton, “Liminal Space in the Early Modern Ottoman-Habsburg Borderlands,” in *The Uses of Space in Early Modern History*, ed. Paul Stock (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 75-96.

<sup>6</sup> See Nile Green “Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West: Industrial Communications in the Making of the ‘Muslim World’,” *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 2 (2013): 401-29; James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014).

nineteenth century. The hajj and the hijra are rarely studied together: the former constituted a centuries-long religious practice, whereas the latter was a permanent relocation borne out of imperial conquests.<sup>7</sup> The two were, in fact, intertwined. The hajj, the fifth pillar of Islam, provided a crucial connection not only between Muslim individuals and Mecca, but also among Muslim communities around the world. Prior to the 1860s, the hajj was the primary source of information about the Ottoman realm for North Caucasian Muslims. The experiences and recollections of visiting holy shrines in Istanbul, Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Medina, and Mecca, which were regular stops for many Russian Muslims, colored communal perceptions of the Ottoman Empire across the Caucasus.<sup>8</sup> Hajjis' interactions with like-minded hajjis contributed to the imagining of the entire Ottoman state as a righteous caliphate, in stark contrast to the "infidel" Russian rule and heterodox Islamic practices in the Caucasus. This idealized vision of the Ottoman state played a role in nineteenth-century refugee migrations, especially from the Terek and Daghestan provinces. The "push" factors – varied as they were, including a brutal ethnic cleansing in the Northwest Caucasus – were more important in driving the exodus, but expectations of a just sultan rule in *dār al-islām*, the single most important and commonly shared "pull" factor, wielded considerable influence across the region.

---

<sup>7</sup> An exception is scholarship on late nineteenth-century West Africa, where hijra was directed towards Sudan and the Hejaz; see Chanfi Ahmed, *West African 'Ulamā' and Salafism in Mecca and Medina* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015); David Robinson, "Jihad, Hijra, and Hajj in West Africa," in *Just Wars, Holy Wars, and Jihads: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Encounters and Exchanges*, ed. Sohail H. Hashmi (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 246-62.

<sup>8</sup> On Russian Muslims' hajj, see Kane, *Russian Hajj*; Daniel Brower, "Russian Roads to Mecca: Religious Tolerance and Muslim Pilgrimage," *Slavic Review* 55, no. 3 (1996): 567-84. Most North Caucasian Muslims did not utilize the Russian-sponsored railway-steamship route via Odessa and Jedda and continued going to Mecca by land, via Kars, Erzurum, Diyarbakir, Aleppo, Damascus, and, by the early twentieth century, Amman. Alternatively, many came to Istanbul first and from there, by land or sea, continued their pilgrimage to the Hejaz.

For many, the hajj and the hijra were part of the same physical journey. For centuries, the hajj represented a driver of Muslim mobility and intellectual and cultural exchange across Eurasia, and a great number of pilgrims never returned home, having found a new home on their way.<sup>9</sup> From the perspective of the Russian state and its migration priorities, the hajj and the hijra fulfilled similar enough functions to be placed under the same legal framework (see Chapter 6). The officials issued all emigrating Muslims six-month passports for the hajj, with the stipulation that if they did not return within the prescribed period, they would forfeit the right to re-enter Russia. Many North Caucasian Muslims used those six months for a pilgrimage, during which they contemplated whether to remain in the Ottoman Empire and become Ottoman subjects, or not; others immigrated as muhajirs and, if they regretted their decision, they had a six-month window to reimmigrate in Russia under the guise of returning hajjis.<sup>10</sup>

In the late Ottoman and tsarist era, the hajj became the primary conduit of communication between Muslim communities from the Caucasus, the Volga region, Central Asia, and Siberia, who found themselves living in the two empires. One may think of the spatiality of the hajjis' journey, or hajjis' "mental mapping," in three distinct layers.<sup>11</sup> The first layer incorporated the sacral geography of Mecca and Medina, and

---

<sup>9</sup> See hajj travelogues (*safarname*) in Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For hajj diasporas, see John A. Works, *Pilgrims in a Strange Land: Hausa Communities in Chad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976); C. Bawa Yamba, *Permanent Pilgrims: The Role of Pilgrimage in the Lives of West African Muslims in Sudan* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> The Russian authorities occasionally resisted readmitting those whom they suspected of having settled in the Ottoman Empire; see RGVA f. 38, op. 7, d. 382, ll. 22-22ob (6 June 1861). Such cases of return were rare: a journey to the Ottoman state and back, and the process of obtaining free land, normally took longer than six months.

<sup>11</sup> Mental mapping is a concept from behavioral geography that denotes how people perceive geography, based on their familiarity with places and meanings attached to spatial configurations.

sometimes Jerusalem, the holiest cities in Islam, complete with the performance of religious rituals. The second layer consisted of the great centers of Islamic culture and learning – Istanbul, Bursa, Damascus, Cairo, as well as Karbala, Najaf, and Baghdad for Shi‘i pilgrims from the Caucasus – replete with famous madrasas, mosques, tombs, and living shaykhs who commanded the attention of passing pilgrims.<sup>12</sup> Finally, the third layer, made all the richer through hijra, was the “home abroad” landscape, which consisted of hajjis’ acquaintances and connections that provided logistical support on their journey. The Anatolian and Syrian countryside now hosted hundreds of villages founded by Circassians, Abkhaz, Ossetians, Karachays, Balkars, Chechens, Avars, and others. Those ethnic networks became a part of how hajjis understood Ottoman geography and changed their itineraries: pilgrims would pass through muhajir villages to see their loved ones and deliver greetings.

Hajjis often carried letters, entrusted to them by muhajirs’ relatives who remained in the Caucasus. They would deliver those letters to addressees on their way to Mecca and collect their responses in a month or two, when they were passing through on their way from the Hejaz to Russia.<sup>13</sup> One muhajir family in al-Zarqa’, a Chechen settlement to the north of Amman, preserved such letters written to its family patriarch, Girim Sultan.<sup>14</sup> This

---

<sup>12</sup> On Russian Shi‘a haji itineraries, see A. Petrov, “Zapiska o palomnichestve musul‘man, znachenii ego i merak k uporiadocheniu” (1896), GARF f. 102, op. 47, d. 314, ll. 232-247; reproduced in f. 102, op. 302, d. 689 and f. 586, op. 1, d. 207.

<sup>13</sup> Such method of communication was common for muhajirs’ villages in eastern Anatolia and Greater Syria. Interview with F.F.S. in al-Zarqa’, Jordan (17 August 2014).

<sup>14</sup> I found four letters in the private collection of F.F.S., based in al-Zarqa’, Jordan, whom I thank for granting me research access. The letters were exchanged within his Chechen family between Ottoman Transjordan and Russian Daghestan. One letter dates back to 1910; others are undated but were likely written between 1905 and 1912. For more private letters exchanged between Daghestan and the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, researchers may turn to the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Ethnography at the Research Center of Daghestan (Institut istorii, arkheologii i etnografii Dagestanskogo nauchnogo tsentra RAN, Makhachkala, hereafter cited as IIAE DNTs RAN), Fund of Oriental Manuscripts, f. 16; the fund

Chechen family hails from Khasavyurt District of western Daghestan.<sup>15</sup> Girim Sultan led a part of his family from Daghestan to Transjordan sometime in the first decade of the twentieth century. The family formally registered its land allotment in al-Zarqa' in 1914.<sup>16</sup> Prior to Girim Sultan's relocation to Jordan, members of his family had performed a hajj. Some settled in Mecca and lived there for decades until the Hashemites were expelled by the al-Sa'ud family, at which point they joined Girim Sultan in Transjordan.<sup>17</sup>

In 1910, Girim Sultan's cousin, Ahmed bin Saltmurad bin Tambulat, sent a letter in Arabic with the hajjis, with the hope of locating his family members who left the Russian Empire. He did not hear from his cousin because the latter had left Daghestan, and he had no address to which to send the letter. He must have instructed hajjis to carry his letter and ask muhajirs in refugee settlements, which they passed on their way to Mecca, about his cousin. He wrote that he searched for the news of his cousin "for weeks, months, years, for some time, and always." The letter wished his cousin well wherever he was and implored him to get in touch with his family in the Caucasus. Ahmed asked, "Does one forget about the loved ones and can one's spirit rest before the family reunites again?"<sup>18</sup>

Fortunately for him, al-Zarqa' was among the largest Chechen settlements and a regular stop on the Hejaz Railway, and the letter found its way to Girim Sultan, who

---

contains several thousand of Arabic letters, most of them locally produced, found in villages across Daghestan.

<sup>15</sup> The family came from the village of Kishen'-Aukh, or Keshen-Evla, which is mentioned in Letter A (1910), F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa', Jordan. The village is now called Chapaevo. Stalin deported its Chechen population to Central Asia in 1944 and repopulated it with ethnic Laks.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with F.F.S. in al-Zarqa', Jordan (17 August 2014).

<sup>17</sup> According to family lore, Saliha, a sister of Girim Sultan, settled in Mecca and was a nanny of King Abdullah I of Jordan, son of Hussein bin 'Ali, the last Ottoman Sharif of Mecca, sometime in the 1880s or 1890s; interview with F.F.S. in al-Zarqa', Jordan (17 August 2014). Whether the story is true or not, it represents the construction of a dual narrative of loyalty – to the Hashemite dynasty and to Islam – which a non-Arab, non-Transjordanian minority community is presently eager to stress.

<sup>18</sup> Letter A, Ahmed bint Saltmurad to Girim Sultan, F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa', Jordan. The dating at the bottom of the letter is unclear, and the family interprets it, based on oral history, as 1 *muharrem* 1328 [13 January 1910]. Interview with F.F.S. in al-Zarqa', Jordan (17 August 2014).



responded to it and reconnected with his family in the Caucasus. Some time later, Girim Sultan received a letter from his brother, Hajj Jan‘aq, who also considered moving to Transjordan from Daghestan. His brother spoke of the debate on virtues and disadvantages of hijra that went on in their ancestral village. According to him, many people wanted to leave, but they hesitated, unsure of what their lives would be like in exile. The letter implied that the pro-hijra faction, which argued that it was a religious duty to emigrate, was dominant. Some, including village leadership, resisted emigration. Their argument against hijra hinged on their love for the motherland: if they were to leave their home, would there be a chance for them to return? Hajj Jan‘aq intended to emigrate in the following months and take his eldest daughter with him. His father-in-law, however, prohibited him from taking his wife into what Girim Sultan’s brother referred to as a “white hijra” (Ar. *al-hijra al-bayḍā*’). His father-in-law refused to let his daughter become a refugee (Ar. *lāji*’).<sup>19</sup>

Girim Sultan’s brother spoke of hijra as an honorable pursuit (Ar. *al-hijra al-gharrā*’) and invoked early Islamic history to draw parallels:

Our hearts are full of sadness because of our separation. We see you as a prophet by the name of Ya‘qub, who was separated from his son Yusuf. [As they were reunited later,] we wish to come to you. We miss you as na’ib Zayn al-‘Abidin missed his nephew, more than you know.

Yusuf and Ya‘qub are Qur’anic characters who reunited in Egypt. Zayn al-‘Abidin, or ‘Ali ibn Husayn, is the fourth Shi‘i Imam. This particular Chechen family apparently tried to make sense of emigration and permanent resettlement in another empire through literary references with which they were familiar.

---

<sup>19</sup> This letter is a rare example of the term *lāji*’ being used in the late Ottoman context. The common term was *muhājir*, whereas *lāji*’ only became a commonly used Arabic term for “refugee” after the 1948 War. Letter B (c. 1910-12), Hajj Jan‘aq to Girim Sultan, F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa’, Jordan.

Girim Sultan responded to his brother, urging him to emigrate and instructing him to persuade others to come to Transjordan as well. He offered to be the point of contact for anyone, including his brother's wife, who was uncertain and wanted to know more about life in the Ottoman state. He promised that they would be content and taken care of in exile. He also expressed sorrow about their situation in Daghestan, about which he had heard from traveling hajjis, alluding most likely to living under Russian rule.<sup>20</sup>

The final letter, preserved by the family, was written by another brother of Girim Sultan, who wished to resolve a property dispute. Girim Sultan had bought a plot of land in Daghestan from his male relative shortly before he left for hijra. He likely left the land in care of the seller's daughter. Because she was not registered in the title deed, the woman now risked losing access to the land and needed Girim Sultan's help in preserving her custodianship of the land.<sup>21</sup> Unresolved and emerging commercial disputes involving North Caucasian Muslims on the two sides of the Russo-Ottoman frontier were not uncommon. In some cases, muhajirs returned to the Caucasus, usually without notifying authorities, to settle property transactions or collect debts.<sup>22</sup> In other cases, muhajirs in Anatolia or Syria died without heirs, and their relatives from the Caucasus would undertake

---

<sup>20</sup> Letter C (c. 1910-12), Girim Sultan to Hajj Jan'aq, F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa', Jordan. Before this letter was sent from Transjordan to Daghestan, the family made a copy of it for future record, which explains why its text survived.

<sup>21</sup> Letter D (c. 1910-12), Dalbek and others to Girim Sultan, F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa', Jordan.

<sup>22</sup> See the case of Khorup Yaganov in Chapter 6; see also TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 8, d. 25, ll. 2-5ob (31 December 1866); TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 39, l. 2 (4 September 1914); CDM Defter Salt 17, #148 (*13 cemaziyelahir 1330*, 9 June 1912).

a journey to claim their share.<sup>23</sup> Isolated cases of long-distance inheritance continued long after the two empires had collapsed.<sup>24</sup>

Private family letters constitute a rare type of historical evidence in late Ottoman scholarship.<sup>25</sup> Few letters, written by refugees and their families, have survived: most perished over multiple rounds of population displacements, and many were destroyed by their custodians because of the political risk that such overseas correspondence entailed in the Soviet and Turkish republican periods. I located several family letters in regional archives in Tbilisi, Vladikavkaz, and Makhachkala; tsarist border authorities intercepted smuggled letters, which ensured their survival in the depths of an imperial archive. I also collected several letters that had reached their addressees in private family collections in al-Zarqa', Jordan and Kizilyurt, Daghestan. Overall, I can call on full texts of twenty letters that were sent from/to the Terek and Daghestan provinces, and Zakatala District within the Russian Empire and to/from the Ottoman provinces of Bursa, Sivas, Kars, and Damascus. Tsarist records mention hundreds of other letters, which were confiscated and not transcribed. They represent a small fraction of a vigorous culture of writing and smuggling

---

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, TsGA KBR f. 2, op. 1, d. 613, l. 1 (1 February 1862); f. 3, op. 1, d. 203, ll. 79, 92, 98 (August 1873).

<sup>24</sup> In 1967, a village headman from Dođlat, Afyonkarahisar in Turkey sent a letter to Soviet Kabardino-Balkaria. He wrote in Karachay-Balkar, a language closely related to Turkish, in the Latin script. He was looking for two elderly sisters, whose brother passed away in Turkey with no direct heirs and left them all his property. The Soviet authorities, as one could expect, closely supervised this communication. They found the two sisters, who had been deported to Kyrgyzstan during Stalin's era and then returned to their Balkar village of Khushto-Syrt. The sisters, responding in Russian, hastily disavowed all private property that came into their possession in capitalist Turkey; see TsDNI KBR f. P-865, op. 1, d. 18 (1967-70).

<sup>25</sup> For studies that utilize Ottoman-era private letters, see Aliye Fatma Mataracı, *Trading in Wartime: The Business Correspondence of an Ottoman Muslim Merchant Family* (Istanbul: Libra Yayinevi, 2016); Doumani, *Rediscovering Palestine*; Cemal Kafadar, "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature," *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-50; Butrus Abu-Manneh, "The Husaynis: The Rise of a Notable Family in 18th Century Palestine," in *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period*, ed. David Kushner (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Press, 1986), 93-108; on the trans-Eurasian letter exchange, see Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean*.

letters across the Russo-Ottoman frontier. Letters were usually written in Arabic because, for centuries, it constituted a literary *lingua franca* in the North Caucasus, especially in Chechnya and Daghestan, and served as a cherished medium of communication with other Muslims in the Ottoman world. The language of these letters is often idiosyncratic because Arabic was never a first language for their authors, whose vernacular tongues included Circassian, Abkhaz, Ossetian, Chechen, Avar, Kumyk, Dargin, and others.<sup>26</sup>

The letters, such as the ones preserved by Girim Sultan's descendants in Jordan, often served communal purposes. The pressing issue at hand, which concerned a specific family, usually occupied only a few sentences. The rest of the letter was intended for public consumption and dissemination. The largest section of a letter was typically its introductory paragraph, which identified the authors, their relatives, and the recipients of their greetings. The main sender could be joined by representatives of other families, who all enquired about their families. The final section urged the recipient to write back promptly and contained specific instructions on where to send the letter to ensure its smooth delivery; that information could be used by others in the village. On the margins, someone else could scribble a short greeting to his or her loved ones.<sup>27</sup> The authors of the surviving letters were people with a sufficiently good command of Arabic, usually through religious schooling. They wrote on their own behalf or on behalf of others, similar to how Ottoman communal petitions were created, which reinforced the communal character of this type of long-haul correspondence.

---

<sup>26</sup> By the time of tsarist conquest, several North Caucasian languages, especially Avar, had an established literary tradition based on the Arabic script. Arabic, however, remained the dominant literary language. In the late 1920s, Soviet linguists adapted the Latin script for most North Caucasian languages and, in the late 1930s, devised the Cyrillic script-based alphabets for them.

<sup>27</sup> See also Adrian Gully, *The Culture of Letter-Writing in Pre-Modern Islamic Society* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008).

*(Il)licit Transborder Correspondence*

In addition to hajjis, muhajirs secretly returning to the Caucasus occasionally carried letters from other refugees to their families. In January 1866, the Russians apprehended a group of returning Ossetian and Kabardin muhajirs who had left Russia in 1860 and now attempted to reimmigrate in the Caucasus. They smuggled 53 letters from other muhajirs.<sup>28</sup> Later in the same year, the Russian frontier police near Aleksandropol captured two Chechen returnees, who carried 67 “important” letters and many others “of lesser importance.”<sup>29</sup> Tiflis officials launched an investigation to determine who had been in correspondence with whom.

They discovered that the plurality of letters – at least twenty – were written by male members of the influential Kundukhov family. Musa Kundukhov, an Ossetian general in the Russian military service, had led 4,990 families out of Terek Province to Anatolia in the previous year (see Chapter 3). Not all letters were meant to be secret; one letter was written by Afako Kundukhov, Musa Kundukhov’s brother, to Prince Mikhail Loris-Melikov, the Russian governor of Terek Province. Other senders were Kabardin and Ossetian notables, male and female, whose families allied with the Kundukhavs. Four letter-writers were Chechen elders, who were held in high enough esteem that a tsarist envoy in eastern Anatolia personally asked Tiflis to approve their reimmigration in Russia. On the receiving side of the letters were the Mal’sagov, Kubotiev, Dudarov, Tuganov, Tkhostov, Anzorov, Bekuzarov, Dzhantiev, Aldatov, Kundukhov, and other families – some of the most prominent Muslim families in Ossetia, Kabarda, and Chechnya, whose

---

<sup>28</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 5, d. 29, ll. 25-26 (25 January 1866).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 164-67, 170 (May 1866).

support was critical for a smooth governance of the region. In many letters, muhajir notables called on their families and friends to follow them in emigration; some of them mentioned that they had joined Ottoman military service, which was duly flagged by Russian censors. This discovery of letters, most of which were written in Arabic, had alerted the authorities to the scope of unsupervised correspondence across the border. The region's most prominent families continued communication with their relatives and friends, who had emigrated to the Ottoman Empire.

Imperial control over a population rests upon the government's ability to restrict access to information. By the 1860s, tsarist rule in the newly conquered and reconquered areas of the North Caucasus was far from absolute; mass emigration further undermined the government's standing in many areas and created a fluid trans-imperial population. The government sought to curtail the flow of information to and from the Ottoman Empire, and one of the most effective ways was to further restrict unsanctioned return migration and, with it, smuggled correspondence by increasing border patrol. It turned out, however, that some muhajirs sent letters through the official postal service of the Ottoman and Russian states.

In 1867, the Terek authorities in Vladikavkaz came into possession of three letters from muhajirs sent by regular mail. The letters came from Kabardin nobles who wrote to their relatives and patrons, the Atazhukin princely family. The authorities opened envelopes and made translations of the letters in secret, probably in order to avoid offending their powerful recipients. In one of the letters, Gushasukh, a daughter of the Kabardin prince Murzabek, berated her relatives for not having followed her into the Ottoman Empire:

When a person comes into need in their own country, their duty is to leave for *dār al-islām* to alleviate the sufferings. Can you call yourselves Allah’s creatures if you do not wish to move to Turkey to fulfill your debt and duty? Moreover, please consider whether I am capable of managing a [large] household [and inheritance], which all but belongs to you.<sup>30</sup>

The Terek governor, Prince Mikhail Loris-Melikov, interpreted this letter as propaganda of emigration targeting the Muslim landowning class, whose economic situation was particularly vulnerable after the Russian-led abolition of serfdom in Kabarda. The governor then gave an order to the postal service to deliver all letters sent to Chechen, Ingush, Kabardin, and Ossetian Muslims from the Ottoman Empire to his office, essentially placing all overseas correspondence under government surveillance.<sup>31</sup>

Such a forceful act was not out of place in the political environment of the 1860s, when Russian authorities had been making a transition from military to civil rule in parts of the North Caucasus. This time, however, the Terek governor faced opposition from Baron Aleksandr Nikolai, head of the administration of the Caucasus Viceroy, as well as the Caucasus head of the Russian post.<sup>32</sup> Baron Nikolai asserted that the existing legislation protected “one of the most sacred and dearest properties of society, namely the integrity and inviolability of correspondence.” The surveillance of private correspondence was unlawful and exceptions to this rule could only be granted in the face of evidence of anti-government activities. Under no circumstances, he reasoned, could such a measure be applied to the entire province, so that “not to undermine the trust in governmental decrees and institutions in society.”<sup>33</sup> Loris-Melikov’s order was rescinded. Thus, in this instance,

---

<sup>30</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 8, d. 27, ll. 3-4, 8ob, 9ob (March - April 1867).

<sup>31</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 8, d. 27, ll. 1-2ob, 16-17 (April - May 1867).

<sup>32</sup> At the time, the position of the Caucasus Viceroy, held by Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich Romanov (1862-81), brother of Emperor Alexander II (r. 1855-81), was all but nominal. The head of the administration wielded actual power. The position of the Viceroy was discontinued in 1881.

<sup>33</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 8, d. 27, l. 14 (21 April 1867).

the Tiflis government's insistence on the rule of law, particularly in the context of governing newly occupied territories, temporarily shielded Terek Muslims' privacy rights.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, in some areas, the surveillance of Muslims' correspondence continued in secret.<sup>35</sup>

The Russian government closely supervised the correspondence of high-profile North Caucasian Muslims who posed an alleged political threat. Chief of those remained Shamil, Russia's main adversary during the last stage of the Caucasus War. After the defeat of his forces, Shamil surrendered to Russian troops in 1859 and was exiled to Kaluga, a provincial town in central Russia.<sup>36</sup> In exile, Shamil received hundreds of letters from North Caucasian Muslims. Most letters were apolitical; their authors either asked Shamil for money and intercession or sought Shamil's advice on matters of faith ("Are we allowed to eat meat that was cut by Jews? What about sugar?").<sup>37</sup> His followers were, no doubt, aware that all correspondence was scrutinized by imperial censors.

---

<sup>34</sup> Prince Mikhail Loris-Melikov and Baron Aleksandr Nikolai, notwithstanding their different positions on the privacy of correspondence, forged an excellent working relationship, which they continued after having been promoted from their Caucasus posts to imperial ministerial portfolios. Loris-Melikov, an Armenian nobleman from Tiflis, became the last Minister of Interior (1880-81) during the reign of the liberal-minded Emperor Alexander II. Loris-Melikov ensured the appointment of Nikolai to the post of Minister of National Enlightenment, in charge of higher education and research in the empire. Their positions were short-lived because after the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, his son, Alexander III, took a conservative course. Loris-Melikov was replaced as the Minister of Interior by another man familiar to readers, Count Nikolai Ignatiev, a long-term ambassador in Istanbul (1864-77), known for his conservative leanings and Slavophile politics.

<sup>35</sup> For example, in 1900, the administration of Dargin District in central Daghestan admitted that it read all letters from overseas addressed to its residents and that only those that it deemed not to contain anti-government language were delivered to addressees; TsGA RD, f. 66, op. 1, d. 65, ll. 52-52ob (10 May 1900).

<sup>36</sup> On Shamil, see Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar*; Thomas M. Barrett, "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity," *Russian Review* 53, no. 3 (1994): 353-66. On Shamil's letters, see Amri R. Shikhsaidov and Khalata A. Omarov, eds., *100 pisem Shamilia* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1997).

<sup>37</sup> RGVA f. 400, op. 1, d. 7; TsGA RD f. 133, op. 3, d. 3 (1865-66), quote from l. 14.



Shamil received mail from Ottoman senders as well. He corresponded with his former Avar na'ib [deputy] to the Circassians, Muhammad Amin, who led Circassian troops against the Russians in 1848-59. Muhammad Amin also had a complicated relationship with the tsarist government.<sup>38</sup> He surrendered to the Russians, was granted a state pension, and eventually emigrated to the Ottoman Empire, where he reportedly established ties with Polish émigrés to secure their support in fighting tsarism in Circassia, while receiving and subsequently losing pensions from both the Ottoman and Russian governments.<sup>39</sup> Muhammad Amin sent greetings to Shamil from his residence in Bursa. He notified Shamil of his recent pilgrimage to Mecca and assured him that he had prayed for him there. As a gift, he enclosed a phial of water from the Zamzam Well in Mecca.<sup>40</sup> Shamil also received a letter from 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jazairi, an Algerian Sufi scholar and resistance fighter, who lived in exile in Damascus. 'Abd al-Qadir offered Shamil to ask the Russian Emperor personally if he would allow Shamil to emigrate to Mecca, which was widely known to have been Shamil's desire.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Muhammad Amin, also known as Magomet Amin, was the third na'ib of Shamil in Circassia. His success in uniting several Circassian tribes against Russia made him, in practice, the second most prominent anti-colonial leader in the North Caucasus at the time. Because of the Circassians' defeat and expulsions and Muhammad Amin's subsequent deal with the Russians, his legacy is contentious and, unlike Shamil, who is hailed as a national hero across the Northeast Caucasus, Muhammad Amin is not commemorated in the Northwest Caucasus; see Amirkhan M. Magomeddadaev, ed., *Mukhammad-Amin i narodno-osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie narodov Severo-Zapadnogo Kavkaza v 40-60 gg. XIX veka* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1998).

<sup>39</sup> RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 396, ll. 47-47ob, 75ob (1862-63).

<sup>40</sup> RGVIA f. 400, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 137-37ob (1865-66).

<sup>41</sup> As a Qadiri shaykh and a prominent anticolonial leader, 'Abd al-Qadir was held in high esteem among many Chechens; see Boualem Bessaih, *De l'émir Abdelkader à l'imam Chamyl: le héros des Tchétchènes et du Caucase* (Algiers: Casbah, 2009). The tsarist government also favored 'Abd al-Qadir for his intercession on behalf of the Russian vice-consulate in Damascus and his protection of local Christians during the 1860 massacre, and bestowed upon him an Order of the White Eagle. In 1869, Shamil received Russian approval for a hajj, which was commonly understood as his emigration to the Hejaz. In the same year, he met with 'Abd al-Qadir in Egypt, at the opening of the Suez Canal. Shamil died in Medina in 1871, and 'Abd al-Qadir in Damascus in 1883. For 'Abd al-Qadir's letter, see RGVIA f. 400, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 150-53 (early 1865); for Shamil's response, see ll. 153, 161-61ob (19 July 1865).

The Russian government's strict supervision of Shamil's correspondence, including a mandatory translation of all Arabic letters, was part of the imperial attempt to police communication of North Caucasian Muslims and control a political conversation about the future of the North Caucasus. Foreign ministerial despatches reveal that the Russian embassy in Istanbul and its consular network kept close tabs on the whereabouts and activities of those who had enough legitimacy to emerge as Shamil's ideological heirs, most prominently Muhammad Amin in Bursa, and later Cairo, and Shamil's son, Ghazi Muhammad, in Istanbul.<sup>42</sup>

#### *Daghestani Shaykhs in Yalova and a Trans-Imperial Naqshbandi Network*

The tsarist conquest of the Caucasus may have disrupted some of the old trade routes and intellectual networks within the Muslim world, but also facilitated the creation of new ones.<sup>43</sup> One of them was a trans-imperial Sufi network of al-Kikuni shaykhs that emerged as a result of Muslim emigration.<sup>44</sup> The shaykhs came from the village of Kikuni in central Daghestan and adhered to the Naqshbandi tariqa.<sup>45</sup> The leader of the Kikuni

---

<sup>42</sup> On Ghazi Muhammad, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 966 (1874-75); RGVIA f. 400, op. 1, d. 403 (1874-75); on Muhammad Amin, see RGVIA f. 38, op. 7, d. 396 (1861-63).

<sup>43</sup> Many routes survived and evolved, embracing and having been embraced by tsarist protectors; see Megan Dean Farah, "Mobility, Commerce and Empire in the Caucasus, 1762-1918," Ph.D. dissertation (Stanford University, 2013); Kane, *Russian Hajj*, 17-24.

<sup>44</sup> On trans-imperial Sufi tariqas, see Anne K. Bang, *Islamic Sufi Networks in the Western Indian Ocean (c. 1880-1940): Ripples of Reform* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); James Canon, "Sufism and Liberation Across the Indo-Afghan Border: 1880-1928," *South Asian History and Culture* 7, no. 2 (2016): 135-54.

<sup>45</sup> On al-Kikuni shaykhs, see Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, "'Malyi Dagestan' pod Stambulom: severokavkazskie sufii i sviatye mesta v Turtsii," *Turcica et Ottomanica: Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu professora M.S. Meiera*, eds. Il'ia V. Zaitsev and Svetlana F. Oreshkova (Moscow, 2006), 150-63; Ibragimova, "Muhammad-Hajji and Sharapuddin of Kikuni." On the Naqshbandi tariqa in Daghestan, see Makhach A. Musaev, "Sufiiskie seti na Vostochnom Kavkaze v XIX v.: formirovanie i rasprostranenie (na osnove izucheniia araboiazychnykh pis'mennykh istochnikov)," Unpublished manuscript (2013-14), IIAE DNTs RAN f. 3, op. 1, d. 900.

branch, Muhammad al-Kikuni, known in the Naqshbandi tradition as Abu Muhammad al-Madani, was an active proponent of emigration to the Ottoman Empire. Muhammad al-Kikuni took part in the 1877 uprising in Daghestan, and, as a punishment, tsarist authorities exiled him in one of Russia's northern provinces. He fled his place of internment to the Ottoman state, where he came into contact with local Naqshbandi tariqas.<sup>46</sup> According to oral history, he secured an audience with Sultan Abdülhamid II through the intercession of the Libyan shaykh Muhammed Zafir of the Shadhiliyya tariqa.<sup>47</sup> The Ottoman government granted Muhammad al-Kikuni and his followers land near Yalova, in northwestern Anatolia, where they founded the village of Reşadiye (now Güneyköy).<sup>48</sup> Under the leadership of Muhammad al-Kikuni and his nephew Şerafeddin al-Kikuni (also known as Şerafeddin Dağistani), the village emerged as a primary destination for Sufis escaping Russian rule and was one of the largest Daghestani villages in diaspora.

The Naqshbandi branch, headed by al-Kikuni shaykhs, not only survived but flourished after the relocation of its religious leaders to the Ottoman Empire. The shaykhs maintained a network of followers in Daghestan and actively corresponded with them.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> On the Ottoman Naqshbandi tariqa, see Dina LeGall, *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis and the Ottoman World, 1450-1700* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005). On Central Asian Sufis in Istanbul, see Lale Can, "Connecting People: A Central Asian Sufi Network in Turn-of-the-Century Istanbul," *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2012): 373-401.

<sup>47</sup> See Amirkhan M. Magomeddadaev, ed., *Emigratsiia dagestantsev v Osmanskuiu imperiiu: sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2000), vol. 1, 390-91. Abdülhamid II, at various points, patronized Naqshbandiyya, Qadiriyya, and Shadhiliyya tariqas and even joined the latter two; see Karpat, *Politicization of Islam*, 174; Butrus Abu-Manneh, "Sultan Abdulhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda al-Sayyadi," *Middle Eastern Studies* 15 (1979): 131-53.

<sup>48</sup> The original Daghestani name of the village, founded in 1896, is Almali, or Elma Alanı. It was renamed Reşadiye in honor of Sultan Mehmet V Reşad (r. 1909-18) for his sponsorship of a water fountain. In 1934, the village was renamed Güneyköy. On the original land grant, see Terzibaşoğlu, "Landlords, Nomads and Refugees," 135.

<sup>49</sup> Zaira B. Ibragimova, "Problema mukhadzhirstva v dagestanskikh pamiatnikakh epistolarnogo zhanra kontsa XIX – nachala XX vv.," *Voprosy istorii* 4 (2012): 152-56; Magomeddadaev, *Emigratsiia dagestantsev*, vol. 1, 342, 386.

Some Daghestanis from Reşadiye traveled back to the Caucasus to visit family and carried oral and written messages from the shaykhs.<sup>50</sup> Reportedly, one way to smuggle correspondence was in the sole of a shoe.<sup>51</sup> Shaykhs advised their followers on various matters of faith and pious living, and their adherents copied and circulated their poetry and written word. In late 1914, when the Ottoman Empire had already joined the Central Powers, tsarist authorities conducted raids in Daghestan to uncover compromising correspondence from abroad. One raid revealed a stash of letters written to al-Kikuni shaykhs from a resident of the village of Kuppa in central Daghestan. The man wrote to Shaykh Şerafeddin to enquire about a local Muslim saint interred at a mosque in Golotl', his ancestry, and whether he had participated in the "holy war" (Ar. *ghaza*; Ott. Tur. *gazevat*; Rus. *gazavat*) against the Russians. The same man wrote a separate letter to his father, who lived in Istanbul, telling him about the hajj that he recently undertook, which included his visiting and staying with the shaykhs in Reşadiye.<sup>52</sup>

The village of Reşadiye, known as "Little Daghestan" (*Küçük Dağistan*), with three mosques and shaykhs' tombs as sites of pilgrimage, became a notable feature in the Ottoman-Daghestani landscape. A spiritual center, it complemented hajjis' visit to Istanbul, where many political exiles and veterans of the Daghestani ghaza resided. Some pilgrims and muhajirs purchased photographs of the shaykhs, as a symbol of their devotion or as a protective charm that they carried with them.<sup>53</sup> The multi-nodal network of al-

---

<sup>50</sup> TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 21a, ll. 3-3ob, 43-44 (12 December 1912).

<sup>51</sup> L.A. Gadzhieva and Zaira B. Ibragimova, "Vospominaniia Ali Usta o sheikhe Sharapuddine Kikuninskom kak istochnik po istorii dagestanskogo mukhadzhirstva kontsa XIX - nachala XX vv.," *Vestnik Instituta IAE* 4 (2013): 41-46.

<sup>52</sup> TsGA RD f. 66, op. 5, d. 48, ll. 2-2ob (23 December 1914).

<sup>53</sup> TsGA RD f. 2, op. 2, d. 93, l. 8ob (19 February 1914).

Kikuni shaykhs included historical areas of Daghestani Muslims in modern-day Daghestan and Azerbaijan, muhajir settlements in Anatolia, especially around Kars, Sivas, Tokat, and Bursa, as well as Daghestani Sufi residents in the Hejaz.<sup>54</sup> Reşadiye was also a notable site within a much larger Naqshbandi realm, which at the time extended from Bosnia to China. After the suppression of Sufi orders in the early Turkish Republic, Şerafeddin al-Kikuni's disciple and successor, Abdullah Fa'izi al-Daghestani, emigrated to Egypt and then Syria, where he solidified al-Kikuni shaykhs' teachings as the Naqshbandi-Haqqani tradition.<sup>55</sup>

### *Russia and Pan-Islamism*

Communication between Russian and Ottoman Muslims nourished the fears that Russian imperial authorities, especially Caucasus officials in Tiflis, entertained about alleged political and cultural threats emanating from the Muslim world. Namely, the government was concerned about the growing appeal of the idea of global Muslim unity. In 1874, the Russian ambassador in Istanbul warned his Foreign Ministry that a danger to Russia's national security lay in the "theories of Pan-Islamism" that, according to him, became fashionable throughout the Ottoman Empire.<sup>56</sup> Pan-Islamism, loosely defined, is a

---

<sup>54</sup> The Russian secret police reported that al-Kikuni shaykhs, when already based in the Ottoman state, organized a "secret" fundraising campaign in Daghestan that collected 5,000 rubles for the construction of a hostel for Daghestani pilgrims in Mecca; see *Kavkazskii Sbornik* 2 (34) (2005): 178-79. The strength of the Daghestani presence in the two holy cities is unclear, but the Baku police suspected that at least one Sufi from Kikuni lived in Medina and actively corresponded with Sufis throughout Daghestan, urging them to emigrate. He sent letters, some of which the Russian police found, with the visiting Daghestani pilgrims; see TsGA RD f. 66, op. 1, d. 65, ll. 52-52ob (10 May 1900).

<sup>55</sup> After the three Daghestani shaykhs, who resided, respectively, in Daghestan, Turkey, and Syria, the so-called "golden chain" of the Naqshbandi-Haqqani tradition was continued by two shaykhs from Northern Cyprus.

<sup>56</sup> SSSA f. 5, d. 3317, l. 4 (21 November 1874).

set of political beliefs prioritizing the unity of Muslim umma, which the Russian authorities interpreted as a pledge of Muslims' loyalty to a foreign sovereign, namely the Ottoman caliph. By and large, Pan-Islamic ideas were a product of western imperial expansion in the Muslim world and, closely related to it, a global revolution in transportation and communications, which created new networks of information and knowledge throughout Eurasia.<sup>57</sup> Pan-Islamism, although certainly an intellectual movement for the likes of al-Afghani and 'Abduh, was also a self-serving phenomenon for imperial officials, whether in Tiflis, Algiers, Calcutta (Kolkata), or Batavia (Jakarta). It gave colonial governments a pretext to develop new mechanisms of subduing and controlling, as well as integrating and cooperating with their Muslim subjects.<sup>58</sup>

The protracted Caucasus War (1817-64), including a struggle against the Caucasus Imamate (1828-59), made the Russian government particularly apprehensive of the spread of any political ideology, let alone one inspired by Islam, to its southern periphery. Following the end of the war, the Caucasus experienced a series of anti-colonial uprisings against Russian rule: in Chechnya (1864), Abkhazia (1864, 1866), Zakatala District (1863, 1869-70), the Kuban region (1870), and Daghestan (1866, 1871).<sup>59</sup> Many uprisings, even when arising out of public dissatisfaction with taxation and land reforms, were couched in religious terms and invoked a ghaza against non-Muslim colonizers. Three revolts were particularly damaging to Russia's governance and sparked further migrations to the

---

<sup>57</sup> See Cemil Aydın, *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017); Gelvin and Green, eds., *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, especially chapters by Robert D. Crews, Eric Tagliacozzo, and Ilham Khuri-Makdisi.

<sup>58</sup> In the last few decades, the relationship between European colonialism and Islam attracted much scholarly interest. For an excellent foray into that scholarship, see David Motadel, ed., *Islam and the European Empires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>59</sup> See Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 136-54. See also GARF f. 677, op. 1, d. 511, ll. 7-10; SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 1305, l. 13 (1876).

Ottoman Empire: the 1864 revolt in Chechnya ended in the exodus of several thousand Sufi adherents in 1865;<sup>60</sup> the 1866 uprising in Abkhazia and the siege of Sukhum prompted the emigration of almost 20,000 Abkhaz Muslims to Anatolia;<sup>61</sup> and the 1877 revolts in Abkhazia, Chechnya, and Daghestan, which coincided with the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, led to the emigration of 30,000-50,000 Abkhaz and small groups of Chechens and Daghestanis.<sup>62</sup>

The Russian government developed a profound sense of paranoia about connections between Muslims in the Russian and Ottoman empires.<sup>63</sup> Concerns over Pan-Islamism came in different guise throughout the 1878-1914 period: fears of an underground network of pro-Ottoman “Pan-Islamic committees” from Derbent and Astrakhan to Crimea and Odessa; doubts about the loyalty of nomadic Kurdish and Turkic populations, especially in the aftermath of Russia’s annexation of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan; and unease about Turkic intellectuals, such as Ismail Gasprinskii, who urged educational reforms and political engagement for Russian Muslims.<sup>64</sup> The colonial archive preserves

---

<sup>60</sup> On this revolt and its underlying ideology, which is traced to the Qadiri shaykh Kunta Hajji and known in Russian historiography as Zikrism, see SSSA f. 416, op. 3, d. 617-19 (1864); see also Alexandre Bennigsen, “The Qadiriyyah (Kunta Hajji) Tariqah in North-east Caucasus: 1850-1987,” *Islamic Culture* 62, no. 2-3 (1988): 63-78.

<sup>61</sup> Dzidzariia cites 19,342 people, or 3,358 households; *Makhadzhirstvo*, 289.

<sup>62</sup> On Abkhaz emigration, see Dzidzariia, *Makhadzhirstvo*, 371-73. Estimates of Daghestani muhajirs in the entire 1860-1914 period range between 20,000 and 40,000 people; see See Magomeddadaev, *Emigratsiia dagestantsev*, vol. 2, 83-86.

<sup>63</sup> Michael A. Reynolds argued that at times tensions between the Russian state and Russian Muslims “produced pan-Islamic sympathies that were exported to the Ottoman empire” and not the other way around; *Shattering Empires*, 91. On Russian officials’ exaggerated perception of the Islamic threat, see Alexander Morrison, “Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic: Nil Sergeevich Lykoshin and the Aftermath of the Andijan Uprising,” *Past & Present* 214, no. 1 (2012): 255-304.

<sup>64</sup> See tsarist police reports on Pan-Islamism in GARF f. 102, which are arranged by province and year. For a rich corpus of primary sources on Pan-Islamism in Russia, see also GARF f. P5325, op. 4, d. 79-81, 172, 345, 504, 596. These summaries of primary evidence were written up in the early Soviet period, reflecting how the Bolsheviks understood the late Ottoman Pan-Islamist ‘threat.’

much evidence of such trans-imperial ties, seen by the empire as suspect and undesirable.<sup>65</sup> The archive also guided the development of Russian historiography on the Caucasus, which often overemphasizes the importance of external influences, especially Ottoman “emissaries” and “spies” that allegedly infiltrated the region.

In 1870, the Caucasus authorities discussed cross-border rumors of an impending Muslim uprising throughout the Caucasus, prepared by a small number of Ottoman “spies” from among muhajirs.<sup>66</sup> Their fears were mostly unfounded, but the idea of private correspondence as a threat to the empire lived on. The 1877 uprising in Daghestan, the most significant anti-colonial uprising since the end of the Caucasus War, started, according to some narratives, with the letters from Shamil’s son, Ghazi Muhammad, that several muhajirs carried from Istanbul and that urged Daghestani Muslims to support the Ottoman war effort.<sup>67</sup> Historians of Daghestan disagree on whether those letters, none of

---

<sup>65</sup> I use the term “colonial archive” to stress the power hierarchy embedded in the selection, conservation, and organization of historical evidence, and not in the context of a rich debate of whether Russian imperial rule in the Caucasus was colonial or not. A colonial archive reproduces knowledge of the governing class and power of the state by excluding non-dominant narratives and voices; see Ann Laura Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 87-109.

<sup>66</sup> In 1870, the Russian consul in Erzurum wrote that the Kars subprovincial governor, Emin Paşa, instructed a Chechen muhajir, Abdülkerim, to cross into the Caucasus and visit village headmen of Chechen, Kumyk, Lezgin, Nogai, and other communities that had committed to participate in the upcoming uprising. The consul later reported that the Erzurum governor sent two more muhajirs, and then two more, all from among Northeast Caucasian Muslims, to agitate against Russia. He also believed that Musa Kundukhov’s brother, Ampua Bey, based in Sivas, was implicated in the plot. The Caucasus authorities paid little attention to those dispatches, but acknowledged that such rumors had been spreading among muhajirs and even among Ottoman provincial governors in eastern Anatolia, and that they should monitor the situation. The timing of this trans-border anxiety over a potential uprising in the Caucasus coincided with an increased traffic in Chechens returning to the Russian Empire, as described in Chapter 6; see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2836 (1870-71).

<sup>67</sup> See Abdurazak Sogratlinskii, who was a Daghestani loyalist and wrote his history by interviewing former rebels, “Istoriia imamata 1877 goda i vosstaniia na territorii Dagestana,” in *Vosstaniia dagestantsev i chechentsev*, eds. Timur M. Aitberov et al., 168; see also 150. The Caucasus authorities suspected that Ghazi Muhammad, son of Shamil, sent six Lezgin muhajirs to the Caucasus with letters agitating for an anti-Russian rebellion; see SSSA f. 5, op. 1, d. 5022 (1877).



which survive, or other forms of correspondence with Ghazi Muhammad in fact existed.<sup>68</sup> Whether or not Shamil's heir sent messages to Daghestan is less important than both the fact that many Daghestanis at the time thought that he did and that, in the aftermath of the failed rebellion, many thought it prudent and plausible to link the origins of the rebellion to him.

Many tsarist officials in the Caucasus were also suspicious of Sufism. They had a rudimentary understanding of what Sufis believed, rarely distinguished between pro-*jihād* and pacifist Sufi tariqas, and perceived of tariqas as similar to secret cells, like groups of socialist revolutionaries whom they were battling at the same time.<sup>69</sup> The Russian police established surveillance over several villages in the Dargin, Gunib, Avar, and Temir-Khan-Shura districts of central Daghestan, where they believed Naqshbandi followers resided. They feared that Sufi networks could hide fugitives, who tried to escape Russian authorities to the Ottoman Empire via Petrovsk (now Makhachkala) and Batum. Above all, the government disdained the idea that Sufi adherents in Russia could be following orders of religious figures from outside the empire.<sup>70</sup> The view of Sufism as an inherently political

---

<sup>68</sup> Iskhak Urminskii and Ali Saltinskii mentioned that Ghazi Muhammad sent oral messages; see Aitberov et al., eds., *Vosstaniia dagestantsev i chechentsev*, 14-15, 64, 119. Several participants in the uprising did not mention the letters in their memoirs and accorded little importance to support or propaganda from the Ottoman state; see Khaidarbek Genichutlinskii, *Istoriko-biograficheskie i istoricheskie ocherki*, trans. Timur M. Aitberov (Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1992); Raasu Gaitukaev, "Istoricheskii ocherk o vosstaniia v Chechne. Memuary," TsGA RD f. 133, op. 2, d. 1 (after 1881). For the discussion on Ghazi Muhammad's letters in historiography, see Amirkhan M. Magomedadaev and Z.M. Amirova, "Prichiny i posledstviia vosstaniia 1877 goda v Dagestane v otsenke sovremennikov i issledovatelei," *Izvestiia DGPU* 1 (2010): 20-31.

<sup>69</sup> Tsarist, Soviet, and Russian historiography applied different terminology to Sufi phenomena. Thus, popular Sufism often fell under *dervishestvo*, a term derived from derwish; Muslim resistance in the Imamate period (1828-59) came to be known as *miuridizm*, from murid, a resistance fighter; after the Caucasus War, Sufis were often referred to as *tarikatchiki*, from tariqa; and the ideology of the Qadiri shaykh Kunta Hajji from Chechnya entered historiography as *kuntizm* or *zikrism*, after dhikr, a devotional recitation in Sufism; see also Knysh, "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm."

<sup>70</sup> Superintendent (*nachal'nik*) of Nalchik District (17 December 1893), quoted in Mikhail S. Totoev, "Materialy po pereseleniiu gortsev v Turtsiiu" (1941), North Ossetian Institute for Research in Humanities

and anti-establishment movement was not unique to Russian censors; French colonial officials in the Maghreb held similar mistrust of Qadiri and Rahmani Sufis whom they regarded as “conspirators.”<sup>71</sup>

*Culture and Refugee Studies: Legacy of Migration and Frontier Rumors*

Refugee migration, including that from the North Caucasus, is typically explained by economic, political, and military factors. This is the legacy of the Rankean evolution of the historical discipline and an impact of even more empirical domains on the interdisciplinary fields of migration and refugee studies. Socio-economic processes, such as land reform, abolitionism, and Slavic colonization, were major reasons for “voluntary” and semi-voluntary emigration. Displacement and ethnic cleansing led to forced migration. I argue that social and cultural phenomena, such as a legacy of migration and popular rumors, served as additional factors in precipitating trans-imperial migration. Previous migrations from the Caucasus had underlying political and economic reasons, but, over the course of several generations, memories of that mobility were a socio-cultural force of its own.

In the centuries before tsarist conquests, Muslim communities in the North Caucasus had come to regard the Ottoman domains as a land of opportunity. Residents of the Northwest Caucasus, particularly coastal Circassians and Abkhaz, were incorporated

---

and Social Sciences (Severo-Osetinskii institut gumanitarnykh i sotsial'nykh issledovaniï, Vladikavkaz, hereafter cited as SOIGSI) f. 17, op. 1, d. 27, ll. 253-55.

<sup>71</sup> Knysh makes this comparison in “Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm,” 160-61; see also Julia A. Clancy-Smith, *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800-1904)* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).

into the power structures of the Eastern Mediterranean through slave trade. In some cases, slaves from the Caucasus achieved prominent positions of power. In 1382-1517, a Circassian Mamluk dynasty ruled over Egypt; in 1516-1758, seven Circassians, four Abkhaz, and four Georgians rose to governorship of Ottoman Syria;<sup>72</sup> and in the late Ottoman period, the last four Valide Sultans [mother of the sultan] were either Georgian or Circassian.<sup>73</sup> This narrative of Caucasian slaves-turned-rulers may have contributed to the emigration of Circassian notables westward before the 1860s. In 1860-64, at the height of the Circassian ethnic cleansing and displacement, however, the old narrative played no role, as most Circassians had been all but expelled into the Ottoman state; their sale of children on the Ottoman slave market at the time was nothing but a result of famine, abject poverty, and a collapse of social ties.

In the Northeast Caucasus, where hijra had a more voluntary character, it built on the historical legacy of another type of migration westward – that of scholars. Daghestan, out of all Caucasus territories, was best integrated into intellectual networks of the broader Muslim world. It was first to encounter Islam with seventh-century Arab conquests. Despite, or perhaps owing to, its heterodox linguistic make-up, it developed a vibrant Arabic-based theological, educational, and judiciary tradition.<sup>74</sup> By 1917, 2,311 maktab

---

<sup>72</sup> Karl K. Barbir, *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 42.

<sup>73</sup> Bezmiâlem Sultan, Pertevniyal Sultan, Şevkefza Sultan, and Rahime Perestu Sultan held the title of Valide Sultan under, respectively, Abdülmecit I, Abdülaziz I, Murad V, and Abdülhamid II. No Valide Sultan was appointed after 1904. The title of Valide Sultan was not always held by a biological mother of a reigning sultan. Biological mothers of seven out of the last eight Ottoman sultans were either Circassian, Abkhaz, or Georgian.

<sup>74</sup> See three edited volumes by Moshe Gammer, *Daghestan and the World of Islam* (2006), co-edited with David J. Wasserstein; *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan* (2009); and *Written Culture in Daghestan* (2015).

and 400 madrasas operated in Daghestan.<sup>75</sup> It was a long-standing tradition of Daghestani ‘ulama to seek religious posts in the Ottoman domains. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Daghestanis came to occupy many religious and legal offices in the neighboring empire.<sup>76</sup> In the last decades of Ottoman rule, the ‘ulama of Daghestani origin could be found in the positions of *şeyhülislam* (Ömer Hulusi Efendi), *kazasker* of Anatolia (Mustafa Efendi), and *kadı* of Mecca (Ahmet Cemaleddin Efendi).<sup>77</sup> Russian expansion into the Caucasus not only did not disrupt this westward journey of scholars but intensified it and made it more visible. Many companions of Shamil, including his spiritual mentor, Jamal al-Din al-Ghazi Ghumuqi, fled to the Ottoman state, where they received houses and estates, annual salaries, and had their children enrolled in the empire’s best educational institutions.<sup>78</sup>

It is in the spirit of such legacy of scholarly career opportunities in the Ottoman state that we should understand the letter by Gassan-Dibir, which opened this chapter. Gassan-Dibir, who described a warm welcome that his scholarly company received in Kars in 1869, attempted to persuade his compatriots that the same career opportunities existed for educated Daghestanis as before. His letter, however factually dubious it may seem, is a

---

<sup>75</sup> Enver F. Kisriev and Robert Bruce Ware, “Russian Hegemony and Islamic Resistance: Ideology and Political Organization in Daghestan, 1800-1930,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2006): 499.

<sup>76</sup> On Daghestani appointments in the Ottoman Empire, see BOA AE.SMHD.I 241/19519 (29 *zilhicce* 1156, 13 February 1744); C.EV 4/151 (13 *cemaziyelevvel* 1227, 25 May 1812).

<sup>77</sup> *Şeyhülislam* is the highest rank in the Ottoman ‘ulama hierarchy; *kazasker* is a chief judge; and *kadı* is a judge. See Alexandre Toumarkine, “Oulémas originaires du Lazistan, d’Adjarie, de Circassie et du Daguestan pendant les dernières décennies de l’Empire Ottoman (fin XIXème siècle - début XXème siècles): approche préliminaire,” in *Caucasia Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, 1555-1914*, eds. Raoul Motika and Michael Ursinus (Wiesbaden, 2000), 64; see also idem., “Entre Empire Ottoman et État-Nation Turc,” 356-73. On Daghestani diasporic literature, see Murtazaliev, *Literatura dagestanskoi diaspori Turtsii*.

<sup>78</sup> Cuthell, “Muhacirin Komisyonu,” 134-37; Candan Badem and Patimat Takhnaeva, “Mukhammad-Fazil’ Pasha Dagestanlı (1853-1916): biograficheskie svedeniia po materialam Osmanskogo arkhiva,” *Tavraev* 1 (2014): 25-30; see also BOA İ.MVL 360/15800 (22 *safer* 1273, 22 October 1856); A.MKT.MHM 239/39 (7 *safer* 1279, 4 August 1862); MVL 646/69 (1 *muharrem* 1280, 18 June 1863); İ.MVL 486/22044 (8 *muharrem* 1280, 25 June 1863).

tribute to generations of learned North Caucasian men travelling westward to seek riches, the kind of economic mobility that was still remembered back in mountainous Daghestani villages. Describing hijra as a fortuitous affair and urging others to emigrate were not necessarily a self-serving deception. It was rather an act of imagining, on behalf of muhajirs, of what hijra should have been and could be for others. As they sought to justify their hijra to themselves, they bolstered their narratives with retrospective arguments in favor of hijra and fanciful descriptions of how they used to imagine a good Ottoman life.

In the nineteenth-century Caucasus, hijra from Russian-occupied territories proceeded not only to the Ottoman Empire, although that was the largest and best-known migration. North Caucasian Muslims applied the term *hijra* to at least three more migrations. First, in the early nineteenth century, many Kabardins moved to western (Zakubanskaia) Circassia, leaving their native plateaus for coastal lowlands. Their migration was a result of the Russian annexation of Kabarda, and exiles to the unincorporated Circassian territories are known in historiography as *khadzhrity*.<sup>79</sup> Second, the Caucasus Imamate, while battling Russia, encouraged immigration from Russian-held territories, and many Muslims from throughout the region joined the imamate forces as muhajirs, especially during the time of Shamil. Third, leaders of the 1877 uprising in Daghestan reclaimed the concept, and Daghestani fighters fleeing to the territories newly-liberated from the Russians called themselves muhajirs. Those intra-Caucasus migrations were important in the overall context of the Ottoman hijra because they further popularized the concept of hijra as a form of anti-colonial resistance and/or religious duty throughout the North Caucasus.

---

<sup>79</sup> Also known as fugitive (*beglye*) or free (*vol'nye*) Kabardins; see Alov, “‘Beglye’ kabardintsy.”

Frontier rumors, an ever-present and integral element of popular culture, played an important role in the mobility of North Caucasian Muslims between the Russian and Ottoman empires.<sup>80</sup> To be clear, structural transformations brought on by Russian rule were the primary and underlying reasons for refugee migration from the North Caucasus into the Ottoman Empire. But the culture of rumors, which is impossible to quantify, had some role in determining the scope and timing of an exodus from Kabarda, Chechnya, and Daghestan. Rumors present a serious methodological challenge to a historian. A feature of popular and, in this case, anti-establishment culture, they usually evade being put down on paper.<sup>81</sup> What finds its way into the colonial archive is often documentation, carefully selected for being particularly damaging to imperial interests, especially at a time when their superiors yearned to learn more about the alleged Pan-Islamic threat in their backyard. Nevertheless, rumors were a crucial constituent in the making of popular knowledge about the hijra.

One of the most powerful rumors – persistent to this day among the North Caucasian diaspora in the Middle East – is that the two empires agreed on the exchange of Muslim and Christian populations, whereby the Ottoman state would receive North Caucasian Muslims and the Russian state would resettle Armenian and Greek populations in their place.<sup>82</sup> There is little historical evidence to corroborate a conspiracy theory of a

---

<sup>80</sup> Vladimir Bobrovnikov notes that the “role of rumors in the emergence of the muhajir movement is little-studied but the significance of rumors was truly enormous”; see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 169.

<sup>81</sup> For rumors and gossip as a tool of resistance by subaltern actors, see James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985); *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990). Rumors could also be part of the establishment culture; see Tolga U. Esmer, “Notes on a Scandal: Transregional Networks of Violence, Gossip, and Imperial Sovereignty in the Late Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 1 (2016): 99-128.

<sup>82</sup> See SSSA f. 11, d. 3239 (1859); f. 545, op. 1, d. 2811 (1868). For a variation of this conspiracy theory, namely that the two empires had planned the displacement of Circassians for their mutual benefit, see Mohydeen I. Quandour, *The Triple Conspiracy* (1995). A historical novel by a contemporary Jordanian Circassian writer, it captures sentiments of many in the North Caucasian diaspora.

formal Russo-Ottoman plan to exchange their populations. The only two known bilateral agreements – the 1860 understanding for Ottoman resettlement of 40,000-50,000 Circassians and the 1865 accords for the emigration of about 5,000 families, primarily Chechens, from Terek Province – were numerically and temporally limited.<sup>83</sup> On the contrary, at the height of the 1863-64 refugee crisis, the Porte repeatedly demanded that the Russians prevent further Circassian emigration, and following 1867, the Russian state instituted policies to discourage Muslim emigration.

Many believed that the two empires had made a formal treaty that bestowed upon North Caucasian Muslims a right to freely emigrate to the Ottoman state. This mistaken but widespread assumption even led to personal tragedies. In one case, sixteen men from the village of Musuli in Zakatala District wrote a petition in Ottoman Turkish to Tiflis authorities requesting to let them emigrate to the Ottoman state. A local official made a translation into Russian, which read as follows, “On the basis of an existing treaty between the [two] states, we wish to move to Turkey with our families.” The head of the administration in Tiflis, who received the translated petition, misread it. Instead of *traktat*, a Russian term for “treaty,” he read a similarly-sounding *tarikāt*, which means a tariqa (Sufi order). Incensed that local Muslims were demanding emigration based on their allegiance to a Sufi movement, he ordered local authorities to arrest and deport four “instigators” to Siberia. The order was carried out. The deportees, shocked at what had happened, wrote a petition to Tiflis, expressing remorse and asking for mercy; a wife of one of them and then the entire village sent separate petitions to Tiflis begging for their

---

<sup>83</sup> On the 1860 agreement, see Pinson, “Demographic Warfare,” 113, 147; Karpāt, “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule,” reprinted in *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History*, 653n6; Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 172. On the 1865 agreement, see SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 90 (1865).

release. The authorities, albeit irritated over Zakatalans' insistence on a non-existing Russo-Ottoman treaty, eventually approved their return home.<sup>84</sup>

Some rumors had a prophetic or supernatural message. The Caucasus, both before and during Russian rule, was connected to the world of popular transnational Islam. In places, as far afield as Southeast Asia, Muslims spoke of an anti-colonial struggle in the Caucasus, with stories occasionally turning into legends valorizing the glory of Islam. In one such story, conveyed in an 1896 Malay manuscript, Imam Shamil's son [Ghazi] Muhammad appears as a hero of the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. The manuscript depicts the war as part of the perennial battle between Christianity and Islam. In its telling, Shamil's son emerged triumphant after blinding Russian forces with magical green and red crystals.<sup>85</sup> European imperial expansion in the Muslim world prepared fertile ground for ominous narratives about the upcoming apocalypse.<sup>86</sup>

Trans-Eurasian hajjis also exchanged "chain letters," a little-known literary genre of the era.<sup>87</sup> One chain letter, which circulated in the Caucasus around 1885, reputedly came from "Shaykh 'Ali," a Daghestani hajji. Shaykh 'Ali claimed prophethood and a direct line of communication with the Prophet, which he purportedly established after having prayed over the Prophet's grave in Medina. In his letter, allegedly directed by the

---

<sup>84</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 645, ll. 4-6, 9 (2 September 1872 – 8 October 1873).

<sup>85</sup> See Vladimir I. Braginsky, "Russians, Circassians and ... the Discovery of Laser Weapons: 'The Story of the War Between Sultan Istanbul and the Russian Tsar Alexander'," *Indonesia Circle* 24, no. 70 (1996): 193-217.

<sup>86</sup> See Michael Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements Against the European Colonial Order* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Richard Landes, *Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>87</sup> Chain letters seek the multiplication of their original message in geometrical progression by threatening recipients with bad luck, physical violence, or death, should they "break the chain" of transmission. Traditional historiography places the origin of chain letters in either industrializing England or the United States; they are considered to be a modern phenomenon that came about thanks to a centralized postal system. See "Chain Letters" in *Encyclopedia of American Folklife*, ed. Simon Bronner (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006), 166-70.



Prophet himself, he admonished Muslims to follow their faith in anticipation of the impending Armageddon. He predicted apocalyptic events on the 1320th, 1330th, and 1340th anniversaries of the Prophet's death, respectively a three-day solar eclipse, divine revocation of the Qur'an, and a series of uprisings caused by the Dajjal [anti-messiah in Islamic eschatology]. The letter contained a commercial clause, typical of chain letters:

Whoever gives the copyist of this letter 10 kopecks will have their sins of missing prayers forgiven by Allah. Those who give 20 kopecks will be saved from evil spirits and shaytan. Those who donate 35 kopecks will have the gates of hell closed to them. Those who give 40 kopecks will have all gates of paradise open to them, and the Prophet himself will protect them.<sup>88</sup>

Another letter, discovered in the North Caucasus, came from "Omar of Mazandaran." Omar claimed that he received the blessing of the Prophet himself, had a divine confirmation of his own prophethood in Mecca, and, since then, had "preached in Iraq, Khorasan, Persia, Turkestan, Daghestan, and other places." In his short letter, he urged readers to accept his prophetic agency at once and pass on his message "from town to town," for it to reach other Muslims. His letter ended with both a blessing and a threat: "whoever fulfills [the passing of this letter to others] will be saved from cholera and other diseases, and whoever does not fulfill [it] will not live longer than forty days."<sup>89</sup>

In the nineteenth-century Muslim world, chain letters utilized societal anxieties produced by colonialism and biological disasters that accompanied globalization. An emphasis on cholera is noteworthy. A global epidemic of the nineteenth century, it came in hand with European imperialism, a global revolution in transportation, and the opening

---

<sup>88</sup> TsGA RSO-A f. 12, op. 8, d. 227, ll. 24-24ob, 26-26ob (3 May 1893).

<sup>89</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 245, ll. 10-14, 24-25 (1866).

of the hajj to middle-class Muslims across Eurasia.<sup>90</sup> Some Muslims in the Caucasus believed that outbreaks of cholera, a previously unknown disease, was Allah's punishment for not emigrating to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>91</sup>

Many rumors, building on the geopolitical situation at the time, predicted an inevitable great war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire (sometimes, adding the Qajars, the "war of the three empires"). In this hypothetical conflict, the Caucasus would serve as a battleground, Russian Muslims would rebel against tsarist rule, and "Muslim armies" would emerge victorious.<sup>92</sup> On the Ottoman side of the frontier, such rumors nourished the belief of many Circassian muhajirs that their exile was temporary and would soon come to an end.<sup>93</sup> Refugees' hope of return, often through a military victory with the help of a friendly host-state, has been a feature of many refugee experiences: Palestinian refugees entertained a similar hope after the 1948 War, as did Cuban refugees following the 1959 revolution.<sup>94</sup>

A substantial part of out-migration, especially in the post-1867 period, stemmed from the rolling rumors of forthcoming Muslim discrimination: compulsory military conscription (that entailed consuming pork served in Russian barracks), conversion to Christianity, confiscation of lands, colonization by Russian settlers, construction of

---

<sup>90</sup> See Michael Christopher Low, "Empire and the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam Under British Surveillance, 1865-1908," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 2 (2008): 269-90; Eric Tagliacozzo, "Hajj in the Time of Cholera: Pilgrim Ships and Contagion from Southeast Asia to the Red Sea," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, eds. Gelvin and Green, 103-20.

<sup>91</sup> SOIGSI f. 17, op. 1, d. 27.

<sup>92</sup> SSSA f. 7, op. 3, d. 2507 (1877); f. 5, d. 5007, ll. 4-5 (1878); GARF f. 102, op. 242, d. 74, ch. 39, l. 2 (1912); Totoev, "Materialy po pereseleniiu gortsev," in SOIGSI f. 17, op. 1, d. 27, l. 251.

<sup>93</sup> SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 2836 (1871).

<sup>94</sup> Juliane Hammer, *Palestinians Born in Exile: Diaspora and the Search for a Homeland* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005), 11; María Cristina García, *Havana USA: Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 14-16.

churches across the Muslim landscape, and introduction of additional Muslim-only taxes.<sup>95</sup>

An open letter, reportedly in limited circulation in Daghestan in the early 1910s, illustrates such concerns. The writer, a Daghestani muhajir, urges his coreligionists to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire:

... I leave Daghestan forever because of my disdain for it. How can I not abandon Daghestan and not leave for Istanbul, when [it is] the latter [that] has faith? In Daghestan, ... [people] do not distinguish anymore between what is permitted and what is prohibited. ... Whoever stays here will regret it later and turn into Russians. ... Heavy taxes will be imposed, and bad times will come. ... Those who live with the Russians drink wine. Whoever stays here will be in hell forever. Daghestanis, let's go to Turkey! Do you remember what happened to Kazan Tatars? Your turn is coming, and you will be recruited into [Russian] soldiers, and Allah will reproach you for that in the afterlife...<sup>96</sup>

The fear of the sectarian “other,” who wielded political power, has been common throughout history and gripped large swathes of the Muslim world in the age of European imperialism.<sup>97</sup> Fears of cultural imperialism, or imposition of Russo-Orthodox ways of life, were not limited to the Muslim population. In 1880, the Kars correspondent of the *Kavkaz* newspaper reported that Kars Armenians had been emigrating out of the Russian-conquered province into Ottoman Anatolia alongside their Muslim neighbors because they were convinced that the tsarist government had a secret plan to conscript Armenian men and convert them to Orthodoxy.<sup>98</sup> In the North Caucasus, the anxiety was compounded by fear of a centralized state, widely perceived as bent on disrupting local structures and

---

<sup>95</sup> SSSA f. 5, op. 1, d. 622, ll. 3-6 (14 December 1868); GARF f. 102, op. 52, d. 31, ch. 2, ll. 10b (20 January 1895); Totoev, “Materialy po pereseleniiu gortsev,” in SOIGSI f. 17, op. 1, d. 28, l. 28; TsGA RD f. 2, op. 6, d. 13, ll. 2-3 (1 February 1900).

<sup>96</sup> TsGA RD f. 2, op. 9, d. 16, ll. 96-99ob (2 August 1912).

<sup>97</sup> See Cemil Aydın, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

<sup>98</sup> *Kavkaz*, no. 224 (22 August 1880), 2.

remaking the Caucasus in the image of Mother Russia.<sup>99</sup> After all, those inhabiting the North Caucasian world shared memories of the punishing Caucasus War and the near-total expulsion of western Circassians. Russia's wartime atrocities and peacetime colonialism fed popular expectations of further discrimination to come, which contributed to much of "voluntary" Muslim emigration between 1864 and 1914.

### *Debates over Hijra*

The extension of Russian rule to the Caucasus provoked passionate debates among local notables and 'ulama on the necessity and benefits of hijra. The question of whether Muslims should leave for *dār al-islām* or stay in *dār al-ḥarb*, which had commanded the attention of generations of Islamic jurists, now split Muslim religious establishment in the Caucasus.<sup>100</sup> Some 'ulama advocated emigration, whether into the Caucasus Imamate, when it existed, or into the Ottoman Empire, while others urged their followers to stay in the Russian-held territories.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> One could draw parallels to early nineteenth-century Egypt, where thousands of Egyptian peasants ran away or maimed themselves to avoid conscription into Mehmet Ali Paşa's army; others resisted any encroachment of the state, be it in the form of tax inspectors, land surveyors, or Cairo-educated midwives; see Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 99-103, 224-26, 260-62; idem., "Women, Medicine and Power in Nineteenth-Century Egypt," in *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 35-72; Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 34-62. In mid-nineteenth-century Syria, Druze communities rebelled against Ottoman authorities over newly imposed taxation and conscription; see Schilcher, "The Hauran Conflicts of the 1860s."

<sup>100</sup> See Abou El Fadl, "Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities"; Muhammad Khalid Masud, "The Obligation to Migrate: The Doctrine of *Hijra* in Islamic Law," in *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration and the Religious Imagination*, eds. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (London: Routledge, 1990), 29-49; Kathryn A. Miller, *Guardians of Islam: Religious Authority and Muslim Communities of Late Medieval Spain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 20-43.

<sup>101</sup> See Kemper, "Khalidiyya Networks." For some Muslims accepting Russia as part of *dār al-islām*, see Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, 3, 86-89.

With the end of the Caucasus War, the debate not only persisted but had become more public and extended to new actors within North Caucasian society. Muhajirs, who had a personal experience of moving to the Ottoman domains, participated in this trans-imperial conversation, which unfolded via oral messages, private letters, and newspapers. Much private correspondence, especially the kind that had to be smuggled, encouraged emigration.<sup>102</sup> In 1859, a group of Circassians in Istanbul who had emigrated in 1857 wrote to twenty-three notables in western Circassia, urging them to join them in the Ottoman Empire:

Nothing can compare to the joy and hospitality shown to us by the Turks. Upon our arrival, we were given houses, money, firewood, clothes, coal, and everything we may need. Moreover, our wives and children have no scarcity of anything. We were given places for residence in Rumelia, where the Crimeans had been settled. We, however, wishing to be closer to the sites blessed by the life of our Prophet, asked to be given lands for settlement in Anatolia. . . . Our request was granted, and, starting this spring, [the government] will build us houses, mosques, schools, and even hammams, and will give us oxen, cows, wheat, barley, sowing seeds, and everything that we may need for agriculture and household.<sup>103</sup>

This letter reveals that the hierarchy of desirability regarding muhajirs' places of settlement in the Ottoman Empire may have had religious undertones. The Ottoman Empire was not only *dār al-islām*, because it was ruled by a Muslim dynasty, or a caliphate, although the latter designation was re-emphasized by the Ottomans at a slightly later period. It also hosted "sites blessed by the Prophet," a reference to Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. No muhajirs were allowed to immigrate to those exact places, but the idea of moving to the land of the Prophet, whether one resettled in Transjordan, Syria, or Anatolia, held certain attraction for some Muslims. In other words, as a result of the Caucasus War

---

<sup>102</sup> For Russian complaints about such correspondence, see SSSA f. 11, op. 1, d. 3239, l. 101 (30 March 1861).

<sup>103</sup> RGVIA f. 13454, op. 15, d. 343, ll. 47-49 (18 October 1859); the intercepted letter is in Ottoman Turkish and was translated into Russian by the Caucasus authorities.

and the imposition of Russian rule in the North Caucasus, the entire Ottoman Empire became a sacred domain.

Endorsements of hijra from within the Ottoman Empire found a receptive public in the Caucasus. As late as 1866, some Circassian Abzakh leaders, who lived in Russia, sent an open letter to the Ottoman newspaper *Tasvir-i Efkar*. In it, they lamented oppression by the Russians and urged the Ottoman government to endorse and support their emigration.<sup>104</sup> One family in Kizilyurt District in central Daghestan preserved copies of letters that its village sent to the Ottoman sultan complaining that the Russian authorities would not let them leave and asking for his intercession in their hijra.<sup>105</sup> The same family also saved a letter that it reportedly received from Ghazi Muhammad in Istanbul. Shamil's heir urged Muslims to emigrate to the "protected domains" because it was both permissible, as the Russians and the Ottomans signed a treaty to that effect, and necessary, because religious authorities in Mecca endorsed it.<sup>106</sup> 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sughuri (Sogratlinskii), a Naqshbandi shaykh and student of Shamil's adviser, Jamal al-Din al-Ghazi Ghumuqi, in the late 1870s, wrote an Arabic-language treatise on hijra. He urged all North Caucasian Muslims to emigrate as it was their religious duty to leave *dār al-ḥarb* when no hope remained to regain their lands for Islam through ghaza.<sup>107</sup>

---

<sup>104</sup> See Gugov et al., eds., *Tragicheskie posledstviia*, 223-24. For coverage of the Circassian refugee crisis in the Ottoman press, see Margarita Dobрева, "Çerkes Tehcirinin Medyaya Yankısı: Takvim-i Vekayi Gazetesi," *Yeni Türkiye* 74 (2015): 779-88.

<sup>105</sup> R.A. Collection, Kizilyurt, Daghestan. I am grateful to Zaira B. Ibragimova for facilitating my access to the collection.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sughuri was a leading Daghestani Naqshbandi shaykh after the demise of Shamil's Imamate. Considered an influence on the 1877 uprising in Daghestan, he refused to support it. His son, Muhammad Hajji, was a leader of the uprising. See Amri Shikhsaidov et al., eds., *Uslada umov v biografiakh dagestanskikh uchenykh* (Moscow: Mardzhani, 2012), trans. of Nadhir al-Durgili, 107-11; Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 167-68.

Hijra advocates also utilized printing technology to sway public opinion in favor of emigration to *dār al-islām*. The Russian government suspected that some muhajirs planned to send “brochures,” composed of Qur’anic verses and pro-hijra fatwas, which were printed in Cairo and meant for North Caucasian Muslims.<sup>108</sup> In 1905, a Daghestani publisher in Petrovsk printed Muhammad al-Kikuni’s work, in which the Naqshbandi shaykh, based in Reşadiye, urged North Caucasian Muslims to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire, citing Qur’anic verses in support of his argument.<sup>109</sup> Remarkably, the publication was approved by Russian censors, who were, almost certainly, not aware of its contents.

Many muhajirs, nevertheless, took a different stance on hijra. In 1863, Abzakh notables who had previously emigrated to Anatolia urged their community not to emigrate, lest they “wish to depopulate their lands,” but to fight for independence and promised that the Ottomans would dispatch military aid to them.<sup>110</sup> Promises of foreign support also came from the Ubykh leadership, who wrote:

We sent complaints [about Russia’s annexations] to the great [Ottoman] empire, its ministers, and ambassadors of all courts; sent our deputies to Paris, London, and Cairo. ... These empires will soon deliver aid and give you an opportunity to fight, so that you can be independent.<sup>111</sup>

An anti-hijra movement gained strength in the 1860s, when North Caucasian residents witnessed the mass displacement of Circassians by the Russian army. In their

---

<sup>108</sup> GARF f. 102, op. 96, d. 1285, ll. 2-3 (5 October 1898).

<sup>109</sup> The poetic compilation, published in original Arabic and translated into Arabic-scripted (*‘ajami*) Avar, was a commentary on Abu Hamid al-Ghazali’s *Ayyuha-l-walad*. Muhammad al-Dagistani al-Kikuni, *Najm al-anam fi riyadat al-awamm* (Petrovsk: A.M. Mikhailov, 1905); see M.G. Shekhmagomedov and Zarema B. Ibragimova, “Prizyv k khidzhre v tvorchestve dagestanskikh sufiev kontsa XIX - nachala XX vv. (na primere proizvedeniia Muhammada-Khadzhi al-Kikuni),” *gazavat.ru* (23 April 2012). <[www.gazavat.ru/history3.php?rub=14&art=599](http://www.gazavat.ru/history3.php?rub=14&art=599)> (accessed on 23 April 2018).

<sup>110</sup> “Materialy dlia opisaniia voiny na Zapadnom Kavkaze,” *Voennyi Sbornik* 11 (1864); reprinted in *Tragicheskie posledstviia*, eds. Gugov et al., 90.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-91.

consideration whether to emigrate, groups of North Caucasian Muslims from other regions dispatched representatives to the Ottoman Empire to survey the lands that they could potentially settle and report back. Thus, one Ossetian “scout,” after having visited some Ossetians who emigrated with Kundukhov in 1865, wrote back to Ossetian notables urging them to stay put in Russia.<sup>112</sup>

Print newspapers, edited by North Caucasian intellectuals, emerged as the strongest voices against emigration. On the Ottoman side of the frontier, *Ğuaze* (1911-17), the first Circassian newspaper in the Ottoman Empire, was particularly vocal in opposing hijra.<sup>113</sup> The newspaper, published in Istanbul by the Circassian Unity and Support Association, reflected the views of, primarily, upper-class, urban, nationally conscious, and usually second-generation muhajirs (see Chapter 5). The newspaper had a section for news from the Caucasus, which often included Circassian-language poetry sent to Istanbul by Ottoman- and Russian-based Circassians.<sup>114</sup>

Soon after its establishment, the newspaper printed a series of anonymous articles, amounting to editorials, discussing the Circassian exile and prospective return to Russia. The first article in the series alluded to emigration (Ott. Tur. *hicret*) having been a debacle (Ott. Tur. *hezimet*), not least due to empty promises by local authorities in various parts of the empire.<sup>115</sup> Another article endorsed return migration to Russia because of a common dissatisfaction with muhajirs’ life in the Ottoman state, ending with the following words: “In conclusion, no reason remains to prefer Turkey to the Caucasus.”<sup>116</sup> *Ğuaze* regularly

---

<sup>112</sup> Mikhail S. Totoev, “Pereselenie osetin v Turtsiiu (1859-1865)” (1940s), in SOIGSI f. 17, op. 1, d. 5, ll. 33-34.

<sup>113</sup> Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 27-164; for transcriptions of some *Ğuaze* articles, see 243-97.

<sup>114</sup> Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 90-91.

<sup>115</sup> “Hicret Mi, Hezimet Mi?” *Ğuaze* 2 (10 April 1911), 1; see Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 100-03.

<sup>116</sup> “Hicret ve ‘Avdet,” *Ğuaze* 5 (4 May 1911), 1; see Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 104-07.



published complaints that it received from Circassians from throughout the Ottoman Empire about their conditions. One such letter, from Mecidiye in Erdek District, lamented that a local Circassian community felt victim to a poorly understood contract and were indebted to the Ziraat Bank for most of the land that they owned; they blamed the government and said that they had no choice but to return to Russia.<sup>117</sup> The final article in the series came out strongly against the often cited religious justification for emigration, namely that the Ottoman state was part of *dār al-islām*, to which Muslims were supposed to move after losing their homeland to a non-Muslim state. The editorial invited to consider whether the Caucasus could still be *dār al-islām* even after the Russian conquest.<sup>118</sup>

In 1912, the editor of *Ğuaze*, Nuri Tsagov (Tsago Nuri, 1883-1936), wrote an article addressing Circassian readers in the Caucasus. He discouraged them from hijra and criticized those notables who agitate in favor of emigration, accusing them of acting in self-interest after having been promised houses and privileges by unnamed Ottoman officials.<sup>119</sup> Tsagov, himself from a refugee Kabardin family in Quneitra, studied law in Istanbul and, in 1913, moved to Russia, where he became a prominent representative of the Circassian/Kabarda “Enlightenment.”<sup>120</sup> In the Caucasus, he co-founded the first printing house in historical Circassia and published the first Russian-based Circassian-language newspaper, in which he continued to criticize the slowly ongoing hijra.<sup>121</sup>

---

<sup>117</sup> “Meclis-i Mebusan Riyaset-i Celilesine Hicret ve ‘Avdet,” *Ğuaze* 6 (11 May 1911), 4; see Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 108-09.

<sup>118</sup> “Hicret Mi, Hezimet Mi?” *Ğuaze* 27 (28 December 1911), 2; see Arslan, “Circassian Organizations,” 116-18.

<sup>119</sup> *Ğuaze* (1912), quoted in Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 88-89.

<sup>120</sup> Aydemir, *Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları*, 127-28.

<sup>121</sup> Ganich, *Cherkesy v Iordanii*, 111.

The Russian-language journal *Musul'manin* (Rus. “Muslim”) (1908-11), published in Paris by several Circassian notables, emerged as another hub for the anti-hijra agitation.<sup>122</sup> Its editor, Magomed-bek Hadzhetlashe, also known as Kazy-Bek Akhmetukov, published a series of articles and stories about life in the Ottoman Empire, seeking to dispel commonly held misconceptions about an ideal life under sultan rule. The journal criticized the Young Turks’ regime for failing to provide for new immigrants from the Caucasus.<sup>123</sup> Similarly to *Ğuaze*, the newspaper published articles sent by Caucasus-based intellectuals, such as Pago Tambiev, who were keen to maintain connections with the diaspora.<sup>124</sup>

On the Russian side, a number of governmental newspapers opposed hijra, as it was widely unpopular among tsarist officials after 1867. Local Muslim voices endorsed the anti-hijra stance. The journal *Jarīdat Dāghistān* (Ar. “newspaper of Daghestan”) (1913-18), published in Arabic in Temir-Khan-Shura, was a leading outlet for progressive (jadidist) Arabophone intellectuals in the Northeast Caucasus.<sup>125</sup> In 1913, its editor, Ali

---

<sup>122</sup> The North Caucasian diaspora in western and central Europe has never been large. It was re-energized by post-1918 émigrés, who were vocal in the interwar period and during the Cold War, as part of a broader anti-Soviet movement. In the period beyond the scope of this dissertation, North Caucasian diasporic organizations published the following journals: *Kavkazskii gorets* (Prague, 1924-25); *Les Montagnards du Caucase* (Paris, 1929-39; from 1934, *Le Caucase du Nord*); *Severnyi Kavkaz* (Warsaw, 1934-39); *Kavkaz/Le Caucase* (Paris and Berlin, 1934-39); *Free Caucasus/Svobodnyi Kavkaz* (Munich, 1951-54); *United Caucasus* (Munich, 1953-54); and *Caucasian Review* (Munich, 1955-60); see Çelikpala, “Search for a Common North Caucasian Identity,” 114-73.

<sup>123</sup> Davlet Girey, “K polozheniiu mukhadzhirov,” *Musul'manin* 15 (1910): 332-34; “Mukhadzhirskii vopros,” *Musul'manin* 2 (1911): 65-67; see also R. Kh. Khashkhozheva, “Deiateli adygskoii kul'tury dorevoliutsionnogo perioda o Kavkazskoi voine i mukhadzhirstve,” *Natsional'no-osvoboditel'naia voina narodov Severnogo Kavkaza i problemy mukhadzhirstva* (Nalchik: El'brus, 1990), 141-43; Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 91-93.

<sup>124</sup> Baderkhan, *Severokavkazskaia diaspora*, 90-91.

<sup>125</sup> See Amir R. Navruzov, *Dzharidat Dagistan' – araboiazychnaia gazeta kavkazskikh dzhadidov* (Moscow: Mardzhani, 2012). On jadidism, see Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

Kaiaev, penned an editorial against hijra to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>126</sup> Unlike *Ġuaze* and *Musul'manin*, which discouraged emigration on practical grounds by dispelling myths about the Ottoman state, *Jarīdat Dāghistān*, following up on the existing theological debates in the Northeast Caucasus, put forward an argument that it was a duty of Muslims to remain in a Muslim country, regardless of who ruled it.<sup>127</sup> Kaiaev invoked medieval faqihs, namely the Qadiri shaykh Shihab al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1440), to bolster his argument and criticized those Sufi adherents in Daghestan who propagated emigration so they could rejoin their teachers in Ottoman exile.

In the Kuban and Terek provinces, a host of local Muslim intellectuals opposed emigration, blaming it on having decimated the population in the region and having paved the way for Russian colonization. Many writers utilized their personal experiences of having visited their families in the Ottoman Empire to dissuade their communities from emigrating. Thus, Inal Kanukov, an Ossetian writer and ethnographer, who had emigrated as a child and subsequently returned to the Caucasus, criticized the lack of awareness among North Caucasian Muslims of the debilitating poverty that many muhajirs endured in the Ottoman state:

Do they know where they wish to go? No, they do not. They only know that somewhere lies a country called Istanbul, and that in this Istanbul live Muslims, just like themselves. They wish to go there irrationally because they are deceived by false rumors that they will live well there, better even than in their old homeland.<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> Ali Kaiaev (al-Gumuki), “Limādhā yuhājir al-dāghistāniyūn ilā-l-mamālik al-‘uthmāniyya,” *Jarīdat Dāghistān* 5 (4 February 1913). Ali Kaiaev (1878-1943), born in the Lak village of Kumukh in Daghestan, received a religious education in Daghestan. He studied in Cairo’s al-Azhar University in 1905-07 and briefly worked in *al-Manar*, an Egyptian weekly newspaper edited by Rashid Rida. In 1908, he moved to Istanbul, from where he was deported to Russia for “radical” political beliefs. In Terek Province, in 1908, similarly to Nuri Tsagov, he opened a madrasa in a Balkar village that implemented jadidist methods, and in Temir-Khan-Shura, in 1913, he edited *Jarīdat Dāghistān* and opened another madrasa.

<sup>127</sup> Navruzov, *Dzharidat Dagistan*, 117.

<sup>128</sup> Inal Kanukov, “Gortsy-pereselentsy.”

Many Kabardin intellectuals, such as Bekmurza Pachev, Lukman Kodzokov, and Kazi Atazhukin, also urged the peasantry to stay put in the Caucasus, often by touring the countryside and writing poems against emigration.<sup>129</sup> These writers were critical of social and class inequality in their society, which often made the emigration of thousands a decision made by a few notables.

Within two generations since the beginning of mass emigration from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire, the debate over hijra underwent an evolution. In the 1850s and 1860s, its most conspicuous form was that of a theological discussion about a Muslim duty to live in *dār al-islām*, held by village imams in the Northeast Caucasus and disseminated through Friday prayers. That discourse persisted and exerted significant influence on new waves of muhajirs, as evidenced in private letters reviewed in this chapter. By the early twentieth century, the debate had another dimension – a print conversation by public intellectuals and activists about the logistics and politics of emigration. Its centers of gravity shifted to where the emerging North Caucasian intelligentsia resided, be it Istanbul, Nalchik, Temir-Khan-Shura, or even Paris.

*Conclusion: The Hijra, The State, and the Russo-Ottoman Muslim World*

Migration of about a million North Caucasians to the Ottoman domains in the 1860-1914 period amplified the size of the North Caucasian world. Many North Caucasian muhajirs preserved and cultivated connections with their families and friends left in the

---

<sup>129</sup> Their anti-emigration efforts were countered by pro-hijra propaganda on behalf of nobility, ‘ulama, and “people’s poets,” such as the Kumyk poet Irchi Kazak; see Arapov et al., *Severnyi Kavkaz*, 167-69.

Russian Caucasus. Trans-imperial communication occurred on several registers: within family and client networks, as popular-level borderland rumors, and in print among public intellectuals. On the level of personal communication, families and religious communities exchanged verbal and oral messages that traversed state borders. Such “unsanctioned” correspondence fueled tsarist fears of Pan-Islamism, which led to increased surveillance in the Russo-Ottoman borderlands. Within the realm of popular culture, frontier communities shared rumors, which provided many Muslims with information about the two empires. These informal and fleeting flows of information were crucial in prompting emigration to the Ottoman Empire after the Caucasus War. Finally, North Caucasian intellectuals took advantage of the flourishing print culture to launch a public discussion on the risks of hijra. Calls to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire usually came through the medium of private letters and verbal messages carried across the Russo-Ottoman frontier. Intellectuals’ calls against hijra were transmitted via print culture emanating from Istanbul, Paris, and burgeoning urban spaces in the North Caucasus.

Studying threads that connected the Russo-Ottoman Muslim world is more than a historical exercise in reconstructing a world half-lost and half-forgotten. Examining the communication of people across the two empires provides a new vantage point to understanding how an empire operates. The state, understandably, lies at the center of how we view migration, frontiers, and identity in the modern period. Studying diasporic mobility and communication allows us to de-center the state as a focal category of analysis. North Caucasian refugees, returnees, and their families fostered social and cultural networks that straddled the two empires. The Russo-Ottoman Muslim world existed across the two states. It defied the geography imposed by the empires bent on tightening their

control of their respective peripheries. This category of analysis does not preclude us from considering how North Caucasian Muslims engaged with their two empires. Some of their communication challenged the imperial order; other forms reinforced it.

The hijra should be situated within its global and regional contexts. It draws on a long history of Muslim migration to *dār al-islām*, in emulation of the Prophet's flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD. It was also a product of Russia's territorial conquests, followed by her encouragement of Muslim emigration or outright expulsions. The nineteenth-century hijra from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire had several regional legacies: history of migration to the Ottoman state through slave trafficking and scholarly journeys; trans-imperial mobility of hajjis and Sufis; and intra-Caucasus migrations of muhajirs escaping Russian rule. The North Caucasian hijra remained susceptible to frontier rumors between the Ottoman and Russian empires, which sparked voluntary migration. It also relied on and contributed to global Muslim anxieties in the age of European imperialism, which had manifested themselves in population displacements and anti-colonial uprisings from Algeria to Indonesia. This multi-layered character of hijra from the Caucasus partially accounts for why emigration to the Ottoman Empire continued beyond the Caucasus War, well into the early twentieth century.

## CONCLUSION

This dissertation examined the resettlement of refugees from the Russian Empire's North Caucasus region in the Ottoman Balkans, Anatolia, and Greater Syria. Muslim refugees played a critical role in reshaping the late Ottoman Empire, particularly because refugee resettlement intensified intercommunal competition over land, leading to a sectarian conflict or shaping localized forms of capital accumulation. The roles that North Caucasian muhajir communities came to play in unraveling, protecting, and "reordering" (demographically, socially, economically) the Ottoman Empire depended largely on the political economy and geography of refugee resettlement.

The three settlement areas explored in this dissertation are located in different parts of the empire and also represent various stages of Ottoman refugee resettlement. Dobruja, in the northern Balkans, received many western Circassian and some Abkhaz refugees in the 1860s, and Danubian officials experimented with settling newcomers in older Muslim, Christian, and Crimean Tatar muhajir villages. Uzunyayla, in central Anatolia, served as a popular destination for immigrants, primarily eastern Circassians and Abazins, for over five decades, and most villages in Uzunyayla were monoethnic North Caucasian settlements. The Balqa', in the southern Levant, was a product of the post-1878 settlement by western and eastern Circassians and Chechens, whereby their muhajir-only villages had an early history of interaction with local bedouin and settled Transjordanians.

The resettlement outcomes differed dramatically in the three regions. With limited financial support from the state, many muhajirs struggled in Dobruja and across other resettlement areas in the Balkans. During the 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, North Caucasian muhajirs left or were expelled from Dobruja and other parts of now-independent

Romania and Serbia and autonomous Bulgaria. The remote plateau of Uzunyayla provided a refuge for many North Caucasian communities. Yet its isolation from major transportation routes also ensured economic stagnation of the region, which continued well into the Turkish republican era. On the contrary, in the Balqa', which was initially regarded as one of the least desirable Ottoman resettlement areas, muhajirs capitalized on the state-funded construction of the Hejaz Railway and established trading relations with Syrian and Palestinian merchants. The small Circassian village of Amman grew to the size of a small town in the course of one generation, to later be chosen as the Transjordanian capital. The urbanization of the Balqa' area, where muhajirs owned prime real estate, elevated the economic and social status of immigrant families.<sup>1</sup>

Refugee migration and resettlement were tied with processes central to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the remaking of the Middle East and the Balkans along the nation-state system. First, resettling about a million North Caucasian muhajirs, most of whom arrived in the 1860s, severely strained imperial and provincial budgets. It also coincided with an increase in the empire's loans from European banks, which eventually resulted in the Ottoman default in 1875.<sup>2</sup> The empire continued borrowing money, and, according to one estimate, the expenditure on refugee resettlement between 1878 and 1914, or 215 million *kuruş*, was similar to the total borrowed in the same time period.<sup>3</sup> Second, refugee resettlement exacerbated intercommunal tensions in the northern Balkans, with muhajirs involved in the suppression of the 1876 April Uprising, which led indirectly to yet another war between the Ottoman and Russian empires. The 1878 treaties

---

<sup>1</sup> See Shami, "Ethnicity and Leadership," 91-92.

<sup>2</sup> See Birdal, *Ottoman Public Debt*, 17-62.

<sup>3</sup> Yel and Gündüz, "Uzunyaylaya Yerleştirilmeleri," 978.



of San Stefano and Berlin confirmed the Ottomans' loss of much of their remaining Balkan territories and a large Christian population, putting the Hamidian regime on a course toward policies of Islamization and Turkification.<sup>4</sup> Third, in the post-1878 period, refugee resettlement became part of the state policy of displacement and dispossession of its "minority" subjects, whereas muhajir militias were sometimes coopted into state paramilitary service. An ideological connection existed between the two terms that shared the same Arabic root: *hicret*, or Muslim emigration, that precipitated muhajirs' resettlement in the Ottoman state, and *tehcir*, or "relocation," an Ottoman euphemism used for deportations and the genocide of Armenians.

In the half-century before World War I, multiple waves of migration of Muslims from Russia to the Ottoman Empire took place. A part of that trans-imperial mobility was prompted by ethnic cleansing and forced displacement of Circassians by the Russian imperial army. Other strands of migration included semi-voluntary migration from Kabarda, Chechnya, Abkhazia, Ossetia, and Daghestan in the post-1864 period. By drawing on different waves of migration by various ethnic groups, this project problematized the notions of forced, semi-voluntary, and voluntary migration in the global contexts of imperialism, sectarianism, and agricultural expansion. It also showed how wartime expulsions coincided with and drew on earlier migration narratives, such as labor and education migration, religious pilgrimage, and hijra. Muhajir communities cultivated social connections linking their dispersed villages throughout the empire, from Kosovo and Dobruja to Iraq and Transjordan. They also maintained ties to their families left in the Russian Empire, and some muhajirs succeeded in returning to the Caucasus. Their return

---

<sup>4</sup> See Karpat, *Politicization of Islam*, 136-54, 183.

migration, a sizeable phenomenon in its own right, challenged Russian and Ottoman policies limiting muhajirs' mobility and affected how the tsarist administration perceived frontier security and citizenship in the Caucasus.

Drawing on rare private letters, communal petitions, court records, and land registers, this dissertation sought to privilege voices of refugees and immigrants, who, of their own volition or against their will, were part of the exceptional mobility in the late imperial age. Their stories made this history of migration and resettlement alive and constitute its very *raison d'être*. The experiences of two Circassian women, Sayetkhan and her daughter Gül'azar, demonstrate how a muhajir family expanded its wealth by utilizing an Ottoman court and a land registry in an up-and-coming Amman. The tale of two brothers, Fuat and Cevat, one an officer and the other a real estate entrepreneur, who sent each other letters across Anatolia and Transjordan, illustrate the reliance of high- and low-status muhajirs on kinship-based social networks in their resettlement. The story of Ahmed, a Chechen in Daghestan, who entrusted a letter addressed to his muhajir cousin, Girim Sultan, without knowing where he settled in the Ottoman Empire, to a caravan of hajjis going to Mecca, hoping that pilgrims may find him on their way (they did), testifies to the interconnectedness of many networks that now spanned the two empires and their mobile populations. Finally, the story of four orphans, Nagoi, Talib, Hajibekir, and their sister Khazizet, who did not want to stay in Syria and, in the dead of winter, traveled across Kurdistan, Georgia, and the Caucasus Mountains to get to their mountainous home village in Kabarda, shows the remarkable resistance and strength some could muster when faced with displacement.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Male Population of Hacıoğlu Pazarcık District, 1874

Village	Bulgarian	Muhajir*	Muslim	Roma	Greek	Total
Gelincik (كلنجك)	233	64	51			348
Baş Bunar (باشبكار)	22	40	49			111
Aydın (أيدین)	77	26	13			116
Hoşkadem (خوشقدم)	11	35	88			134
Karl Bey (كارلى بك)		29	61			90
Susuz (صوسز)			47	5		52
Çayırli Göl (چایرلى كول)		14	22			36
Mursal kuyusu (مرسل قیوسى)			18			18
Toy kuyusu (طوى قیوسى)		17	61			78
Çoral kebir (چورال كیبر)		3	52			55
Çoral sagir (چورال صغیر)		6	33			39
Küstekçiler (كوستكچیلر)			28			28
Harman kuyusu (خرمن قیوسى)		121	14			135
Salman (صالمان)	17					17
Kara Yazıcı (قره یازیجی)		28	58			86
Ağaçlıca (اغاچلیجه)		12	30			42
Kara Bakı (قره باقى)		13	18			31
Çayır Harman (چایرخرمن)	30	69	8			107
Küpeliler (كوپه لیلر)		12	67			79
Gezer 'Aliler (كزر عالیلر)		10	29			39
Mümince (مؤمنجه)			33			33
Malcılar (مالجه لر)			16			16
Kasım (قاسم)			44			44
Kara Dormuş (قره دورمش)		73				73

Village	Bulgarian	Muhajir*	Muslim	Roma	Greek	Total
Uşanlı (اوشنلی)	419		95	33		547
Arnavut kuyusu (ارنبود قیوسی)		52	137	2		191
Yeni Mahalle (یکی محله)	3	18	86	21	75	203
Boğdan (بغدان)	189	13				202
Kara Başlı (قره باشلی)		17	63	22		102
Kara Bunar (قره بوکار)			46	5		51
Semet (سمت)		2	190	1		193
Opanca (اوپانجه)		18	70	5		93
Ermeni (ارمنی)		11	111	6		128
Sarıca (ساریجه)		28	61			89
Valalı (والالی)		3	66			69
Semiz 'Ali (سمز علی)	45	10	114	30		199
Çoban kuyusu (چوبان قیوسی)			78			78
Kara Ağaç (قره اغاچ)			75			75
Mazlumca (مظلومجه)	27	90	15			132
Yürgeçler (یورکچیلر)		36	57			93
Durgut Kalfa (درغوت قلفه)		19	44			63
Kara Murat (قره مراد)	70	37	56	2		165
Çamurlu sagir (چامورلی صغیر)	98	17	59	10		184
Çamurlu kebir (چامورلی کبیر)		33	95			128
Ömerçe Çamurlusu (چامورلیسی) (عمرجه)		30	103	18		151
Osman Fakih (عثمان فقی)		48	139			187
Nebi Kuyusu (نبی قیوسی)		25	22			47
Arabacı (عربہ جی)		35	36			71
Kara Sinan (قره سنان)	144	68	132			344
Çakırca (چاکرجه)		59	69			128

Village	Bulgarian	Muhajir*	Muslim	Roma	Greek	Total
‘Aziz Bey (عزيز بك)	175	210	56	6		447
Şuhud kuyusu (شهود قیوسی)			116			116
Mahmuzlu (مهموزلی)			64			64
Çerkes (چركس)			82			82
‘Ali Bey (على بك)		194				194
Mahmuzlu Kalfa (مهموزلی قلفه)		46	40			86
Alıç sagir (الیجه صغیر)		6	22			28
İlanlık Kahraman mah. (قهرمان محله)			7			7
İlanlık Enbiya mah. (انبیا محله)		2	20			22
İlanlık Kuru [Balanlık] mah. (بلانلق)		15	29			44
Köseler (کوسه لر)		16	65			81
Tokçılar (طوقچه لر)		32	63	37		132
Şahınlar (شاهنلر)			56	5		61
Kara Kurt (قره قورت)					49	49
Kaba Sakal (قبا صقال)	111	55				166
Alıç kebir (الیجه کبیر)	75	10	37			122
Yesakçılar (یصه قخیلر)			34			34
Veli Fakih (ولی فقی)	39	11	25			75
Hisarlık (حصارلق)			83			83
Yürgeçler (یورکچیلر)			101			101
Harmanlık (خرمانلق)			28			28
Balıca (بالیجه)		34		182		216
Yanıklar (یانقلر)		12	47			59
Ahu Orman (اهو اورمان)		34	134			168
Kuruca Kuyu (قوریجه قیو)		36	57			93
Kara İlyas (قره الیاس)	76	81	24			181
Piri Fakih (پری فقی)			53			53

Village	Bulgarian	Muhajir*	Muslim	Roma	Greek	Total
Midhatiye (مدحتیه)		124				124
Kadı (قاضی)	148		298	56		502
Emir Bey (امر بك)		8	258	70		336
Kurkut (قورقوت)	29	13	88			130
Deli Osmanlar (دلی عثمانلر)	173	41	85	20		319
‘Arablar (عربلر)			362	34		396
Serdimend (سردمند)		12	208	27		247
Hasım Dede (خاصم ده ده)		29	116	4		149
Deynekler (دینکلر)		37	80	2		119
Ekizce (اکزجه)		51	662	45		758
Kara Sulular (قره صولیلر)	188	24	136	23		371
Kirinci (کرنجی)			137	25		162
Sarı Mahmud (صاری محمود)	4	78	79	13		174
Nasreddin (نصرالدین)			239	8		247
Seyid ‘Ali (سید علی)		5	91	23		119
Kasaplı (قصابلی)		36	38			74
Dokuz Ağaç (طقوز اغاچ)		35	85	4		124
Poyraz (بویراز)			44			44
Aydın Bey (آیدین بك)		156	1			157
Suyutcuq (صیوتجق)	197	112	1	2		312
Elibek (الیبك)	132	51	9			192
Hacı Sadık (حاجی صادق)		10	27			37
Kozluca Durbalı (دوربالی) (قوزلیجه)		106	50			156
Çiftlik (چفتلك)		77	89			166
Pazarcık Durbalı (دوربالی) (بازارجق)		269				269
Kara Bakiler (قره باکیلر)			52	15		67
Fındıklı (فندقلی)		25	112	22		159

Village	Bulgarian	Muhajir*	Muslim	Roma	Greek	Total
Mansur (منصور)	57		106			163
Musa Bey (موسى بك)		255	125			380
Melekler (ملكر)		15	26			41
Total:	2789	3604	7706	783	124	15006
Population share:	18.6%	24%	51.4%	5.2%	0.8%	100%

\* The register does not specify the ethnicity of muhajirs. Likely, the designation of *muhacir* in this register depended on whether one still enjoyed exemptions from taxes as a recent arrival or not. In practice, *muhacirler* meant post-1864 immigrants, mostly Circassians.

Sources: NBKM D490 (1873), ff. 39-41 and 22/274a (1874).

Appendix II: Total Population of Babadağ District, 1874

Village	Crimean	German	Lipovan	Bulgarian	Moldavian	Circasian	Turk	Total
Kamber (قمبر)	47			88		87	103	325
Satunovo (صانتو)					93			93
Sibil (سبیل)	60			156	150			366
Kongaz (قونغاز)				108		58	96	262
Hacılar (حاجیلر)	75			154		87	85	402
Nalbent (نلبنت)				154				154
Armutlu (ارمودلو)	49					74	129	252
Baş (باش)				288				288
Çineli (جبنه لی)				95		95		190
'Ali Bey (علی بك)					87			87
Ak Kadın (اق قدین)	11					114	96	210
Orta (اورطه)	9					93	45	144
Davutça (داوتجه)							95	95
Atmaca (اتمجه)		148						148
Çukurovo (جقور اوه)	81	74	121				15	291
Vefikiye (وفیقیه)						386		386
Kızalhisar (قزالحصار)			500					500
Ğuğaca (غوغاجه)	95			19		86		190
Kaman (Kamenka) (قمانه)				170				170
Eski Baba (اسکی بابا)				138				138
Çamurlu bala (جمورلی بالا)				372				372
Sarıgöl (Sarıgöllü) (صاریکول)				218				218
Kayalı Dere (قیالیدره)						34	58	92
Destemal (دسنمل)						38	70	108
Çavuş (جاوس)	107							107
Hacı Ömer (حاجی عمر)						36	55	91



Village	Crimean	German	Lipovan	Bulgarian	Moldavian	Circassian	Turk	Total
'Ali Fakih (علی فقی)							82	82
Derbetçe (دربتجه)							29	29
Saksağan (صقسان)	85							85
Kasımca (قاسمجه)	42					38	59	139
Kaçamak (قچماق)	126					54		180
Kuçı (قوچی)							285	285
Kuleli (کولهلی)	278							278
Toksovo (طوقصوفی)	361							361
Karacalık (کراجک)	68						56	124
Kocalık (قوجهلق)	188					15	152	355
Akhan (اکخان)	152					21	183	356
Tanrıverdi (تکری وردی)						8	198	206
Düğüncü bala (دوکونجی بالابالا)	124							124
Düğüncü zir (دوکونجی زیر)	108							108
Kara Nasuh (قره نصوح)				296				296
Kasap (قصاب)				274				274
Sarı Yordu (صاری یوردی)				254				254
Zemlik zir (زملیک زیر)	54					68	141	291
Zemlik bala (زملیک بالابالا)	62					36	70	168
Hacı Vahid (حاجی واحد)	221							221
Bey Davud (بکداود)				344				344
Potor (بوطور)				205				205
Hamamcı (حمامجی)				280		118		398
Çamurlu zir (جمورلی زیر)				237				237
Kanlı Bucak (قتلی بوجاق)	15			55		73	84	227
Paşa Kışla (باشا قتله)				330				330
Zhurilovka (جورلیقه)			488					488

Village	Crimean	German	Lipovan	Bulgarian	Moldavian	Circasian	Turk	Total
Karaman (قرمان)				368		69	64	501
Yeni Sıla (يكي صله)					164			164
Estirne (استرنه)	85			119				204
Baş Bunar (باشبكار)						123		123
Tekiye (Tursun Baba Teke) (تكيه)			53				10	63
Total:	2503	222	1162	4722	494	1811	2260	13179
Population share:	19%	1.7%	8.8%	35.8%	3.7%	13.7%	17.1%	100%

Source: NBKM 170/292 (c. 1872-76).

Appendix III: Total Population of Maçin District, 1871

Village or neighborhood	Women	Men	Population	Known muhajirs
Maçin, town of (Muslims)	543	591	1134	
— (non-Muslims)	701	731	1432	
Soğanlık (صغانلق)	589	663	1252	Circ.; mixed
Çerna (چرنه)	739	792	1531	Circ.; mixed
Karklı (قارقلو)	460	425	885	
Torkoya (طورقويه)	247	268	515	
Yeniköy (يكي كوي)	188	224	412	
Eniç Bey (انچيك)	299	331	630	
Koyun Bunar (قويكبوكار)	136	174	310	
Mütecat (مطجات)	180	203	383	
Kanad Kalfa (قناد قالفه)	206	252	458	
Hasanlar (حسنلار)	96	118	214	
Kırcalar (قرجالار)	368	377	745	Circ.; mixed
Ahurlar (احورلار)	89	101	190	
Payla (بايلا)	83	91	174	
Efekar (افيكار)	117	135	252	
Hancarka (حنجركه)	70	97	167	
Sikanka (سيفانقه)	156	188	344	Circ.; mixed
Balabanca (بالابنجه)	198	224	422	Circ.; mixed
Cecile (ججيله)	329	344	673	
Gardan (گردان or گردات)	174	215	389	
Dekret (دقرن or دقرت)	378	397	775	
Neskutça (نسقوتجه)	356	399	755	
Rakil (راكل)	171	206	377	Abaza; mixed
‘Izaklı (عضاقلی)	60	66	126	
Basika (بسيقه)	206	233	439	
Total:	7139	7845	14984	

Source: NBKM 22/917 (18 *kanun-ı sani* 1286, 30 January 1871).

Appendix IV: Taxes in Babadağ District, 1877

Communities	Military tax [non-Muslims]		Profit tax (3%)		Income tax (4%)		Property tax (4%)		Populati on	Mon oethn ic*
	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>		
<i>Babadağ (town)</i>										
Sufiler mahallesi			360		478		1833	12	88	
Çezmeci mahallesi			510		454		1454	12	73	
Teke-i mahallesi			502	20	452	8	1499	28	112	
Birkesik mahallesi			219		0		551	4	71	
Sufiler Tatar mah.			262	20	0		139	4	58	Cr.Tat.
Çezmeci Tatar mah.			397	20	12		231	20	97	Cr.Tat.
Teke-i Tatar mah.			210		0		165		121	Cr.Tat.
Birkesik Tatar mah.			390		0		245		127	Cr.Tat.
Sufiler Çerkes mah.			0		0		122	16	77	Circ.
Teke-i Çerkes mah.			0		0		104		92	Circ.
Birkesik Çerkes mah.			0		0		42		34	Circ.
Qibtî Muslim mah.			307	20	0		81	4		Roma
Varuşa mahallesi	10806	8	2842	20	905		4135	8		
Ermeni mahallesi	3222	32	562	20	160		639	8		Arm.
Yahudi mahallesi	1778	8	570		323	16	755	8		Jewish
Varuşa perakendesi			0		434		2291	4		
<i>Villages</i>										
Kamana	4750	32	142	20	92		1999	24	170	Bulg.
Eski Baba	2778		208	20	96		1297	24	138	Bulg.
Zemlik zir			22	20	120		3098			
Zemlik zir Çerkes							883	32	.	Circ.

Communities	Military tax [non- Muslims]		Profit tax (3%)		Income tax (4%)		Property tax (4%)		Popu- lating	Mon- oethn- ic*
	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>		
Toksovo			217	20	60		5986		361	Cr.Tat.
Kocalık	27	32	967	20	100		5612	24	355	
Tanrıverdi			142	20	56		3363	8	206	
Akhan			495		102		8962	24	356	
Dügüncü bala			367	20	0		1854	4	124	Cr.Tat.
Dügüncü zir			570		10		1810	8	108	Cr.Tat.
Karacalık			82	20	76		1816	4	124	
Sarıgöllü	5389	8	270		254		4825	24	218	Bulg.
Estirne	3805	24	499	20	24		1764		204	
Yeni Sıla	4806	16	660		146		2425	24	164	Mold.
Karaman	10194	24	1035		330		7908	16	501	
Zhurilovka	15139		4068		632		4454		488	Lipov.
Paşa Kışla	7139	24	1357	20	244		3819	8	330	Bulg.
Kanlı Bucak	2334	8	348		140		6455	16	227	
Çamurlu zir	9723		655	20	146		6836	16	237	Bulg.
Hamamcı	6139	34	390		210		8257		398	
Potor	6555	32	844	20	272		6962	32	205	Bulg.
Hacı Vahid			558		20		3427	24	221	Cr.Tat.
Kızalhisar	11056	16	967	20	242		4191	16	500	Lipov.
Tursun Baba Teke	2000	24	123		20		516	16	63	
Destemal			117		0		1480	32	108	
Kayalı Dere	83	16	256	20	20		1951		92	
Zemlik bala			81		26		1605	24	168	
Kuleli			600		56		2952	16	278	Cr.Tat.
Kuçı			328	20	60		4755	20	285	Turk.
Kaçamak			214	20	72		2935	24	180	
Kasımca			261		32		1912	28	139	

Communities	Military tax [non-Muslims]		Profit tax (3%)		Income tax (4%)		Property tax (4%)		Population	Monothnic*
	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>		
Derbetçe			21		24		865	20	29	Turk.
Saksağan			0		8		3045		85	Cr.Tat.
‘Ali Fakih			85	20	24		1437	24	82	Turk.
Çavuş			82	20	0		1670		107	Cr.Tat.
Hacı Ömer			115	20	12		1263	24	91	
Baş Bunar			0		40		1455		123	Circ.
Çukurovo	6223	8	708		114		3303		291	
Sibil	9278	8	309		360		8740	16	366	
Kongaz	5000		358	20	140		3351	24	262	
Hacılar	4667	16	315		226		3409	16	402	
Nalbend	7111	32	412	20	186		3441	16	154	Bulg.
‘Ali Bey	4556	8	487	20	306		2421	32	87	Mold.
Ak Kadın			420		0		2256		210	
Vefikiye			0		22		2609	16	386	Circ.
Sarı yordu	10389	8	1162	20	498		8806	8	254	Bulg.
Kasap	11056	16	1357	20	340		10139	24	274	Bulg.
Kara Nasuh	9862		886	20	346		7305	32	296	Bulg.
Çamurlu bala	11945		1372	20	594		7112		372	Bulg.
Bey Davud	10695		750		380		6389	32	344	Bulg.
Ğuğaca	11	8	232	20	64		1511	24	190	
Orta			262	20	10		1964	24	144	
Davetçe			142	20	0		1560		95	Turk.
Atmaca	5111	8	390		122		3325		148	Germ.
Çineli	2666	32	450		148		2141	16	190	
Başköy	13861	8	1599		320		6474	24	288	Bulg.
Armutlu			390		78		4570	32	252	
Kamber	2722	16	427	20	138		3894	24	325	

Communities	Military tax [non- Muslims]		Profit tax (3%)		Income tax (4%)		Property tax (4%)		Popu- lating	Mon- oethn- ic*
	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>	<i>Kuruş</i>	<i>Para</i>		
Satunovo	3612		352	20	92		1537	24	93	Mold.

\* I mark villages as monoethnic, according to the Badadağ District population register in NBKM 170/292 (Appendix II).

Sources: tax data from NBKM Badagağ 9/12 (25 *mayıs* 1293, 6 June 1877); population data from 170/292 (c. 1872-76) for villages (men and women) and 170A/243 (c. 1872-76) for Babadağ neighborhoods (men only).

Appendix V: North Caucasian Villages in Damascus Province

Village	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
Amman	Balqa'	1878	Shapsugh, Kabardin, Abzakh	150 people (1879) <sup>^</sup> 162 people (1882)* 640 families (1906)** 1,200 people (1912) <sup>^^</sup> 300 families (1914) <sup>^^^</sup>	* BOA BEO Sadaret 291/1, cited in Yıldız 2006: 120-25. ** TNA FO 195/2217, Drummond Hay to O'Conor (Beirut, 20 March 1906), compiled by Lewis 1987: 115-23. <sup>^</sup> Oliphant 1881: 218. <sup>^^</sup> Kushkhabiev 1993: 96. <sup>^^^</sup> Hacker 1960: 19.
Wadi al-Sir		1880	Shapsugh, Bjedugh, Abzakh	25 families (1880)* 312-370 families (1906)**	* Kushkhabiev 1993: 70. ** Lewis 1987: 115.
Na'ur		1901	Bjedugh, Abzakh, Shapsugh	120-170 families (1906)* 150 people (1906)**	* Lewis 1987: 115-16. ** Ganich 2007: 44.
al-Zarqa'		1902	Chechen, Circassian	790 families (1906)* 200 people (1906)**	* Lewis 1987: 116. ** Ganich 2007: 44.
Sweileh		1906* 1907**	Chechen, Circassian		* Lewis 1987: 116. ** Hanania 2011: 69-70.
al-Sukhna		1905* 1912**	Chechen		* Abujaber 1989: 215. ** Hanania 2011: 69-70.
al-Rusayfa		before 1904	Chechen, Circassian	60 people (1906)*	Lewis 1987: 116. * Ganich 2007: 44.



Village	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
al-Azraq		1932	Chechen	15 families (1934)	Founded by Chechens from al-Zarqa' and Sweileh. Glubb reports, cited in Lewis 1987: 117.
Jerash	Hawran	1882*** 1884*	Kabardin	258-400 families (1906)* 250 people (1906)**	* Lewis 1987: 115. ** Ganich 2007: 44. *** Kushkhabiev 1993: 71.
Quneitra		1872* 1873***	Kabardin, Abzakh**, Chechen, Daghestani** *	400 (1871-72)* 300-400 people (1877) 494 people (1872-73)^ 1,300 people (1885)*** 435 families (1906)*** 1,949 families (1906)^	* Kushkhabiev 2007: 65. ** Kushkhabiev 1993: 79. *** Lewis 1987: 104-06, 117. ^ Yıldız 2006: 115, 120. ^^ Ganich 2007: 41.
'Ayn Ziwan		post-1878	Abzakh^	260 people (1882)*	* Yıldız 2006: 120-21.
Juwaiza		post-1878	Abzakh, Kabardin^	69 people (1882)*	** Yıldız 2006: 116, 121. *** Lewis 1987:
Al-Buraykah		post-1878	Abzakh^	302 people (early 1870s)** 85 families or 425 people (1885)***	105-06. ^ Kushkhabiev 1993: 79-80. ^^ Lewis 1987: 118.
Bi'r 'Ajam		post-1878	Bjedugh, Abzakh, Kabardin^	115 people (1882)*	Overall population: 7 villages with 3,000 people in the Golan Heights by 1879; Oliphant 1881: 64, 68.
Ruhina		1884^^	Abzakh^	100 people (1882)*	
Mansura		post-1878	Bjedugh, Abzakh^	609 people (1882)*	13 villages by 1885; Schumacher in Lewis 1987: 105.
Mumsiya		post-1878	Abkhaz^	67 people (1882)*	1,634 families (1906); Lewis 1987:
Surman		post-1878	Bjedugh^	287 people (1882)*	117.

Village	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
'Ayn Surman		post-1878	Kabardin^	110 people (1882)*	
Khushniya		1897^^	Kabardin, Abzakh, Abkhaz^		
Al-Faham		1912^^	Abzakh^		
Fazara		post-1878	Ossetian^		
Hamidiye		post-1878	Kabardin^		
Sindaniye		post-1878	Chechen^		
Faraj		post-1878	Ossetian^		
Kafr Kama	Acre	1876 or 1879* 1876** 1878***	Shapsugh	449 people (by 1876)** 50 families (1878), followed by 183 more families, or 500 people (1879)** 150 or 310 families (1906)*	* Lewis 1987: 117. ** Yıldız 2006: 117, 122. *** Kushkhabiev 2007: 68-69.
Rehaniye		1869* 1876** 1880-81***	Abzakh	61 families, or 200 people (1880-81)*** 126 people (by 1876)^ 110 families (1906)**	* Ganich 2007: 43. ** Lewis 1987: 117. *** Kushkhabiev 2007: 69. ^ Yıldız 2006: 117, 122.
Jabat al-Sheykh		1876		60 families (1906)	Lewis 1987: 117.
Homs	Hama	N/A		82 people (1882)	Yıldız 2006: 124.
Jusiyah al-Kharab		before 1896			Lewis 1987: 119.

Village	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
Na'im		1873	Daghestani** , Circassian*	74 people (1882)* 30 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 119.
Tlil		1887	Bjedugh, Shapsugh, Abzakh	141 people (1882)* 60 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 119.
'Asaylah		1887	Circassian	80 families (1906)	Lewis 1987: 119.
Deir Ful [Dayr Fur]		1873	Daghestani** , Circassian*	383 people (1882)* 120 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 119.
Abu Hamama ['Izz al-Din]		1877	Circassian	65 people (1882)* 30 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 125. ** Lewis 1987: 120.
'Ayn Dat		1878?	Bjedugh	352 people (1882)* 150 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 120.
Tell 'Amr		1878?	Bjedugh	244 people (1882)* 2000 people (1905)** 150 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 120.
Tell 'Ajil		1878-79	Kabardin	228 people (1882)* 80 families (1906)**	* Yıldız 2006: 124. ** Lewis 1987: 121.
Murj al-Durr		1883*	Bjedugh	122 people (1882)**	* Lewis 1987: 120. ** Yıldız 2006: 123.
Hamidiye		1883			Lewis 1987: 120.
Tell al-Sinan		1878-79*	Bjedugh, Abzakh	59 people (1882)**	* Lewis 1987: 121. ** Yıldız 2006: 123.
Tell al-'Adah		1878-79*	Bjedugh, Abzakh	82 people (1882)**	* Lewis 1987: 121. ** Yıldız 2006: 123.
Jassin		1900*	Chechen, Daghestani		

Village	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
<u>Other settlements:</u> Hazab, Deir Shamil, Asil		1878 and later	Shapsugh, Bjedugh, Abzakh, Daghestani*		NBKM 279A/2151. *Yıldız 2006: 124.
Jable	Latakia	1878	Bjedugh^	over 2,000 people (1880)*	* Most refugees moved inland later. NBKM 279A/2299; 287Ar/11. ** Yıldız 2006: 123. *** Lewis 1987: 121. ^ Kushkhabiev 1993: 80.
'Arab al-Mulk		1878		284 people (1882)** 70 families (1906)***	
Sukas		1878		20 families (1906)	
Murj al-Sultan	Damascus	1878?	Abaza, Abzakh		Lewis 1987: 119.
Buraq*		before 1894	Circassian*		* According to Lewis, these villages failed. Lewis 1987: 118-19. ** These villages existed by the 1935 French census. Kushkhabiev 1993: 79.
Balay*				Circassian*, Balkar, Karachay**	
Buaydan*		1878	Abaza, Abzakh*, Balkar, Karachay**		
Najha*					
Dumayr*		1878			

Sources: Data compiled in Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 115-23, updated with information from primary and secondary sources.

Appendix VI: North Caucasian Villages in Aleppo Province

Village or district, if village name unknown	Subprovince	Foundation date	Ethnic groups	Population	References and notes
Manbij	Aleppo	1878* 1879**	Abzakh*	212 families (1879)* 2,500 people (1890)*	* Kushkhabiev 1993: 70, 77, 97. ** Lewis 1987: 104, 123.
Khanasir		1906*	Kabardin**	80 families (1906)* 100 families (1906)**	* Lewis 1987: 122. ** Kushkhabiev 1993: 72-73, 77.
<u>Other villages:</u> Khan al-‘Asal*, ‘Ayn Dakhan**			Abzakh**		* Lewis 1987: 123. ** Kushkhabiev 1993: 77.
Ra’s al-‘Ayn	Urfa	1865*	Chechen	In Ra’s al-‘Ayn: 500 families (1879)*** 150 families (1903)***	* Lewis 1987: 122-23. ** Kushkhabiev 1993: 64-65, 77-78. *** Chochiev 2000: 97-98, 119.
<u>Other villages near Ra’s al-‘Ayn:</u> Masajid, Tall al-Sinan, Safih, Mujayrah, Tall al-Jamus, ‘Arayshah, Abut Hajar, Ad Daqiyah, Ibrit*		1865-late 1860s*	Chechen	In Ra’s al-‘Ayn area: 13,648 people [with Diyarbekir] (1865-66)** 5,000 people (1880)**	
Kilis District	Antep	1879 or before	Circassian	30 families (1879)	Kushkhabiev 1993: 70.
Araban District			Circassian	600 families (1879)	Kushkhabiev 1993: 70.
al-Raqqa	Marash	1905-06*	Chechen, Kabardin, Ossetian	47 families (1906)* 50 families (1906)**	* Lewis 1987: 103-04, 121. ** Kushkhabiev 1993: 73, 77.
<u>Settlements near al-Raqqa:</u> Abu Hurayrah.				Circassian	

Zeitun District		mid-1860s	Circassian	800 families in 6 villages (1881)	Kushkhabiev 1993: 64.
-----------------	--	-----------	------------	-----------------------------------	-----------------------

Sources: Data compiled in Lewis, *Nomads and Settlers*, 115-23, updated with information from primary and secondary sources.

Appendix VII: North Caucasian Villages in Adana Province

Village*	District*	Year of arrival	Households	Population
Ak-Punar	Hadjin	1871	120	750
Kara-Punar		1870	45	350
Ikdebel		1871	50	380
Polat-Punar		1871	60	400
Kods-Aghaz		1870	30	200
Tsamurli		1871	200	600
Shukat	Kars Pazar	1878	180	1080
Altibohi		1874	80	480
Ghiokariki Altibohi		1874	60	360
Bakirli	Osmanieh	1871	90	450
Shohukia		1870	200	1,000
Hamuzali	Hamidieh	1872	80	320
Humuteli		1870	60	300
Kara Mezar		1866	250	1,250
Kerhaneh Kioprussu		1866	100	500
Hamidieh Mahallessi		1870	550	2,200
Tsokyiak Punar		1878	70	280
Mankut		1868	80	320
Beghuk Mankut		1866	230	1,150
Ghilan Kaleh		1850	300	1,500
Kuru Kaleh		1870	90	360
Ali Kara		1870	100	300
Tsakal Dereh		1869	350	2,100
Tahtamish		1871	80	320

Sirkeleh		1870	200	1,000
Anavarz Kalessi		1870	150	750
Sari Bazeh		1872	60	180
Sakitieh		1870	90	540
Tsakut	Karahissalu	1885	80	480
Keferduz	Gebel Bereket	1870	60	360
Ghani Kisi		1870	40	200
Takanni	Tarsus	1870	130	520
Total:			4,265	20,980

\* The original spellings of all names, as they appear in the document, are preserved.

Source: TNA FO 195/2213, Loiso to O'Conor, inclosure in #13 (Mersin, 27 August 1906).



Appendix VIII: North Caucasian Villages in Uzunyayla

Village (Original name)	Original name			Ethnic group/subgroup
	Yel & Gündüz 2008	Papşu	Karataş 2012	
Akören, <i>or</i> Akviran*	Pedisey, Fedsey	Pedisey		Hatuqwai
Alamescit	Ligurhable	L'ıǵurhable	Lıǵurhable	Kabardin
Altıkeseek	Loǵkıt	Lookıt, Lookuaje	Loǵkıt	Abazin
Aşağı Beyçayırı	Şıpşhable		Şıpışhable	Kabardin
Aşağı Borandere	Şeşen Jambotey			Chechen, Kabardin
Aşağıhüyük, <i>or</i> Kiremitli	Babıgey	Babıguey	Babıgey	Kabardin
Aşağı Karagöz	Gosthable	Hosthable	Gosthable	Kabardin
Aşağı Kızılçevlik	Mekeney			Kabardin
Aygörmez	Hıthable			Hatuqwai
Beserek				Hatuqwai
Burhaniye			İndere	Hatuqwai <sup>^</sup> , Kabardin <sup>^^</sup>
Büyük, <i>or</i> Yukarı, Gümüşgün	Apşohable			Kabardin
Büyük, <i>or</i> Aşağı, Kabaktepe**		Tambiyhable		Kabardin
Büyük, <i>or</i> Aşağı Potuklu	İsmelkıt	Yismeylkıt	İsmelkıt	Abazin
Cinliören, <i>or</i> Küçük Çamlıbel		Nıbernikuey	Niberinhable	Hatuqwai
Çamurlu	Habçey	Haptsey	Habçey, Hapsey	Kabardin
Çukuryurt				Abzakh
Demirboğa				Abazin
Devederesi		Pedisey(tsuk) Tıǵujhable	Padiseyij	Hatuqwai
Demirciören		Haşhakoy	Hacısakhable	Hatuqwai
Dikilitaş	Yınalgoy	Yınalhable	Yınalgoy	Kabardin

Village (Original name)	Original name			Ethnic group/subgroup
	Yel & Gündüz 2008	Papşu	Karataş 2012	
Eğrisöğüt				Ossetian^ Karachay^^, ^^^
Eskiyassıpınar	Şenibey	Şenibey	Şenibey	Kabardin
Gebelek	Gothaley	Kothaley	Kuthaley	Kabardin
Halitbeyören	Gunaşey	Kunaşey	Gunaşey	Kabardin^,^^ Abazin^^
Hayriye	Jamırzey			Kabardin
Hilmiye	Beş Kızakhable	Beşkazakhable	Beşkızakhable	Kabardin
İnliören	Hevşey	Havsay	Hevşey	Hatuqwai
Kaftangiye	Anzorey	Anzoreyij, Kaftankey	Anzorey	Kabardin
Kapaklıpınar				Kabardin
Karaboğaz	Aslınhable	Aslanhable		Kabardin
Karacaören				Abazin
Karahalka	Ganşuyev	Karhalak, Mertezey	Mertezey	Kabardin
Karakoyunlu		Sımhahable		Kabardin
Karakuyu	Şegamey- Şigaloğö	Şegem-Şhalıko		Kabardin
Kavakköy		Libiyhable	Libiyhable	Hatuqwai
Kaynar				Hatuqwai
Kazancık		Başılbiy		Abazin
Kılıçmehmet	Gılışpihable	Kılışbiyhable	Gılışbihable, Kılıçbihable	Kabardin
Kırkgeçit	Jiyayago	Jığeyiko hable, Babıguey	Jiyayago, Jigeyko	Kabardin
Kırkpınar	Sasıghable	Sasikhable	Sasıghable, Sasikhable	Kabardin
Kızıldikme				Chechen, Qarapapaq
Kurbağlık	Şiğebeğö	Şikebahuey	Şiğeleğö, Jikebehoy	Kabardin
Kuşçular		Lakay kuaje		Hatuqwai

Village (Original name)	Original name			Ethnic group/subgroup
	Yel & Gündüz 2008	Papşu	Karataş 2012	
Küçük, <i>or</i> Aşağı, Gümüşgün	Birgutey	Berkutey		Kabardin
Küçük, <i>or</i> Yukarı, Kabaktepe**			Tambihhable	Kabardin
Küçük, <i>or</i> Yukarı Potuklu	İsmelkıt	Yismeylkıt	İsmelkıt, İsmelgoaje	Abazin
Malak				Hatuqwai
Maraşlı, <i>or</i> Erdoğan		Şogenhable		Hatuqwai <sup>^</sup> , Kabardin <sup>^^,^^^</sup>
Methiye	Mudarey			Kabardin
Olukkaya, <i>or</i> Pöhrenk	Jambotey	Jamboteytsuk	Jambotey	Kabardin
Örenşehir, <i>or</i> Viranşehir	Gundetey	Kundetey, Yerensıhar	Gundatey, Kundatey	Kabardin
Panlı				Abzakh
Pazarsu		Anzoreytsuk		Kabardin
Saçayağı, <i>or</i> Beyazköy	Gunaşhable		Gunaşhable	Kabardin
Sıvgın***				Ossetian
Söğütlü*				Hatuqwai <sup>^,^^</sup> , Kabardin <sup>^^^</sup>
Şerefıye	Aslemırey	Astemırey		Kabardin
Tahtaköprü	Guraşınhable	Kuraşınhable	Guraşınhable, Kuraşınhable	Kabardin
Taşlıgeçit	Toğlahable	Tohhable	Toğlahable, Tokhable	Kabardin
Taşoluk	Hopaşey	Hapaş'ey	Hapaşey	Kabardin
Tavladere				Abazin
Tersakan	Lakhable			Hatuqwai
Tilkihüyük	Goğulgey	Koğulhkuey	Goğulgey	Kabardin
Uzunpınar	Yınerıgey	Yınarıkuey	Yınerıgey, Yınerıkoy	Kabardin
Üç Pınar	Hadıgşıgeycug	Hatoşıkoytsuk	Hatışıkoytzuk, Hadıgşıgeycug	Kabardin
Yağlıpınar	Jerestey	Jerıştey	Jereştey, Jerıştey	Kabardin

Village (Original name)	Original name			Ethnic group/subgroup
	Yel & Gündüz 2008	Papşu	Karataş 2012	
Yahyabey	Hatukşığoyij	Hatohşıkue-yij	Hatukşığoyij, Hatukşıkoyij	Kabardin
Yarhisar				Chechen, Qarapapaq
Yeniköy				Ossetian
Yeniyapan	Şıdkıt	Sidkit	Şıdkıt	Abazin
Yeniyassıınar	Janıgey	Janıkuey	Janıgey, Janıkoy	Kabardin
Yukarı Borandere	Yeliğey	Yelhıkuey	Yeligoy	Abazin
Yukarı Beyçayırı	Marğuşey			Kabardin
Yukarı Karagöz	Moğarhable	Maharhable	Mağarhable, Makarhable	Kabardin
Yukarı Kızılcıevlik	Jeşhable	L'ışejhable	Jeşhable	Kabardin
Yukarıhüyük				Chechen

^ Yel & Gündüz

^^ Papşu

^^^ Karataş

\* Yel & Gündüz and Karataş list Akören and Akviran as two separate villages. Yel & Gündüz list Söğütlü and Cerkes Söğütlü as two separate villages.

\*\* Yel & Gündüz list Kabaktepe as one village.

\*\*\* Sıvgın was a mixed Ossetian-Afşar village. It was vacated in the mid-twentieth century; Chochiev 2016: 125. By 1898, it also had an Armenian population; TNA FO 195/2025, Maunsell to O'Conor, #42 (Sivas, 15 June 1898), f. 280.

Sources: Murat Papşu's unpublished database of North Caucasian villages, the Sivas section of which he kindly shared with me; Yel & Gündüz 2008: 971-73; Karataş 2012: 264-71.

Appendix IX: Chechen migration to the Ottoman Empire in 1865

No. of emigrating party	Departure from Vladikavkaz	Households	Men	Women	Carts	Horses	Cattle
1	23 May	143	494	446	230	232	406
2	25 May	167	494	462	291	210	414
3	30 May	133	484	441	300	250	429
4	2 June	131	359	359	216	165	230
5	5 June	126	310	295	197	134	358
6	8 June	210	487	485	291	199	545
7	10 June	161	391	372	209	99	356
8	11 June	219	556	554	391	229	532
9	14 June	306	739	738	428	334	694
10	16 June	205	448	482	276	231	430
11	18 June	182	392	404	235	190	425
12	25 June	158	344	332	205	114	344
13	27 June	192	401	353	230	132	392
14	29 June	200	423	401	236	118	406
15	3 July	159	377	342	204	137	309
16	7 July	206	408	391	253	148	491
17	10 July	202	436	446	266	169	436
18	15 July	173	342	297	190	74	366
19	19 July	131	301	261	163	110	264
20	21 July	174	360	362	236	148	410
21	31 July	160	359	317	215	135	398
22	4 August	191	392	371	247	109	497
23	8 August	223	577	518	280	166	345
24	7 August	134	355	276	178	90	339
25	9 August	139	286	282	192	131	344
26	11 August	207	503	441	295	134	462
27	13 August	217	452	435	251	181	382

28	17 August	141	363	361	214	162	416
Total:		4,990	11,833	11,224	6,919	4,531	11,420

Source: SSSA f. 545, op. 1, d. 90 (1865), ll. 124-454. I used the data for male and female populations and number of carts from Ibragimova, *Emigratsiia chechentsev*, 40-41. Most muhajirs were Chechens, but emigrating parties also included Ossetians, Ingush, and Karabulaks.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Archives and Libraries

#### Turkey

Prime Minister Ottoman Archive (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*, BOA), Istanbul.

A.MKT.MHM	Sadaret Mektubi Mühimme Kalemî Evrakı
A.MKT.MVL	Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Meclis-i Vala Evrakı
A.MKT.NZD	Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Nezaret ve Devair Evrakı
A.MKT.UM	Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Umum Vilayat Evrakı
AE.SMHD.I	Ali Emiri Mahmud I
BEO	Babıali Evrak Odası Evrakı
C.EV	Cevdet Evkaf
DH.MHC	Dahiliye Nezareti Muhacirin Komisyonu
DH.MKT	Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî
DH.ŞFR	Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Evrakı
DH.TMIK.M	Dahiliye Nezareti Tesri-i Muamelat ve İslahat Komisyonu
HR.İD	Hariciye Nezareti İrade Dahiliye
HR.MHC.02	Hariciye Nezareti Romanya Muhacirin Komisyonu
HR.MKT	Hariciye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî
HR.SFR.1	Hariciye Nezareti Petersburg Sefareti
HR.SYS	Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi
HR.TO	Hariciye Nezareti Tercüme Odası Evrakı
İ.DH	İrade Dahiliye
İ.HUS	İrade Hususi
İ.MMS	İrade Meclis-i Mahsus
İ.MVL	İrade Meclis-i Vala
MAD.d	Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler
ML.MSF.d	Maliye Masarıfat Defterleri
MVL	Meclis-i Vala Evrakı
ŞD	Şura-yı Devlet Evrakı
Y.A.HUS	Yıldız Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı
Y.MTV	Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı
Y.PRK.KOM	Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Komisyonlar Maruzatı
Y.PRK.UM	Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Umumi

Caucasus Foundation (*Kafkas Vakfı*), Istanbul.

Caucasus Research, Culture, and Solidarity Foundation (*Kafkas Araştırma Kültür ve Dayanışma Vakfı*), Ankara.

Center for Islamic Studies (*İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi*), Istanbul.

Shamil Education and Culture Foundation (*Şamil Eđitim ve Kùltür Vakfı*), Istanbul.

Jordan

Center of Documents and Manuscripts (*Markaz al-wathā'iq wa-l-makhṭūṭāt*, CDM),  
University of Jordan, Amman.

Defter Salt no. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 17

Department of Land and Survey (*Dairat al-arāđi wa-l-masāḥa*, DLS), Amman.

Defter no. 1/1/1, 1/5/1, 5/1/1, 7/1/1, 9/1/1, 10/1/1, 18/1/1, 19/1/1, 30/1/2, 31/1/2,  
32/1/2

F.F.S. Collection, al-Zarqa'.

Khutatzade Collection, Amman.

Bulgaria

Cyril and Methodius National Library (*Natsional'na biblioteka "Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodii,"*  
NBKM), Sofia.

“Primary” Collection: Funds 20, 22, 69, 119, 169, 170, 172, 173, 175

“Secondary” Collection: Funds 22A, 170A, 172A, 279A, 282A

Arabic Collection: Funds 172Ar, 280Ar, 282Ar, 283Ar, 286Ar, 287Ar

Defter Collection: D490

Oriental Archival Collection (OAK): Funds 85, 91, 141, 169, 172

Uncataloged “Pre-Collection”: Funds Babadađ 9; Varna 1, 24; Silistre 30, 31;

Tulça 51, 52, 54, 55, 57; Maçin 172

Central State Archive of Bulgaria (*Tsentralniiat dŭrzhaven arkhiv*, TsDA), Sofia.

Fund 159K

State Archive, Dobrich Branch (*Dŭrzhaven arkhiv*), Dobrich.

Fund 181K

Museum of the Bulgarian Renaissance (*Muzei na Vŭzrazhdaneto*, MnV), Varna.

Fund 5



Russia

National Archive of the Russian Federation (*Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, GARF), Moscow.

Funds 102, 677, R5235

Russian State Military-Historical Archive (*Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voenno-istoricheskii arkhiv*, RGVIA), Moscow.

Funds 38, 400, 2000, 13454

Central State Archive of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (*Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Kabardino-Balkarskoi Respubliki*, TsGA KBR), Nalchik.

Funds 2, 6, 24, 1209, P-865

Center for Documentation of Modern History of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic (*Tsentr dokumentatsii noveishei istorii Kabardino-Balkarskoi Respubliki*, TsDNI KBR), Nalchik.

Fund P-865

Kabardino-Balkar Institute for Research in Humanities (*Kabardino-Balkarskii institut gumanitarnykh issledovaniï*), Nalchik.

Central State Archive of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (*Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Severnaia Osetiia – Alaniia*, TsGA RSO-A), Vladikavkaz.

Fund 12

North Ossetian Institute for Research in Humanities and Social Sciences (*Severo-Osetinskii institut gumanitarnykh i sotsial'nykh issledovaniï*, SOIGSI), Vladikavkaz.

Fund 17

Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan (*Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Dagestan*, TsGA RD), Makhachkala.

Funds 2, 66, 126, 133

Institute of History, Archaeology, and Ethnography at the Research Center of Daghestan (*Institut istorii, arkheologii i etnografii Dagestanskogo nauchnogo tsentra RAN*, IIAE DNTs RAN), Makhachkala.

Funds 3, 16

R.A. Collection, Kizilyurt.

### Georgia

National Historical Archive of Georgia (*Sakartvelos sakhelmtsipo saistorio arkivi*, SSSA), Tbilisi.

Funds 5, 7, 11, 12, 231, 416, 545, 1087

### United Kingdom

The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA FO), London.

Funds 78, 195, 424

### Azerbaijan

National Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan (*Azərbaycan Respublikası Dövlət Tarix Arxivi*), Baku.

Fund 45

### Romania

National Archive of Romania, Tulcea Branch ( *Direcția Județeană Tulcea a Arhivelor Naționale*), Tulcea.

Funds 156, 173

## **Newspapers and Periodicals**

*Danube/Tuna* (Rusçuk, 1865-77, in Ottoman Turkish and Bulgarian)

*Ğuaze* (Istanbul, 1911-17, in Ottoman Turkish)

*İttihad Gazetesi* (Cairo, 1899, in Arabic)

*Jarīdat Dāghistān* (Temir-Khan-Shura, 1913-18, in Arabic)

*Kavkaz* (Tiflis, 1846-1918, in Russian)

*Musul'manin* (Paris, 1908-11, in Russian)

*Österreichische Revue* (Vienna, 1865-67, in German)

*Tiflisskii Vestnik* (Tiflis, 1873-82, in Russian)

### **Ottoman Provincial Yearbooks**

*Salname-i Vilayet-i Sivas* (h. 1325, 1907).

*Salname-i Vilayet-i Suriye* (h. 1299, 1882).

*Salname-i Vilayet-i Tuna* (h. 1291, 1874).

### **Published Primary Sources**

#### In Turkish:

Abdülhamid II. *İkinci Abdülhamid'in Hatıra Defteri*. Istanbul: Selek Yayınevi, 1960.

Açba, Leyla. *Bir Çerkes Prensesinin Harem Hatıraları*. Istanbul: Timaş, 2010.

Akgündüz, Ahmet. *Mukayeseli İslam ve Osmanlı Hukuku Külliyyatı*, 683-715. Diyarbakir: Dicle Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi, 1986.

Berzeg, Sefer E., ed. *Türkiye Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Çerkes Göçmenleri*. Istanbul: Nart Yayıncılık, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Gurbetteki Kafkasya'dan Belgeler*. Ankara: privately printed, 1985.

Binark, İsmet, ed. *Osmanlı Devleti ile Kafkasya, Türkistan ve Kırım Hanlıkları Arasındaki Münasebetlere Dair Arşiv Belgeleri (1687-1908 Yılları Arası)*. Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1992.

Brookes, Douglas Scott. *The Concubine, the Princess, and the Teacher: Voices from the Ottoman Harem*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Chochiev, Georgy. "1867 Abhaz Göçüne Dair Birkaç Rus, Osmanlı ve İngiliz Belgesi." *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 103-58.

Gurulkan, Kemal, ed. *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Kafkas Göçleri*, 2 vols. Istanbul: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2012.

Karayel, Erol, ed. *Kuzey Kafkasya Tarihinden Belgeler*. Istanbul: Meydan Yayıncılık, 2010.

Şimşir, Bilal N., ed. *Rumeli'den Türk Göçleri: Belgeler*, 3 vols. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1989.

In Arabic:

Haghandoqa Mohammad Kheir. *Mirza Pasha Wasfi: kitab watha'iqi, marhala min tarikh bilad al-Sham min khilal watha'iq Mirza Pasha*. Amman: Royal Scientific Society, 1994.

Qazan, Salah Yusuf. *'Amman fi matla' al-qarn al-'ashrin: al-sijill al-shar'i al-awwal li-nahiyat 'Amman, 1319-1326 H/1902-1908 M, dirasa wa-tahqiq*. Amman: Ministry of Culture, 2002.

Zirikli, Khayr al-Din. *'Aman fi 'Amman: mudhakkirat 'amayn fi 'asimat sharq al-Urdun*. Cairo: al-Matba'a al-'Arabiyya, 1925.

In Russian:

Aitberov, Timur M., trans. *Istoriko-biograficheskie i istoricheskie ocherki*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1992.

Aitberov, Timur M., Iu.U. Dadaev, Kh.A. Omarov, eds. *Vosstaniia dagestantsev i chechentsev v posleshamilevskuiu epokhu i imamat 1877 goda: materialy*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2001.

Aver'ianov, Petr I. *Kurdy v voinakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v techenie XIX stoletia*. Tiflis: Tipografiia Shtaba Kavkazskogo voennago okruga, 1900.

Berzhe, Adol'f P. "Vyselenie gortsev s Kavkaza." *Russkaia starina* 33 (1882): 161-76, 337-63; 36 (1882): 1-32. Reprinted as *Vyselenie gortsev s Kavkaza*. Nalchik: Izdatel'stvo M. i V. Kotliarovykh, 2010.

Berzhe, Adol'f P., D.A. Kobiakov, and E.G. Veidenbaum, eds. *Akty sobrannye Kavkazskoi arkheograficheskoi komissiei*, 12 vols. Tiflis: Tipografiia Glavnogo upravleniia namestnika Kavkazskago, 1866-1904.

Chochiev, Georgy. "Neskol'ko osmanskikh dokumentov o poselenii osetin v Anatolii." *Izvestiia SOIGSI* 23 (62) (2017): 67-74.

- Dzagurov, Grigorii A., ed. *Pereselenie gortsev v Turtsiiu: materialy po istorii gorskikh narodov*. Rostov-Don: Sevkavkniga, 1925.
- Gradovskii, Grigorii K. *Voina v Maloi Azii v 1877 godu: ocherki ochevidtstva*. Saint Petersburg: Tipografiia i khromolitografiia A. Transhelia, 1878.
- Gugov, Rashad Kh., Kh.A. Kasumov, and D.V. Shabaev, eds. *Tragicheskie posledstviia Kavkazskoi voiny dlia adygov: vtoraiia polovina XIX - nachalo XX veka. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov*. Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2000.
- Gutov, Adam M., V.Kh. Kazharov, and N.G. Sherieva, eds. *Adygskie pesni vremen Kavkazskoi voiny*, 2nd ed. Nalchik: Pechatnyi dvor, 2014.
- Kanukov, Inal. "Gortsy-pereselentsy." *Sbornik svedenii o kavkazskikh gortsakh* 9 (1876): 84-103.
- Kaufman, Aleksandr A. *Pereselenie i kolonizatsiia*. Saint Petersburg: Biblioteka obshchestvennoi pol'zy, 1905.
- Koliubakin, Boris M. *Russo-Turetskaia voina 1877-1878 gg. na Kavkaze i v Maloi Azii*, vol. 1. Saint Petersburg: Tipo-litografiia A.G. Rozena, 1906.
- Kondakov, Nikodim P. *Arkheologicheskoe puteshestvie po Sirii i Palestine*. Saint Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1904.
- Kumykov, Tugan Kh., ed. *Problemy Kavkazskoi voiny i vyselenie cherkesov v predely Osmanskoi imperii, 20-70e gg. XIX v.: sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov*. Nalchik: Elbrus, 2001-03.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Vyselenie adygov v Turtsiiu: posledstvie Kavkazskoi voiny*. Nalchik: Elbrus, 1994.
- Kundukhov, Musa. "Memuary Generala Musa-Pashi Kundukhova." *Kavkaz/Le Caucase* (Paris) 1-5, 8, 10-12 (1936); 3, 5, 7-8, 10 (1937). In French translation, *Les Mémoires du Général Moussa-Pacha Koundoukhov (1837-1865)* (Paris: Editions du Caucase, 1939). In Turkish translation, Murat Yağan, trans., *General Musa Kundukhov'un Anıları* (Istanbul: Kafkas Kültür Dernekleri, 1978).
- Kushkhabiev, Anzor V., ed. *Istoriia adygov v dokumentakh Osmanskogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva*. Nalchik: Respublikanskii poligrafkombinat im. Revoliutsii 1905 g., 2009.
- Leont'ev, Konstantin N. *Diplomaticheskie donesenii, pis'ma, zapiski, otchety, 1865-1872*. Moscow: Rosspen, 2003.

- Leontovich, Fedor I. *Adaty Kavkazskikh gortsev: materialy po obychnomu pravu Severnago i Vostochnago Kavkaza*, 2 vols. Odessa: Tipografiia P.A. Zelenogo, 1882-83.
- Magomeddadaev, Amirkhan M., ed. *Emigratsiia dagestantsev v Osmanskuiu imperiiu: sbornik dokumentov i materialov*, vol. 1. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Mukhammad-Amin i narodno-osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie narodov Severo-Zapadnogo Kavkaza v 40-60 gg. XIX veka: sbornik dokumentov i materialov*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1998.
- Ovsianyi, Nikolai R., ed. *Sbornik materialov po grazhdanskomu upravleniiu i okkupatsii v Bolgarii v 1877-78-79 gg.* Saint Petersburg: Tovarishestvo Khudozhestvennoi Pechati, 1906.
- Shikhsaidov, Amri R., Alfrid K. Bustanov, and Michael Kemper, eds. *Uslada umov v biografiakh dagestanskikh uchenykh*. Moscow: Mardzhani, 2012.
- Shikhsaidov, Amri R. and Khalata A. Omarov, eds. *100 pisem Shamilia*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1997.
- Troinitsky, Nikolai A. et al., eds. *Obshchii svod po Imperii rezul'tatov razrabotki dannykh Pervoi vseobshchei perepisi naseleniia*, vol. 2. Saint Petersburg: Parovaia tipografiiia N.L. Nyrkina, 1905.

In Bulgarian:

- Dorev, Pancho, ed. *Dokumentū za Būlgarskata istoriia*. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1942.
- Draganova, Slavka. *Selskoto naselenie na Dunavski vīlaet*. Sofia: Avangard Prima, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Berkovskoto selo v navecherieto na Osvobozhdenieto: statistichsko izsledvane spored Osmanskite danūchni registri*. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Materiali za Dunavskii vīlaet: Rusenska, Silistrenska, Shumenska i Tutrakanska kaza, prez 50-te - 70-te godini na XIX v.* Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1980.
- Gandev, Khristo and Gūlūb Gūlūbov, eds. *Turski izvori za Būlgarskata istoriia*, vol. 2 – Dobrichka Kaza. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1960.
- Gerov, Naiden, ed. *Dokumenti za Būlgarskata istoriia*, vol. 3. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1940.

Mikhailova-Mrūvkarova, Mariia, ed. *Opis na turski dokumenti za sūprotivata i natsionalno-revoliutsionnite borbi na Būlgarskiia narod prez XIX vek*. Sofia: Narodna Biblioteka Sv. Sv. Kiril i Metodii, 1984.

Mikhov, Nikola V., ed. *Naselenieto na Turtsiia i Būlgariia prez XVIII i XIX v.: bibliografski izdirvaniia s statistichni i etnografski dannii*, vols. 2-3. Sofia: Dūrzhavna pechanitsa, 1924-29.

Nedkov, Boris, ed. *Aprilsko vūstanie 1876 g.* Sofia: Nauka i Izkustvo, 1956.

Panchev, Todor, ed. *Dokumenti za Būlgarskata istoriia*, vol. 2. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1932.

Todorov-Khindalov, Vladimir, ed. *Godishnik na Narodna Biblioteka v Sofiia, 1926-28*. Sofia, 1930.

Tonev, Velko. *Kavarna se Vdigna: Izsledvane, dokumenti i materiali za vūstaniето na kavarnentsi prez 1877 g.* Sofia: privately printed, 1997.

\_\_\_\_\_ et al., eds. *Izvori za istoriata na Dobrudzha*, vol. 3. Sofia: IK Gutenberg, 2001. Vol. 4. Sofia: Vekove, 2003.

In English:

Bliss, Frederick Jones. "Narrative of an Expedition to Moab and Gilead in March, 1895." *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 27, no. 3 (1895): 203-35.

Doughty, Charles M. *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1888.

Fisher, Stanley. *Ottoman Land Laws: Containing the Ottoman Land Code and Later Legislation Affecting Land*. London: Oxford University Press, 1919.

Goodrich-Freer, Adela M. *In a Syrian Saddle*. London: Methuen & Co., 1905.

House of Commons. *Papers Respecting the Settlement of Circassian Emigrants in Turkey*. London: Harrison and Son, 1864.

Kenderova, Stoyanka and Viktor V. Lebedev, *Inventory of the Documents in Arabic Language Kept in the Oriental Department of the Cyril and Methodius National Library in Sofia, XIII-XX c.* Sofia, 1984.

Lees, Robinson. "Journey East of Jordan." *Geographical Journal* 5 (1895): 38-43.

Longworth, John A. *A Year Among the Circassians*. London: H. Colburn, 1840.

Lynch, Harry F.B. *Armenia: Travels and Studies*, vol. 2. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901.

MacGahan, Januarius A., and Eugene Schuyler. *The Turkish Atrocities in Bulgaria*. London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1876.

Oliphant, Laurence. *Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon*. Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1880.

Priestland, Jane, ed. *Records of Syria, 1918-1973*. Slough, Eng.: Archive Editions, 2005.

Smith, George Adam. *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, Especially in Relation to the History of Israel and of the Early Church*, 10th ed. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903.

In French:

Aristarchi Bey, Grégoire. *Législation Ottomane, ou Recueil des Lois, Règlements, Ordonnances, Traités, Capitulations et autres Documents Officiels de l'Empire Ottoman*. Istanbul: Frères Nicolaïdes, 1873-88.

Dulaurier, Édouard. "La Russie dans le Caucase, fin de la guerre de Circassie et dispersion des tribus tcherkesses. L'exode des Circassiens et la colonisation russe." *Revue des Deux-Mondes* (15 December 1865): 947-82, and (1 January 1866): 41-67.

Ubicini, Abdolonyme and Pavet de Courteille. *État Présent de l'Empire Ottoman*. Paris: J. Dumaine, 1876.

In Italian:

Grassi, Fabio L. *Una Nuova Patria: L'esodo dei Circassi verso l'Impero Ottomano*, 185-269. Istanbul: Isis Press, 2014. See also for British, French, and Ottoman documents.

**Select Secondary Sources**

al-Abbasi, Mustafa. *Tarikh al-Tuqan fi Jabal Nablus*. Shefa-‘Amr: Dar al-Mashriq, 1990.

Abdullaeva, Madina I. *Vnutripoliticheskaia situatsiia v Dagestane v 70-90e gg. XIX v. i migratsionnye protsessy*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2014.



- Abou El Fadl, Khaled. "Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries." *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 2 (1994): 141-87.
- Abu-Manneh, Butrus. "The Husaynis: The Rise of a Notable Family in 18th Century Palestine." In *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period*, ed. David Kushner, 93-108. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Press, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sultan Abdulhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda al-Sayyadi." *Middle Eastern Studies* 15 (1979): 131-53.
- Abujaber, Raouf Sa'd. *Qissat 'a'ilat Abu Jabir (al-Jawabira) fi-l-Nasira wa-Nablus wa-l-Salt wa-l-Yaduda wa-l-Jaweida wa-Qurayyat Nafi'*. Amman, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pioneers over Jordan: The Frontier of Settlement in Transjordan, 1850-1914*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1989.
- Adelman, Howard. *No Return, No Refuge: Rites and Rights in Minority Repatriation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.
- Agmon, Iris. *Family and Court: Legal Culture and Modernity in Late Ottoman Palestine*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006.
- Akarlı, Engin Deniz. *The Long Peace: Ottoman Lebanon, 1861-1920*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Akçam, Taner. *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006.
- Aksoy, Elbruz Umut. "White Slaves and Circassian Slavery from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic." M.A. diss., Istanbul Bilgi University, 2017.
- Alff, Kristen. "Levantine Joint-Stock Companies, Trans-Mediterranean Partnerships, and Nineteenth Century Capitalist Development." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 1 (2018): 150-77.
- Aliev, Bagavudin R. "Severokavkazskaia diaspora v stranakh Blizhnego i Srednego Vostoka: istoriia i sovremennye protsessy (vtoraia polovina XIX - XX v.)." Ph.D. diss., IIAE DNTs RAN, 2002.
- Allen, W.E.D. and Paul Muratoff. *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border, 1828-1921*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953.
- Allinson, Jamie. *The Struggle for the State in Jordan: The Social Origins of Alliances in the Middle East*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016.

- Aloev, Timur Kh. “‘Beglye’ kabardintsy: formirovanie v Zakuban’e massiva kabardinskogo naseleniia i ego uchastie v Kavkazskoi voine v 1799-1829 gg.” Ph.D. diss., Kabardino-Balkarian State University, 2006.
- Alon, Yoav. *The Shaykh of Shaykhs: Mithqal al-Fayiz and Tribal Leadership in Modern Jordan*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Making of Jordan: Tribes, Colonialism and the Modern State*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2009.
- Amawi, Abla M. “The Transjordanian State and the Enterprising Merchants of Amman.” In *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami, 109-28. Beirut: CERMOC, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Consolidation of the Merchant Class in Transjordan During the Second World War.” In *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, eds. Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell, 162-86. London: British Academic Press, 1994.
- Amrith, Sunil S. *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: the Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- Andrews, Peter Alford. “Muhacirler.” In *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* 12 (1996): 515-20.
- Angelova, Daniela. *Demografsko razvitie na Bŭlgarskoto Chernomorsko kraibrezhie prez XIX vek (do 1878 g.)*. Sofia: Regaliiia-6, 2013.
- Arapov, Dmitrii Iu., Vladimir O. Bobrovnikov, and Irina L. Babich. *Severnyi Kavkaz v sostave Rossiiskoi imperii*. Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2007.
- Arslan, Elmas Zeynep. “Circassian Organizations in the Ottoman Empire (1908-1923).” M.A. diss., Boğaziçi University, 2008.
- Aslanian, Sebouh. *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011.
- Astourian, Stephan H. “The Silence of the Land: Agrarian Relations, Ethnicity, and Power.” In *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek, 55-81. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Ateş, Sabri. *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making a Boundary, 1843-1914*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Avakian, Arsen. *Cherkesskii faktor v Osmanskoi imperii i Turtsii (vtoraia polovina XIX - pervaiia chetvert’ XX vv.)*. Yerevan: Gitutium, 2001.

in Turkish translation: Arsen Avagyan. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Kemalist Türkiyen'in Devlet-İktidar Sisteminde Çerkesler: XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısından XX. Yüzyılın İlk Çeyreğine*, trans. Ludmilla Denisenko. Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 2004.

Aydemir, İzzet. *Muhaceretteki Çerkes Aydınları*. Ankara, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Göç: Kuzey Kafkasya'dan Göç Tarihi*. Ankara: Gelişim Matbaası, 1988.

Aydın, Cemil. *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

Badaev, Said-Emi S. *Chechenskaia diaspora na Srednem i Blizhnem Vostoke: istoriia i sovremennost'*. Nalchik: Respublikanskii poligrafkombinat im. Revoliutsii 1905 g., 2008.

Badem, Candan and Patimat Takhnaeva. "Mukhammad-Fazil' Pasha Dagestanlı (1853-1916): biograficheskie svedeniia po materialam Osmanskogo arkhiva." *Tavraev* 1 (2014): 25-30.

Baderkhan, Fasikh. *Severokavkazskaia diaspora v Turtsii, Sirii i Iordanii: vtoraiia polovina XIX - pervaiia polovina XX veka*. Moscow: IV RAN, 2001.

Baer, Gabriel. "The Evolution of Private Landownership in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent." In *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, ed. Charles Philip Issawi, 79-90. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

Bakhit, Muhammad 'Adnan. *Kashshaf ihisa'i zamani li-sijillat al-mahakim al-shar'iyya wa-l-awqaf al-islamiyya fi Bilad al-Sham*. Amman: University of Jordan, 1984.

Balkanski, Todor. *Cherkezite v bŭlgarskite zemi: ezikovoarkheologicheski proshit*. Veliko Tŭrnovo: IK Znak 94, 2011.

Bang, Anne K. *Islamic Sufi Networks in the Western Indian Ocean (c. 1880-1940): Ripples of Reform*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Barakat, Nora. "An Empty Land? Nomads and Property Administration in Hamidian Syria." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2015.

Barbir, Karl K. *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.

Barrett, Thomas M. *At the Edge of the Empire: The Terek Cossacks and the North Caucasus Frontier, 1700-1860*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Lines of Uncertainty: The Frontiers of the North Caucasus." *Slavic Review* 54, no. 3 (1995): 578-601.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity." *Russian Review* 53, no. 3 (1994): 353-66.
- Bartov, Omer and Eric D. Weitz, eds. *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian and Ottoman Borderlands*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013.
- Batsaj, Muhammad Khayr Mamsir. *Al-Mawsu'a al-tarikhiyya li-l-umma al-sharkasiyya "al-adigha": min al-alf al-'ashir ma qabla al-milad ila al-alf al-thalith ma b'ada al-milad*, 7 vols. Amman: Dar al-Wa'il, 2009.
- Beinin, Joel. *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Ben-Bassat, Yuval. *Petitioning the Sultan: Protests and Justice in Late Ottoman Palestine*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.
- Bennigsen, Alexandre. "The Qadiriyyah (Kunta Hajji) Tariqah in North-east Caucasus: 1850-1987." *Islamic Culture* 62, no. 2-3 (1988): 63-78.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Muslim Guerrilla Warfare in the Caucasus (1918-1928)." *Central Asian Survey* 2, no. 1 (1983): 45-56.
- Berezgov, Barasbi N. "Cherkesskaia diaspora." In *Adygskaia i karachaevo-balkarskaia zarubezhnaia diaspora: istoriia i kul'tura*, ed. Khasan M. Dumanov, 11-40. Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2000.
- Berlin, Ira. *The Long Emancipation: The Demise of Slavery in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015.
- Berzeg, Sefer E. *Kafkasya ve Diaspora Yayın Hayatından*. Ankara: Kuban Matbaacılık, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Kuzey Kafkasya Cumhuriyeti 1917-1922*, vols. 1-3. Istanbul: Birleşik Kafkasya Derneği, 2003-06.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Kafkas Diasporası'nda Edebiyatçılar ve Yazarlar Sözlüğü*. Samsun: Kafkasya Gerçeği, 1995.
- Besleney, Zeynel Abidin. *The Circassian Diaspora in Turkey: A Political History*. London: Routledge, 2014.
- Beşikçi, Mehmet. "Başbozuk Savaşçıdan 'Makbul' Tebaaya: 1877-1878 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı'nda Osmanlı Ordusunda Çerkez Muhacirler." *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 23 (2015): 85-123.

- Bilmez, Bülent. "A Nationalist Discourse of Heroism and Treason: The Construction of an 'Official' Image of Çerkes Ethem (1886-1948) in Turkish Historiography, and Recent Challenges." In *Untold Histories of the Middle East: Recovering Voices from the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Amy Singer, Christopher K. Neumann, and Selçuk Akşin Somel, 106-23. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Biondich, Mark. *The Balkans: Revolution, War, and Political Violence Since 1878*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Birdal, Murat. *The Political Economy of Ottoman Public Debt: Insolvency and European Financial Control in the Late Nineteenth Century*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010.
- Bloxham, Donald. "The First World War and the Development of the Armenian Genocide." In *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek, 260-75. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Blumi, Isa. *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Contesting the Edges of the Ottoman Empire: Rethinking Ethnic and Sectarian Boundaries in the Malësore, 1878-1912." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35, no. 2 (2003): 237-56.
- Bobrovnikov, Vladimir O. "Mukhadzhirstvo v 'demograficheskikh voynakh' Rossii i Turtsii." *Vostok* 2 (2010): 67-78.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Rossiiskie musul'mane posle arkhivnoi revoliutsii: vzgliad s Kavkaza i iz Bolgarii." *Ab Imperio* 4 (2008): 313-33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'Malyi Dagestan' pod Stambulom: severokavkazskie sufii i sviatye mesta v Turtsii." In *Turcica et Ottomanica: Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu professora M.S. Meiera*, eds. Il'ia V. Zaitsev and Svetlana F. Oreshkova, 150-63. Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Musul'mane Severnogo Kavkaza: obychai, pravo, nasilie*. Moscow: IV RAN, 2002.
- Bonine, Michael E. "The Introduction of Railroads in the Eastern Mediterranean: Economic and Social Impacts." In *The Syrian Land: Processes of Integration and Fragmentation: Bilad al-Sham from the 18th to the 20th Century*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Birgit Schaebler, 53-78. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998.
- Borlakova, Fatima A. "Karachaevo-balkarskaia emigratsiia: etapy formirovaniia i etnokul'turnoi evoliutsii (vtoraia polovina XIX – pervaia polovina XX v." Ph.D. diss., Karachaevo-Cherkessk State University, 2009.
- Botsvadze, Teimuraz D. *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie otnosheniia v Kabarde v pervoi polovine XIX veka*. Tbilisi: Metsniereba, 1965.

- Braginsky, Vladimir I. "Russians, Circassians and ... the Discovery of Laser Weapons: 'The Story of the War Between Sultan Istanbul and the Russian Tsar Alexander'." *Indonesia Circle* 24, no. 70 (1996): 193-217.
- Bram, Chen. "Circassian Reimmigration to the Caucasus." In *Roots and Routes: Ethnicity and Migration in Global Perspective*, ed. Shalva Weil, 205-22. Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1999.
- Breyfogle, Nicholas B. *Heretics and Colonizers: Forging Russia's Empire in the South Caucasus*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011.
- Brooks, Willis. "The Politics of the Conquest of the Caucasus, 1855-1864." *Nationalities Papers* 24, no. 4 (1996): 649-60.
- Brower, Daniel. "Russian Roads to Mecca: Religious Tolerance and Muslim Pilgrimage." *Slavic Review* 55, no. 3 (1996): 567-84.
- Brubaker, Rogers. "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 1-19.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Aftermaths of Empire and the Unmixing of Peoples: Historical and Comparative Perspectives." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18, no. 2 (1995): 189-218.
- Brunnbauer, Ulf. "Descent of Territoriality: Inheritance and Family Forms in the Late Ottoman and Early Post-Ottoman Balkans." In *Household and Family in the Balkans*, ed. Karl Kaser, 305-26. Vienna and Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2012.
- Burke, Edmund III, ed. *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Bussow, Johann. *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem, 1872-1908*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011.
- Çadırcı, Musa. "Türkiye'de Muhtarlık Teşkilâtının Kurulması Üzerine Bir İnceleme." *Belleten* 34 (1970): 409-420.
- Campos, Michelle U. *Ottoman Brothers; Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Early Twentieth-Century Palestine*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.
- Can, Lale. "Connecting People: A Central Asian Sufi Network in Turn-of-the-Century Istanbul." *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 2 (2012): 373-401.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Trans-Imperial Trajectories: Pilgrimage, Pan-Islam, and the Development of Ottoman-Central Asian Relations, 1865-1914." Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2012.

- Canon, James. "Sufism and Liberation Across the Indo-Afghan Border: 1880-1928." *South Asian History and Culture* 7, no. 2 (2016): 135-54.
- Casale, Giancarlo. *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Çelik, Gülfettin. "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Nüfus ve İskan Politikası." *Divan* 1 (1999): 49-110.
- Çelik, Mehmet. "Tanzimat in the Balkans: Midhat Pasha's Governorship in the Danube Province (Tuna Vilayeti), 1864-1868." M.A. diss., Bilkent University, 2007.
- Çelikpala, Mitat. "From Immigrants to Diaspora: Influence of the North Caucasian Diaspora in Turkey." *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2006): 423-46.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "North Caucasian Émigré Movements Between the Two World Wars." *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 9, no. 1-2 (2003): 287-314.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Search for a Common North Caucasian Identity: The Mountaineers' Attempts for Survival and Unity in Response to the Russian Rule." Ph.D. diss., Bilkent University, 2002.
- Çiçek, Nazan. "'Talihsiz Çerkesleri İngiliz Peksimeti': İngiliz Arşiv Belgelerinde Büyük Çerkes Göçü (Şubat 1864 - Mayıs 1865)." *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 64, no. 1 (2009): 57-88.
- Chatty, Dawn. "Refugees, Exiles, and Other Forced Migrants in the Late Ottoman Empire." *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2013): 1-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Chochiev, Georgy. "Evolution of a North Caucasian Community in Late Ottoman and Republican Turkey: The Case of Anatolian Ossetians." In *Diasporas of the Modern Middle East: Contextualising Community*, eds. Anthony Gorman and Sossie Kasbarian, 103-37. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Severokavkazskie sela okruga Tokat glazami frantsuzskogo iezuita: kniazheskaia svad'ba i versiia 'Sag'æstæ' Temirbolata Mamsurova." *Izvestiia SOIGSI* 21 (60) (2016): 121-41.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Caucasian Newspaper in the Late 19th-Century Cairo: 'İttihad Gazetesi'." *Folklor/Edebiyat Dergisi* 20, no. 2 (2014): 225-37.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Severokavkazskie (cherkesskie) organizatsii v Turtsii (1908-1923 gg.)*. Vladikavkaz: SOIGSI, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "XIX. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kuzey Kafkas Göçmenlerinin Toplumsal Uyarlanmasına Dair Bazı Görüşler." *Kebikeç* 23 (2007): 407-56.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "General Musa Kundukhov: nekotorye fakty zhizni i deiatel'nosti v emigratsii." *Kavkazskii sbornik* 3 (35) (2006): 65-86.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Rasselenie severokavkazskikh immigrantov v arabskikh provintsiiakh Osmanskoi imperii (vtoraia polovina XIX - nachalo XX v.)." In *Osmanskaia imperiia: sobytiia i liudi*, eds. Mikhail S. Meier and Svetlana F. Oreshkova, 94-127. Moscow: Gumanitarii, 2000.
- Chochiev, Georgy and Bekir Koç. "Migrants from the North Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia: Some Notes on Their Settlement and Adaptation (Second Half of the 19th Century – Beginning of the 20th Century)." *Journal of Asian History* 40, no. 1 (2006): 80-103.
- Clancy-Smith, Julia A. *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters (Algeria and Tunisia, 1800-1904)*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994.
- Clifford, James. "Diasporas." *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (1994): 302-38.  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988.
- Cohen, Robin. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Crews, Robert D. *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.  
\_\_\_\_\_. "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia." *The American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (2003): 50-83.
- Cuno, Kenneth. "The Origins of Private Ownership of Land in Egypt: A Reappraisal." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 12 (1980): 245-75.
- Cuthell, David Cameron Jr. "The Muhacirin Komisyonu: An Agent in the Transformation of Ottoman Anatolia, 1860-1866." Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2005.  
\_\_\_\_\_. "The Circassian Sürgün." *Ab Imperio* 2 (2003): 139-68.
- Dadrian, Vahakn N. *Warrant for Genocide: Key Elements of Turko-Armenian Conflict*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999.
- Dakin, Douglas. *The Greek Struggle for Independence, 1821-1833*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1973.
- Davison, Roderic H. "The Advent of the Electric Telegraph in the Ottoman Empire." In *Essays in Ottoman and Turkish History, 1774-1923*, ed. Roderic H. Davison, 133-65. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1990.  
\_\_\_\_\_. *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963.
- Dawud, Jurj Farid Tarif. *Al-Salt wa jiwaruha*. Amman: Jordan Press Association, 1994.



- Deguilhem, Randi. "State Civil Education in Late Ottoman Damascus: A Unifying or a Separating Force?" In *The Syrian Land: Processes of Integration and Fragmentation: Bilad al-Sham from the 18th to the 20th Century*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Birgit Schaebler, 221-50. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998.
- Dennis, Brad. "Patterns of Conflict and Violence in Eastern Anatolia Leading Up to the Russo-Turkish War and the Treaty of Berlin." In *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, eds. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, 273-301. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2011.
- Denzel, Markus A. *Handbook of World Exchange Rates, 1590-1914*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
- Der Matossian, Bedross. *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "From Bloodless Revolution to Bloody Counterrevolution: The Adana Massacres of 1909." *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 6, no. 2 (2011): 152-73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Taboo within the Taboo: The Fate of 'Armenian Capital' at the End of the Ottoman Empire." *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 1 (2011): 1-23.
- Deringil, Selim. *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no. 2 (2003): 311-42.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909)." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, no. 3 (1991): 345-59.
- Derluguian, Georgi M. "The Forgotten Complexities of the North Caucasus Jihad." In *Caucasus Paradigms: Anthropologies, Histories, and the Making of a World Area*, eds. Bruce Grant and Lale Yalçın-Heckmann, 75-92. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2007.
- Dimitrov, Strashimir, Nikolai Zhelchev, and Velko Tonev, eds. *Istoriia na Dobrudzha*, 3 vols. Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1984-88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Chiflishkoto stopanstvo prez 50-70-te godina na XIX vek." *Istorieski pregled* 9, no. 2 (1955): 3-34.
- Dobrev, Margarita. "Bulgaristan'ın İvraca ve Rahova Kazalarında Yaşayan Çerkeslerin Nüfus Yapısı ve İktisadi Etkinlikleri (1860-1870)." *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 2 (2016): 43-74.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Çerkes Tehcirinin Medyaya Yankısı: Takvim-i Vekayi Gazetesi." *Yeni Türkiye* 74 (2015): 779-88.

- \_\_\_\_\_. “Remarks on the Circassian Settlements in the Kaza of Lom and Belogradchik.” In *Prouchvaniia po Stopanska istoriia i istoriia na sotsialno-ikonomicheskata sfera v Iugozapadna Bŭlgariia*, ed. Petar Parvanov and Boryana Dimitrova, 106-30. Blagoevgrad: UI Neofit Rilski, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Circassian Colonization in the Danube Vilayet and Social Integration (Preliminary Notes).” *Journal of the Center for Ottoman Studies (OTAM)* 33 (2013): 1-30.
- Doğan, Setenay Nil. “Formations of Diaspora Nationalism: The Case of Circassians in Turkey.” Ph.D. diss., Sabancı University, 2009.
- Doumani, Beshara, ed. *Family History in the Middle East: Household, Property, and Gender*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700-1900*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.
- Dündar, Fuat. “Pouring a People into the Desert: The ‘Definitive Solution’ of the Unionists to the Armenian Question.” In *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek, 276-86. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Crime of Numbers: The Role of Statistics in the Armenian Question, 1878-1918*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Modern Türkiye’nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki’nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *İttihat ve Terakki’nin Müslümanları İskan Politikası (1913-1918)*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
- Dzidzariia, Georgii A. *Makhadzhestvo i problemy istorii Abkhazii XIX stoletia*. Sukhumi: Alashara, 1982.
- Eppel, Michael. *A People Without a State: The Kurds from the Rise of Islam to the Dawn of Nationalism*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2016.
- Erdem, Y. Hakan. *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and Its Demise, 1800-1909*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press, 1996.
- Eren, Ahmet Cevat. *Türkiye’de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri*. İstanbul: Nurgök Matbaası, 1966.
- Erkan, Süleyman. *Kırım ve Kafkasya Göçleri (1878-1908): Tatarlar, Çerkezler, Abhazlar, Gürcüler, Ahıskalılar, Dağıstanlılar, Çeçenler, Diğerleri*. Trabzon: KTÜ, 1996.

- Esmer, Tolga U. "Notes on a Scandal: Transregional Networks of Violence, Gossip, and Imperial Sovereignty in the Late Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 58, no. 1 (2016): 99-128.
- Fahmy, Khaled. "Women, Medicine and Power in Nineteenth-Century Egypt." In *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, ed. Lila Abu-Lughod, 35-72. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Farah, Megan Dean. "Mobility, Commerce and Empire in the Caucasus, 1762-1918." Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2013.
- Fawaz, Leila Tarazi. *An Occasion for War: Mount Lebanon and Damascus in 1860*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.
- Feldman, Ilana. "Home as a Refrain: Remembering and Living Displacement in Gaza." *History and Memory* 18, no. 2 (2006): 10-47.
- Firro, Kais M. *A History of the Druzes*. Leiden: Brill, 1992.
- Fischbach, Michael R. *State, Society, and Land in Jordan*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2000.
- Fisher, Alan W. "Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire in the Years after the Crimean War." *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 35 (1987): 356-71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772-1783*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Fortna, Benjamin C. *The Circassian: The Life of Eşref Bey, Late Ottoman Insurgent and Special Agent*. London: Hurst & Co., 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Frary, Lucien J. and Mara Kozelsky, eds. *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands: The Eastern Question Reconsidered*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014.
- Fratantuono, Ella. "State Fears and Immigrant Tiers: Historical Analysis as a Method in Evaluating Migration Categories." *Middle East Journal of Refugee Studies* 2 (2017): 97-115.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Migration Administration in the Making of the Late Ottoman Empire." Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 2016.
- Gadzhieva, L.A. and Zaira B. Ibragimova. "Vospominaniia Ali Usta o sheikhe Sharapuddine Kikuninskogo kak istochnik po istorii dagestanskogo

- mukhadzhirstva kontsa XIX - nachala XX vv.” *Vestnik Instituta IAE* 4 (2013): 41-46.
- Gammer, Moshe, ed. *Written Culture in Daghestan*. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. ed. *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan*. Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan*. London: Frank Cass, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Beginnings of the Naqshbandiyya in Daghestan and the Russian Conquest of the Caucasus.” *Die Welt des Islams* 34 (1994): 204-17.
- Gammer, Moshe and David J. Wasserstein, eds. *Daghestan and the World of Islam*. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2006.
- Ganich, Anastasiia A. *Cherkesy v Iordanii: osobennosti istoricheskogo i etnokul’turnogo razvitiia*. Moscow: ISAA MGU, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Circassian Diaspora in Jordan: Self-identification, Ideas about Historical Homeland and Impact on North Caucasian Developments.” *Central Asia and the Caucasus* 19 (2003): 23-39.
- García, María Cristina. *Havana USA: Cuban Exiles and Cuban Americans in South Florida, 1959-1994*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.
- Gardanov, Valentin K. *Obshchestvennyi stroi adygskich narodov (XVIII - pervaiia polovina XIX v.)*. Moscow: Nauka, 1967.
- Gatrell, Peter. *The Making of the Modern Refugee*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Geller, Randy. “The Recruitment and Conscription of the Circassian Community into the Israel Defence Forces, 1948-58.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 48, no. 3 (2012): 387-99.
- Gelvin, James L. and Nile Green, eds. *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014.
- Geraci, Robert. “Genocidal Impulses and Fantasies in Imperial Russia.” In *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History*, ed. A. Dirk Moses, 343-71. New York: Berghahn, 2008.
- Geyikdağı, V. Necla. *Foreign Investment in the Ottoman Empire: International Trade and Relations in the Late Nineteenth Century*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.
- Gilbar, Gad G. “The Muslim Big Merchant-Entrepreneurs of the Middle East, 1860-1914.” *Die Welt des Islams*, 43, no. 1 (2003): 1-36.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Economic and Social Consequences of the Opening of New Markets: The Case of Nablus, 1870-1914." In *The Syrian Land: Processes of Integration and Fragmentation: Bilad al-Sham from the 18th to the 20th Century*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Birgit Schaebler, 281-91. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998.
- Gingeras, Ryan. *Heroin, Organized Crime, and the Making of Modern Turkey*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Sons of Two Fatherlands: Turkey and the North Caucasian Diaspora, 1914-1923." *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2011): 2-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sorrowful Shores: Violence, Ethnicity, and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1912-1923*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Notorious Subjects, Invisible Citizens: North Caucasian Resistance to the Turkish National Movement in Northwestern Anatolia, 1919-23." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 1 (2008): 89-108.
- Gmelch, George. "Return Migration." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 9 (1980): 135-59.
- Gould, Rebecca. *Writers and Rebels: The Literature of Insurgency in the Caucasus*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017.
- Göçek, Fatma Müge. *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence Against Armenians, 1789-2009*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Gradeva, Rossitsa, ed. *Frontiers of Ottoman Space, Frontiers of Ottoman Society*. Istanbul: Isis Press, 2014.
- Gratien, Chris. "The Ottoman Quagmire: Malaria, Swamps, and Settlement in the Late Ottoman Mediterranean." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 4 (2017): 583-604.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Mountains Are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956." Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 2015.
- Green, Nile. "Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West: Industrial Communications in the Making of the 'Muslim World'." *The American Historical Review* 118, no. 2 (2013): 401-29.
- Gross, Max. "Ottoman Rule in the Province of Damascus, 1860-1909." Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University, 1979.
- Gully, Adrian. *The Culture of Letter-Writing in Pre-Modern Islamic Society*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
- Güngör, Fethi. "Çerkeslerin Uzunyayla'da İskanı – Kaynar Mahallesi Örneği." *Yeni Türkiye* 74 (2015): 735-40.

- Güsar, Vasfi. "Çerkes İttihad ve Teavün Cemiyeti." *Kafkasya Kültürel Dergisi* 47 (1975): 28-37.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "İstanbul Çerkes Kadınları Teavün Cemiyeti." *Kafkasya Kültürel Dergisi* 48 (1975): 21-26.
- Gutman, David. "Travel Documents, Mobility Control, and the Ottoman State in an Age of Global Migration, 1880-1915." *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 3, no. 2 (2016): 347-68.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Agents of Mobility: Migrant Smuggling Networks, Transhemispheric Migration, and Time-Space Compression in Ottoman Anatolia, 1888-1908." *InterDisciplines* 1 (2012): 48-84.
- Habiçoğlu, Bedri. *Kafkasya'dan Anadolu'ya Göçler*. Istanbul: Nart Yayıncılık, 1993.
- Hacısalihioğlu, Mehmet. "Borders, Maps, and Censuses: The Politicization of Geography and Statistics in the Multi-Ethnic Ottoman Empire." In *Comparing Empires: Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen, 171-216. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.
- Hacker, Jane M. *Modern 'Amman: A Social Study*. Durham: Durham Colleges in the University of Durham, 1960.
- Haghandoqa, Mohammad Kheir. *The Circassians: Origin, History, Customs, Traditions, Immigration to Jordan*. Amman: Rafidi Print, 1985.
- Hamarneh, Mustafa B. "Amman in British Travel Accounts of the 19th Century." In *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami, 57-70. Beirut: CERMOC, 1996.
- Hamed-Troyansky, Vladimir. "Circassian Refugees and the Making of Amman, 1878-1914." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 4 (2017): 605-23.
- Hammad, Mohammed A.L. *The History of the Circassians and the Anzour Dynastic Family: the Adyghe, Chechens, Daghanis and Ossetes*. Al-Raqqa, Syria, 2001.
- Hammer, Juliane. *Palestinians Born in Exile: Diaspora and the Search for a Homeland*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005.
- Hammond, Laura. *This Place Will Become Home: Refugee Repatriation to Ethiopia*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.
- Hamud, Nufan. *'Amman wa jiwaruha khilal al-fatra 1864-1921*. Amman: Business Bank Publications, 1996.

- \_\_\_\_\_. “‘Amman fi awakhir al-‘ahd al-‘uthmani: dirasa fi tatawwur awdaiha al-idariyya wa-l-ijtima’iyya wa-l-iqtisadiyya.” In *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami, 72-88. Beirut: CERMOC, 1996.
- Hanania, Marwan D. “From Colony to Capital: A Socio-Economic and Political History of Amman, 1878-1958.” Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2010.
- Hanioglu, Şükrü. *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Young Turks in Opposition*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Hanley, Will. *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.
- Hansen, Lars Funch. “iCircassia: Digital Capitalism and New Transnational Identities.” *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1-32.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Frontier Zones of Diaspora-Making: Circassian Organizations in Turkey.” In *A Comparative Ethnography of Alternative Spaces*, eds. Jens Dahl and Esther Fihl, 85-109. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Harper, Marjory, ed. *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005.
- Harper, Marjory and Stephen Constantine. *Migration and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Hassan, Mona. *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Henze, Paul B. “Circassian Resistance to Russia.” In *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance Towards the Muslim World*, ed. Marie Bennigsen Broxup, 62-111. London: Hurst, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Fire and Sword in the Caucasus: The 19th Century Resistance of the North Caucasian Mountaineers.” *Central Asian Survey* 2, no. 1 (1983): 5-44.
- Hernández, José Angel. *Mexican American Colonization During the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Heywood, Colin. “The Frontier in Ottoman History: Old Ideas and New Myths.” In *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700-1700*, eds. Daniel Power and Naomi Standen, 228-50. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.
- Hirsch, Francine. *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

- Hirschon, Renée, ed. *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2008.
- Holquist, Peter. "To Count, to Extract, to Exterminate: Population Statistics and Population Politics in Late Imperial and Soviet Russia." In *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, eds. Terry Martin and Ronald Grigor Suny, 111-44. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Hourani, Albert. "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables." In *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers, 41-68. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Hudson, Leila. *Transforming Damascus: Space and Modernity in an Islamic City*. New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008.
- Hunt, Catalina. "'Speaking National' in Dobruca. Muslim Adaptation to Romanian Policies Between 1878 and 1914." *Revue Des Études Sud-est Européennes* 52 (2014): 145-69.
- Iakimov, Georgi. "Vūzrozhdenskiiat pechat za cherkezite v bŭlgarskite zemi prez 60-te – 70-te godini na XIX v." *Istoriia* 4-5 (2004): 71-78.
- Ibragimova, Zaira B. "Problema mukhadzhirstva v dagestanskikh pamiatnikakh epistoliarного zhanra kontsa XIX – nachala XX vv." *Voprosy istorii* 4 (2012): 152-56.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Muhammad-Hajji and Sharapuddin of Kikuni." In *Islam and Sufism in Daghestan*, ed. Moshe Gammer, 71-77. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2009.
- Ibragimova, Zarema Kh. *Chechenskii narod v Rossiiskoi imperii: adaptatsionnyi period*. Moscow: Probel-2000, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Chechenskaia istoriia: politika, ekonomika, kul'tura. Vtoraia polovina XIX veka*. Moscow: Evraziia +, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Emigratsiia chechentsev v Turtsiiu (60-70 gg. XIX v.)*. Moscow: Maks Press, 2000.
- İnalçık, Halil and Donald Quataert, eds. *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, 2 vols. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- İpek, Nedim. *Rumeli'den Anadolu'ya Türk Göçleri (1877-1890)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1994.
- İslamoğlu, Huri. "Property as a Contested Domain: A Reevaluation of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858." In *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen, 3-61. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.



- Ismail, Muhammad Kheyr. *Dalil al-ansab al-sharkasiyya: dirasa fi asl al-sharkas wa tarikhum wa ansabuhum wa amakin tajammu 'akum fi al-jumhuriyya al-'arabiyya al-suriyya*. Damascus: Dar al-Salam, 1993.
- Ivanov, Igor' S. et al., eds. *Ocherki istorii Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1802-2002*, 3 vols. Moscow: Olma-Press, 2002.
- Jaimoukha, Amjad. *The Chechens: A Handbook*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *The Circassians: A Handbook*. Richmond: Curzon, 2001.
- Janib, Musa 'Ali. *Muwatin sharkasi yatahaddath 'an masqat ra'sihi*. Amman: al-Mu'allif, 2006.
- Jersild, Austin. *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845-1917*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Faith, Custom, and Ritual in the Borderlands: Orthodoxy, Islam, and the 'Small Peoples' of the Middle Volga and the North Caucasus." *The Russian Review* 59, no. 4 (2000): 512-29.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Imperial Russification: Daghestani Mountaineers in Russian Exile, 1877-1883." *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 1 (2000): 5-16.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "From Savagery to Citizenship: Caucasian Mountaineers and Muslims in the Russian Empire." In *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700-1917*, eds. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, 101-14. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- Kafadar, Cemal. "Self and Others: The Diary of a Dervish in Seventeenth Century Istanbul and First-Person Narratives in Ottoman Literature." *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 121-50.
- Kale, Başak. "Transforming an Empire: The Ottoman Empire's Immigration and Settlement Policies in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." *Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 2 (2014): 252-71.
- Kane, Eileen. *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015.
- Karakışla, Yavuz Selim. "Çerkes Kadınları Teavün Cemiyeti." *Toplumsal Tarih* 88 (2001): 39-43.
- Karamürsel, Ceyda. "Transplanted Slavery, Contested Freedom and Vernacularization of Rights in the Reform Era Ottoman Empire." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 59, no. 3 (2017): 690-714.

- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Uncertainties of Freedom: The Second Constitutional Era and the End of Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire.” *Journal of Women’s History* 28, no. 3 (2016): 138-61.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “‘In the Age of Freedom, in the Name of Justice’: Slaves, Slaveholders, and the State in the Late Ottoman Empire and Early Turkish Republic, 1857-1933.” Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2015.
- Karataş, Ömer. “Çerkeslerin Sivas-Uzunyayla’ya İskanları ve Karşılaştıkları Sorunlar (H. 1277-1287/M. 1860-1870).” Ph.D. diss., Ege Üniversitesi, 2012.
- Kark, Ruth. “The Contribution of the Ottoman Regime to the Development of Jerusalem and Jaffa, 1840-1917.” In *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social, and Economic Transformation*, ed. David Kushner, 46-58. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1986.
- Karpat, Kemal H. *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Muslim Migration: A Response to Aldeeb Abu-Sahlieh.” *The International Migration Review* 30, no. 1 (1996): 79-89.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Hijra from Russia and the Balkans: The Process of Self-Definition in the Late Ottoman State,” in *Muslim Travelers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination*, eds. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 131-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ottoman Population, 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Ottoman Urbanism: The Crimean Emigration to Dobruca and the Founding of Mecidiye, 1856-1878.” *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 3, no. 1 (1984-85): 1-25.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Status of the Muslim Under European Rule: The Eviction and Settlement of the Çerkes.” *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 1, no. 2 - 2, no. 1 (1979-80): 7-27.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Ottoman Population Records and the Census of 1881/1882-1893.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9 (1978): 237-74.
- Kasaba. Reşat. *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1988.
- Kasumov, Aliy and Hasan Kasumov. *Çerkes Soykırımı: Çerkeslerin XIX. Yüzyıl Kurtuluş Savaşı Tarihi*. Ankara: TAKAV, 1995.
- Katanchiev, Talia M. *Kabardinskoe obychnoe pravo: ego osobennosti*. Nalchik: El’-Fa, 2003.

- Kaya, Ayhan. *Türkiye 'de Çerkesler: Diaspora 'da Geleneğin Yeniden İcadı*. Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Political Participation Strategies of the Circassian Diaspora in Turkey." *Mediterranean Politics* 9, no. 2 (2004): 221-39.
- Keddie, Nikki R. "The Pan-Islamic Appeal: Afghani and Abdülhamid II." *Middle Eastern Studies* 3, no. 1 (1966): 46-67.
- Kemper, Michael. "The North Caucasian Khalidiyya and 'Muridism': Historiographical Problems." *Journal of the History of Sufism* 1-2, no. 5 (2007): 151-67.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Daghestani Shaykhs and Scholars in Russian Exile: Networks of Sufism, Fatwas and Poetry." In *Daghestan and the World of Islam*, eds. Moshe Gammer and David J. Wasserstein, 95-107. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2006.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "'Adat Against Shari'a: Russian Approaches Towards Daghestani 'Customary Law' in the 19th Century." *Ab Imperio* 3 (2005): 147-74.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Communal Agreements (Ittifaqat) and 'Adat-Books from Daghestani Villages and Confederacies (18th-19th Centuries)." *Der Islam* 81 (2004): 115-51.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Khalidiyya Networks in Daghestan and the Question of Jihad." *Die Welt des Islams* 42, no. 1 (2002): 41-71.
- Kenderova, Stoianka. *Bolnitsi za bedni i preselnitsi v Dunavskiia vilaet*. Sofia: NBKM, 2015.
- Kennan, George. *Other Balkan Wars: A 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry in Retrospect*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1993.
- Kern, Karen M. *Imperial Citizen: Marriage and Citizenship in the Ottoman Frontier Provinces of Iraq*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2011.
- Kévorkian, Raymond. *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.
- Khalid, Adeb. *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998.
- Khater, Akram Fouad. *Inventing Home: Emigration, Gender, and the Middle Class in Lebanon, 1870-1920*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.
- Khodarkovsky, Michael. *Bitter Choices: Loyalty and Betrayal in the Russian Conquest of the North Caucasus*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500-1800*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Of Christianity, Enlightenment, and Colonialism: Russia in the North Caucasus, 1550-1800." *The Journal of Modern History* 71, no. 2 (1999): 394-430.

- Khoury, Philip S. *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
- Khristov, Khristo. *Agrarniat vŭpros v Bŭlgarskata natsionalna revoliutsiia*. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1976.
- Khuraysat, Muhammad ‘Abd al-Qadir. *Al-Masihiyun fi qada’ al-Salt: al-Salt, al-Fuhays, Ramimin, 1869-1920*. Amman: Ministry of Culture, 2012.
- Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham. *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 2010.
- Kieser, Hans-Lukas. “From Patriotism to Mass Murder: Dr. Mehmet Reşid (1873-1919).” In *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Ronald Grigor Suny, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek, 126-48. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- King, Charles. *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Imagining Circassia: David Urquhart and the Making of North Caucasus Nationalism.” *The Russian Review* 66, no. 2 (2007): 238-55.
- King, Russell. “Generalizations from the History of Return Migration.” In *Return Migration: Journey of Hope and Despair?*, ed. Bimal Ghosh, 7-55. Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2000.
- Kipkeeva, Zarema B. *Severnyi Kavkaz v Rossiiskoi imperii: narody, migratsii, territorii*. Stavropol: SGU, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Karachaevo-balkarskaia diaspora v Turtsii*. Stavropol: SGU, 2000.
- Kırımlı, Hakan. *Türkiye’deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay Köy Yerleşimleri*. Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Emigrations from the Crimea to the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 5 (2008): 751-77.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *National Movements and National Identity Among the Crimean Tatars, 1905-1916*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996.
- Kisriev, Enver F. and Robert Bruce Ware. “Russian Hegemony and Islamic Resistance: Ideology and Political Organization in Dagestan, 1800-1930.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2006): 493-504.
- Klein, Janet. *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011.

- Knysh, Alexander. "Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm: The Issue of the Motivations of Sufi Resistance Movements in Western and Russian Scholarship." *Die Welt des Islams* 42, no. 2 (2002): 139-73.
- Koç, Bekir. "Tuna Vilayeti Göçmenleri ve Midhat Paşa." *Journal of Caucasian Studies* 2, no. 4 (2017): 55-70.
- Kontogiorgi, Elisabeth. *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees, 1922-1930*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Koser, Khalid. "Information and Repatriation: The Case of Mozambican Refugees in Malawi." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 10, no. 1 (1997): 1-17.
- Koyuncu, Aşkın. "Tuna Vilayeti'nde Nüfus ve Demografi (1864-1877)." *Turkish Studies* 9, no. 4 (2014): 675-737.
- Kozelsky, Mara. "Casualties of Conflict: Crimean Tatars during the Crimean War." *Slavic Review* 67, no. 4 (2008): 866-91.
- Kreiten, Irma. "A Colonial Experiment in Cleansing: the Russian Conquest of Western Caucasus, 1856-65." *Journal of Genocide Research* 11, no. 2-3 (2009): 213-41.
- Kudaeva, Svetlana G. *Ognem i zhelezom: vynuzhdennoe pereselenie adygov v Osmanskuiu imperiiu (20-70 gg. XIX v.)*. Maikop: AGU, 1998.
- Kumykov, Tugan Kh. *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskie otnosheniia i otmena krepostnogo prava v Kabarde i Balkarii (1800-1869 gg.)*. Nalchik: Kabardino-Balkarskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1959.
- Kunz, Egon F. "The Refugee in Flight: Kinetic Models and Forms of Displacement." *The International Migration Review* 7, no. 2 (1973): 125-46.
- Kurt, Ümit. "Revisiting the Legal Infrastructure for the Confiscation of Armenian and Greek Wealth: An Analysis of the CUP Years and the Early Modern Republic." *Middle Eastern Studies* 53, no. 5 (2017): 700-23.
- Kurtynova-D'Herlugnan, Liubov. *The Tsar's Abolitionists: The Slave Trade in the Caucasus and Its Suppression*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Kushkhabiev, Anzor V. *Problemy repatriatsii zarubezhnykh cherkesov: istoriia, politika, sotsial'naia praktika*. Nalchik: KBNTs RAN, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ocherki istorii zarubezhnoi cherkesskoi diaspory*. Nalchik: El'-Fa, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Cherkesskaia diaspora v arabskikh stranakh: XIX-XX vv.* Nalchik: KBNTs RAN, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Cherkesy v Sirii*. Nalchik: Vozrozhdenie, 1993.

- Kushkhabiev, Anzor V., Naima Neflyasheva, Murat Topçu, and Oytun Orhan. "Syrian Circassians." ORSAM Report 130 (2012).
- Ladas, Stephan. *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey*. New York: MacMillan, 1932.
- Lampe, John R. and Marvin R. Jackson. *Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- Landau, Jacob M. *The Hejaz Railway and the Muslim Pilgrimage. A Case of Ottoman Political Propaganda*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1971.
- LeGall, Dina. *A Culture of Sufism: Naqshbandis and the Ottoman World, 1450-1700*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- Levene, Mark. "Creating a Modern 'Zone of Genocide': The Impact of Nation- and State-Formation on Eastern Anatolia, 1878-1923." *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 12, no. 3 (1998): 393-433.
- Lewis, Norman. *Nomads and Settlers in Syria and Jordan, 1800-1980*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Lockman, Zachary. *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Lohr, Eric. *Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.
- Low, Michael Christopher. "Empire and the Hajj: Pilgrims, Plagues, and Pan-Islam Under British Surveillance, 1865-1908." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 2 (2008): 269-90.
- Mackey, Bruce Douglas. "The Circassians in Jordan," M.A. diss., Naval Postgraduate School, 1979.
- Magomeddadaev, Amirkhan M. *Emigratsiia dagestantsev v Osmanskuiu imperiiu: istoriia i sovremennost'*, vol. 2. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 2001.
- Magomeddadaev, Amirkhan M. and Z.M. Amirova. "Prichiny i posledstviia vosstaniia 1877 goda v Dagestane v otsenke sovremennikov i issledovatelei." *Izvestiia DGPU* 1 (2010): 20-31.
- Magomedkhanov, Magomedkhan M. *Dagestantsy v Turtsii*. Makhachkala: IIAE DNTs RAN, 1997.

- Makdisi, Ussama. "Ottoman Orientalism." *American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002): 768-96.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon*. Berkeley, CA: California University Press, 2000.
- Malkki, Liisa. "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees." *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 24-44.
- Manning, Paul. "Just Like England: On the Liberal Institutions of the Circassians." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 51, no. 3 (2009): 590-618.
- Marrus, Michael Robert. *The Unwanted: European Refugees in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002.
- Martin, Terry. *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- Massad, Joseph A. *Colonial Effects: The Making of a National Identity in Jordan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001.
- Masud, Muhammad Khalid. "The Obligation to Migrate: The Doctrine of *Hijra* in Islamic Law." In *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration and the Religious Imagination*, eds. Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, 29-49. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Mataracı, Aliye Fatma. *Trading in Wartime: The Business Correspondence of an Ottoman Muslim Merchant Family*. Istanbul: Libra Yayınevi, 2016.
- McCarthy, Justin. "The Demography of the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War." In *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*, edited by Ömer Turan, 51-78. Ankara: Middle East Technical University, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*. Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1995.
- McMeekin, Sean. *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012.
- Melson, Robert. "A Theoretical Enquiry into the Armenian Massacres of 1894-1896." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 24, no. 3 (1982): 481-509.
- Meyer, James H. *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856-1914*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Speaking Sharia to the State: Muslim Protesters, Tsarist Officials, and the Islamic Discourses of Late Imperial Russia." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14, no. 3 (2013): 485-505.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "For the Russianist in Istanbul and the Ottomanist in Russia: A Guide to the Archives of Eurasia." *Ab Imperio* 4 (2008): 281-301.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship: Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, 1860-1914." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 1 (2007): 15-32.
- Mikhailova-Mrůvkarova, Maria. *Za Krimskite Tatari ot Severoiztochna Bŭlgariia*. Sofia: Avangard Prima, 2013.
- Miller, Kathryn A. *Guardians of Islam: Religious Authority and Muslim Communities of Late Medieval Spain*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Millman, Richard. "The Bulgarian Massacres Reconsidered." *The Slavonic and East European Review* 58, no. 2 (1980): 218-31.
- Minkov, Anton. "Ottoman *Tapu* Title Deeds in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Origin, Typology and Diplomats." *Islamic Law and Society* 7, no. 1 (2000): 1-29.
- Mirkova, Anna M. *Muslim Land, Christian Labor: Transforming Ottoman Imperial Subjects into Bulgarian National Citizens, 1878-1939*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988.
- Miyazawa, Eiji. "The Past as a Resource for the Slave Descendants of Circassians in Turkey." In *The Past as a Resource in the Turkic Speaking World*, ed. Ildikó Bellér-Hann, 59-84. Würzburg: Ergon-Verl., 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reconstruction of the Landscape of Homeland Among Circassians in the Uzunyayla Plateau." *Bulletin of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan* 50, no. 1 (2007): 128-55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Memory Politics: Circassians of Uzunyayla, Turkey." Ph.D. diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2004.
- Morack, Ellinor. *The Dowry of the State? The Politics of Abandoned Property and the Population Exchange in Turkey, 1921-1945*. Bamberg: University of Bamberg Press, 2017.
- Morris, Benny. *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, 2nd ed. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.



- Morrison, Alexander. "Russian Settler Colonialism." In *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini, 313-26. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sufism, Pan-Islamism and Information Panic: Nil Sergeevich Lykoshin and the Aftermath of the Andijan Uprising." *Past & Present* 214, no. 1 (2012): 255-304.
- Motadel, David, ed. *Islam and the European Empires*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Moumdjian, Garabet K. "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdülhamid II, 1895-1909." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "From Millet-i Sadıka to Millet-i Asiya: Abdülhamid II and Armenians, 1878-1909." In *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*, eds. M. Hakan Yavuz and Peter Sluglett, 302-50. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2011.
- Mousa, Suleiman. "Jordan: Towards the End of the Ottoman Empire 1841-1918." In *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, ed. Adnan Hadid, 385-91. Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1982.
- Muchinov, Ventsislav. *Migratsionna politika na Osmanskata imperiia v Bŭlgarskite zemi prez XIX vek (do 1878 g.)*. Sofia: Regaliia-6, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Politika na Osmanskata vlast za spraviane s bezhanskata kriza v bŭlgarskite zemi ot kraia na 50-te i 60-te godini na XIX vek." *Anamneza* 8, no. 4 (2013): 67-104.
- Mufti, Shauket (Habjoka). *Heroes and Emperors in Circassian History*. Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1972.
- Mundy, Martha. "The State of Property: Late Ottoman Southern Syria, the Kaza of 'Ajlun (1875-1918)." In *Constituting Modernity: Private Property in the East and West*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu, 214-47. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004.
- Mundy, Martha and Richard S. Smith. *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007.
- Murphey, Rhoads. *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty: Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800*. London: Continuum, 2008.
- Murtazaliev, Akhmed M. *Literatura dagestanskoi diaspori Turtsii: vtoraia polovina XIX – XX vek*. Makhachkala: IlaLI DNTs RAN, 2006.

- Nalbandian, Louise Z. *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement: The Development of Armenian Political Parties Through the Nineteenth Century*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1963.
- Nashkhu, Jawdat Hilmi. *Tarikh al-sharkas (al-adighah) wa al-shishan fi liwa 'i Hawran wa al-Balqa' (1878-1920)*. Amman: Lajnat Tarikh al-Urdun, 1998.
- Natho, Kadir I. *Circassian History*. New York, 2009.
- Navruzov, Amir R. *'Dzharidat Dagistan' – araboiazychnaia gazeta kavkazskikh dzhadidov*. Moscow: Mardzhani, 2012.
- Neely, Kari S. "Diasporic Representations: A Study of Circassian and Armenian Identities in Greater Syria." Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2008.
- al-Nimr, Ihsan. *Tarikh Jabal Nablus wa Balqa'*, 4 vols. Damascus and Nablus, 1938-1974.
- Nugent, Walter T.K. *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000.
- Oberoi, Pia A. *Exile and Belonging: Refugees and State Policy in South Asia*. New Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Ochsenwald, William. *The Hijaz Railroad*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1980.
- Owen, Roger. *The Middle East in the World Economy, 1800-1914*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1993.
- Özbek, Nadir. "Policing the Countryside: Gendarmes of the Late 19th-Century Ottoman Empire (1876-1908)." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 40, no. 1 (2008): 47-67.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Philanthropic Activity, Ottoman Patriotism, and the Hamidian Regime, 1876-1909." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 1 (2005): 59-81.
- Özcan, Azmi. *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain, 1877-1924*. Leiden: Brill, 1997.
- Öztan, Ramazan Hakkı. "Point of No Return? Prospects of Empire after the Ottoman Defeat in the Balkan Wars (1912-13)." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 50, no. 1 (2018): 65-84.
- Özel, Oktay. "Migration and Power Politics: The Settlement of Georgian Immigrants in Turkey (1878-1908)." *Middle Eastern Studies* 46, no. 4 (2010): 477-96.

- Özyüksel, Murat. *The Berlin-Baghdad Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Industrialization, Imperial Germany and the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2016.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Hejaz Railway and the Ottoman Empire: Modernity, Industrialisation and Ottoman Decline*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2014.
- Palairret, Michael R. *The Balkan Economies c. 1800-1914: Evolution Without Development*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Pashtova, Madina M. "Kavkazskaia voina v 'klassicheskikh' formakh fol'klora i sovremennom sotsiokul'turnom diskurse cherkesskoi diaspory." In *Kavkazskaia voina: sobytiia, fakty, uroki*, eds. Kasbulat F. Dзамikhov et al., 155-65. Nalchik: KBIGI, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Fol'klor v cherkesskoi diaspore Turtsii: funktsional'nye i regional'no-lokal'nye osobennosti." In *Fol'kloristika i kul'turnaia antropologiya segodnia*, eds. Aleksandra S. Arkhipova et al., 418-25. Moscow: RGGU, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "K probleme opisaniia lokal'nykh fol'klornykh traditsii: cherkesy Uzun-Iaily (Turtsiia)." *Vestnik Adygeiskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 2 (2011): 29-35.
- Paz, Omri. "The Policeman and State Policy: Police Accountability, Civilian Entitlements, and Ottoman Modernism, 1840-1860s." In *Society, Law, and Culture in the Middle East: 'Modernities' in the Making*, eds. Dror Ze'evi and Ehud R. Toledano, 104-20. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.
- Peacock, Andrew, ed. *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Peçe, Uğur Zekeriya. "An Island Unmixed: European Military Intervention and the Displacement of Crete's Muslims, 1896-1908." *Middle Eastern Studies* 54, no. 4 (2018): 575-91.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Island Bonds: The Civil War in Crete and the Rise of Mass Protest in the Ottoman Empire, 1895-1912." Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 2016.
- Peirce, Leslie P. *Morality Tales: Law and Gender in the Ottoman Court of Aintab*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Penslar, Derek Jonathan. *Zionism and Technocracy: The Engineering of Jewish Settlement in Palestine, 1870-1918*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- Petrov, Milen. "Tanzimat for the Countryside: Midhat Paşa and the Vilayet of Danube, 1864-1868." Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2006.

- Pinson, Mark. "Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians in Rumeli after the Crimean War." *Études Balkaniques* 3 (1972): 71-85.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Russian Policy and the Emigration of the Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire (1854-1862)." *Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1 (1972): 37-55; 2-3 (1974): 101-14.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Demographic Warfare: An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policy, 1854-1866." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1970.
- Polatkan, Salih. "Kafkasya'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğa Yapılan Göçler." *Kuzey Kafkasya Dergisi* 66-67 (1987).
- Pollock, Sean. "Empire by Invitation? Russian Empire-Building in the Caucasus in the Reign of Catherine II." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2006.
- Polovinkina, Tamara V. *Cherkessiia: bol' moia i nadezhda*. Nalchik: Izdatel'stvo M. i V. Kotliarovykh, 2014.
- Provence, Michael. *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2005.
- Quataert, Donald. "The Age of Reforms, 1812-1914." In *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, eds. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert, vol. 2, 749-943. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Rafeq, Abdul-Karim. "Ownership of Real Property by Foreigners in Syria, 1869-1873." In *New Perspectives on Property and Land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen, 175-240. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- al-Rasheed, Madawi. "The Myth of Return: Iraqi Arab and Assyrian Refugees in London." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7, no. 2-3 (1994): 199-219.
- Rashid, 'Abd Allah. *Malamih al-Hayaa al-Sha'biyya fi Madinat 'Amman, 1878-1948*. Amman: Wizarat al-Thaqafa, 1983.
- Reilly, James. "Status Groups and Property-Holding in the Damascus Hinterland, 1828-1880." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 21 (1989): 517-39.
- Reimer, Michael J. "Control of Urban Waqfs in al-Salt, Transjordan." In *Held in Trust: Waqf in the Islamic World*, ed. Pascale Gazaleh, 103-20. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2011.
- Reynolds, Michael A. *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- Richards, Julian J. "Mohajir Subnationalism and the Mohajir Qaumi Movement in Sindh Province, Pakistan." Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1994.

- Richmond, Walter. *The Circassian Genocide*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Northwest Caucasus: Past, Present, Future*. London and New York: Routledge 2011.
- Robarts, Andrew. *Migration and Disease in the Black Sea Region: Ottoman-Russian Relations in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.
- Robinson, David. "Jihad, Hijra, and Hajj in West Africa." In *Just Wars, Holy Wars, and Jihads: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Encounters and Exchanges*, ed. Sohail H. Hashmi, 246-62. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Robson, Laura. *States of Separation: Transfer, Partition, and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017.
- Rogan, Eugene L. *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East*. New York: Basic Books, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Aşiret Mektebi: Abdülhamid II's School for Tribes (1892-1907)." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28 (1996): 83-107.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Making of a Capital: Amman, 1918-1928." In *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami, 89-107. Beirut: CERMOC, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Bringing the State Back: The Limits of Ottoman Rule in Transjordan, 1840-1910." In *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*, eds. Eugene L. Rogan and Tariq Tell, 32-57. London: British Academic Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Instant Communication: The Impact of the Telegraph in Ottoman Syria." In *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience*, ed. Thomas Philipp, 113-28. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Moneylending and Capital Flows from Nablus, Damascus, and Jerusalem to Qada' al-Salt in the Last Decades of Ottoman Rule." In *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century: The Common and the Specific in the Historical Experience*, ed. Thomas Philipp, 239-60. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reconstructing Water Mills in Late Ottoman Transjordan." *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 5 (1992): 753-56.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Incorporating the Periphery: The Ottoman Extension of Direct Rule over Southeastern Syria (Transjordan), 1867-1914." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Turkuman of al-Ruman: An Ottoman Settlement in South-Eastern Syria." *Arabic Historical Review for Ottoman Studies* 1-2 (1990): 91-106.
- Rogan, Eugene L. and Tariq Tell, eds. *Village, Steppe and State: The Social Origins of Modern Jordan*. London: British Academic Press, 1994.

- Rosser-Owen, Sarah A.S. Isla. "The First 'Circassian Exodus' to the Ottoman Empire (1858-1867), and the Ottoman Response, Based on the Accounts of Contemporary British Observers." M.A. diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, 2007.
- Rubin, Avi. *Ottoman Nizamiye Courts: Law and Modernity*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Safran, William. "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return." *Diaspora*, 1, no. 1 (1991): 83-99.
- Sahillioğlu, Halil. "A Project for the Creation of Amman *Vilayet*." In *Studies in Ottoman Economic and Social History*, ed. Halil Sahillioğlu. Istanbul: IRCICA, 1999.
- Saliba, Najib E. "The Achievements of Midhat Pasha as Governor of the Province of Syria, 1878-1880." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 9, no. 3 (1978): 307-23.
- Sanger, Richard H. *Where the Jordan Flows*. Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1963.
- Saydam, Abdullah. *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri, 1856-1876*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997.
- Schilcher, Linda Schatkowski. "Violence in Rural Syria in the 1880s and 1890s: State Centralization, Rural Integration and the World Market." In *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East*, eds. Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury, 50-84. Miami, FL: Florida International University Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1985.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Hauran Conflicts of the 1860s: A Chapter in the Rural History of Modern Syria." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 13, no. 2 (1981): 159-79.
- Schiller, Nina Glick, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc. "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (1995): 48-63.
- Schull, Kent. *Prisons in the Late Ottoman Empire: Microcosms of Modernity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014.
- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985.

- Shahrani, M. Nazif. "Afghanistan's Muhajirin (Muslim "Refugee Warriors"): Politics of Mistrust and Distrust of Politics." In *Mistrusting Refugees*, eds. E. Valentine Daniel and John C. Knudsen, 187-206. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.
- Shami, Seteney. "Prehistories of Globalization: Circassian Identity in Motion." *Public Culture*, 12, no. 1 (2000): 177-204.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Circassian Encounters: The Self as Other and the Production of the Homeland in the North Caucasus." *Development and Change* 29, no. 4 (1998): 617-46.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Circassians of Amman: Historical Narratives, Urban Dwelling and the Construction of Identity." In *Amman: Ville et Société*, eds. Jean Hannoyer and Seteney Shami, 303-22. Beirut: CERMOC, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Disjuncture in Ethnicity: Negotiating Circassian Identity in Jordan, Turkey and the Caucasus." *New Perspectives* 12 (1995): 70-95.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. *Population Displacement and Resettlement: Development and Conflict in the Middle East*. New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Nineteenth-Century Circassian Settlements in Jordan." *The History and Archaeology of Jordan*, 4 (1992): 417-21.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ethnicity and Leadership: The Circassians in Jordan." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1982.
- al-Sha'r, Hind Abu. *Sijillat al-aradi fi-l-Urdun, 1876-1960*. Amman: Al-Bayt University, 2002.
- al-Sha'r, Hind Abu and 'Abdullah Mutlaq 'Assaf. *Al-Zarqa': al-nash'ah wa-l-tatawwur, 1903-1935*. Amman: Ministry of Culture, 2013.
- al-Sha'r, Hind Abu and Nufan Hamud. *'Amman fi al-'ahd al-Hashimi*, vol. 1, 1916–1952. Amman: Greater Amman Municipality, 2004.
- Shaw, Stanford J. "The Population of Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10, no. 2 (1979): 265-77.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6, no. 4 (1975): 421-59.
- Shaw, Stanford J. and Ezel Kural Shaw. *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Shekhmagomedov, Magomed G., and Zarema B. Ibragimova. "Prizyv k khidzhre v tvorchestve dagestanskikh sufiev kontsa XIX - nachala XX vv. (na primere proizvedeniia Muhammada-Khadzhi al-Kikuni)." *gazavat.ru* (23 April 2012).
- Sherry, Dana. "Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast, 1860-65." *Kritika* 10, no. 1 (2009): 7-30.

- Shyrock, Andrew. *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2008.
- Slezkine, Yuri. "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism." *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414-52.
- Smiley, Will. "'When Peace Is Made, You Will Again Be Free': Islamic and Treaty Law, Black Sea Conflict, and the Emergence of 'Prisoners of War' in the Ottoman Empire, 1739–1830." Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 2012.
- Somel, Selçuk Akşin. *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- Stefansson, Anders H. "Homecomings to the Future: From Diaspora Mythographies to Social Projects of Return." In *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, eds. Fran Markowitz and Anders H. Stefansson, 2-20. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004.
- Stepputat, Finn. "Repatriation and the Politics of Space: The Case of the Mayan Diaspora and Return Movement." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 7, no. 2-3 (1994): 175-85.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance." *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 87-109.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor. *The Making of the Georgian Nation*, 2nd ed. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Looking Toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Suny, Ronald Grigor, Norman Naimark, and Fatma Müge Göçek, eds. *A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Şaşmaz, Musa. "Immigration and Settlement of Circassians in the Ottoman Empire on British Documents, 1857-1864." *OTAM* 9 (1999): 331-66.
- Şeker, Nesim. "Demographic Engineering in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Armenians." *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 3 (2007): 461-74.
- Tagliacozzo, Eric. "Hajj in the Time of Cholera: Pilgrim Ships and Contagion from Southeast Asia to the Red Sea." In *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, eds. James L. Gelvin and Nile Green, 103-20. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014.



- Taymaz, Erol. "Kuzey Kafkas Dernekleri." In *Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik*, eds. Stéphane Yerasimos et al., 451-60. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
- Tell, Tariq. *The Social and Economic Origins of Monarchy in Jordan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Guns, Gold, and Grain: War and Food Supply in the Making of Transjordan." In *War, Institutions, and Social Change in the Middle East*, ed. Steven Heydemann, 33-58. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.
- Terzibaşoğlu, Yücel. "'A Very Important Requirement of Social Life': Privatisation of Land, Criminalization of Custom, and Land Disputes in Nineteenth-Century Anatolia." In *Les Acteurs des Transformations Foncières Autour de la Méditerranée au XIXe Siècle*, eds. Vanessa Guéno and Didier Cuignard, 25-47. Paris: Karthala, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Land Disputes and Ethno-Politics: Northwestern Anatolia, 1877-1912." In *Land Rights, Ethno-Nationality, and Sovereignty in History*, eds. Stanley L. Engerman and Jacob Metzger, 153-80. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Landlords, Nomads, and Refugees: Struggles over Land and Population Movements in North-Western Anatolia, 1877-1914." Ph.D. diss., Birkbeck College, University of London, 2003.
- Tilly, Charles. "Trust Networks in Transnational Migration." *Sociological Forum* 22, no. 1 (2007): 3-24.
- Todorov, Nikolai. *The Balkan City, 1400-1900*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983.
- Todorov, Petūr. *Agrarnite otnosheniia v Iuzhna Dobrudzha 1878-1944 g. Veliko Tŭrnovo*: VU Kiril i Metodii, 1982.
- Toksöz, Meltem. *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region, 1850-1908*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Toledano, Ehud R. *As If Silent and Absent: Bonds of Enslavement in the Islamic Middle East*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Slavery and Abolition in the Ottoman Middle East*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression, 1840-1890*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Slave Dealers, Women, Pregnancy, and Abortion: The Story of a Circassian Slave-Girl in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Cairo." *Slavery and Abolition* 2, no. 1 (1981): 53-68.
- Totoev, Mikhail S. "K voprosu o pereselenii osetin v Turtsiiu (1859-1865)." *Izvestiia Severo-Osetinskogo NII* 13, no. 1 (1948): 24-46.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Pereselenie osetin v Turtsiiu (1859-1865)." Unpublished manuscript (1940s).

- Toumarkine, Alexandre. "Kafkas ve Balkan Göçmen Dernekleri: Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik." In *Türkiye 'de Sivil Toplum ve Milliyetçilik*, eds. Stéphane Yerasimos et al., 425-50. Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Entre Empire Ottoman et État-Nation Turc: Les Immigrés Musulmans du Caucase et des Balkans du Milieu du XIXe Siècle à Nos Jours." Ph.D. diss., Université Paris IV - Sorbonne, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Oulémas originaires du Lazistan, d'Adjarie, de Circassie et du Daguestan pendant les dernières décennies de l'Empire Ottoman (fin XIXème siècle - début XXème siècles): approche préliminaire." In *Caucasia Between the Ottoman Empire and Iran, 1555-1914*, eds. Raoul Motika and Michael Ursinus, 49-67. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2000.
- Troutt Powell, Eve M. *Tell This in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan and the Ottoman Empire*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012.
- Tsuda, Takeyuki, ed. *Diasporic Homecomings: Ethnic Return Migration in Comparative Perspective*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Tucker, Judith E. *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998.
- Turan, Ömer, ed. *The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-78*. Ankara: Middle East Technical University, 2007.
- Ungureanu, George. "The Avatars of the Miri Land in Post-Ottoman Dobrudja: Judicial Formulas and Ethno-Political Interests." *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* (Rome) 2, no. 3 (2013): 11-18.
- Ünal, Muhittin. *Kurtuluş Savaşı'nı da Çerkeslerin Rolü*. Ankara: TAKAV, 2000.
- Üngör, Uğur Ümit and Mehmet Polatel. *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*. London and New York: Continuum International, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Seeking Like a Nation-State: Young Turk Social Engineering in Eastern Turkey, 1913-50." *Journal of Genocide Research* 10 (2008): 15-39.
- Watenpugh, Keith David. *Bread from Stones: the Middle East and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The League of Nations' Rescue of Armenian Genocide Survivors and the Making of Modern Humanitarianism (1920-1927)." *American Historical Review* 115, no. 5 (2010): 1315-39.
- Weiss, Max. *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

- White, Benjamin Thomas. *The Emergence of Minorities in the Middle East: The Politics of Community in French Mandate Syria*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- White, Richard. *“It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own” : A New History of the American West*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993.
- Williams, Brian Glyn. *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation*. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Hijra and Forced Migration from Nineteenth-Century Russia to the Ottoman Empire. A Critical Analysis of the Great Crimean Tatar Emigration of 1860-1861.” *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 41, no. 1 (2000): 79-108.
- Wilson, Mary C. *King Abdullah, Britain, and the Making of Jordan*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Woodhead, Christine, ed. *The Ottoman World*. Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Wyman, Marc. *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants Return to Europe, 1880-1930*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Yavuz, M. Hakan. “The Transformation of ‘Empire’ through Wars and Reforms: Integration vs. Oppression,” in *War and Diplomacy*, eds. Yavuz and Sluglett, 17-55.
- Yavuz, M. Hakan and Isa Blumi, eds. *War and Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and Their Sociopolitical Implications*. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah, 2013.
- Yavuz, M. Hakan and Peter Sluglett, eds. *War and Diplomacy: The Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878 and the Treaty of Berlin*. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 2011.
- Yel, Selma and Ahmet Gündüz. “XIX. Yüzyılda Çarlık Rusyası’nın Çerkesleri Sürgün Etmesi ve Uzunyayla’ya Yerleştirilmeleri (1860-1865).” *Turkish Studies* 3, no. 4 (2008): 949-83.
- Yemelianova, Galina M. *Radical Islam in the Former Soviet Union*. London: Routledge, 2011.
- Yıldız, Berat. “Uzunyayla’da Çerkes İskanı Üzerine Bazı Notlar ve Örnek İki Köyün 1960’lardaki Etnolojik Tahlili: Anzurey ve Aslanhable.” In *Uzunyayla: Rapor ve Belgeleri*, ed. Muhittin Ünal, vol. 2, 162-82. Ankara: Kaf-Dav, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “Emigrations from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire: An Analysis in the Light of the New Archival Materials.” M.A. diss., Bilkent University, 2006.

- Yosmaoğlu, İpek K. "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913." *The Turkish Studies Association Journal* 27, no. 1-2 (2003): 15-49.
- Yousefian, Sevan N. "The Postwar Repatriation Movement of Armenians to Soviet Armenia, 1945-1948." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2011.
- Yurttaş, Hüseyin. "Fuat Bey'in Erzurum Haritası." *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 15 (2000): 49-71.
- Yüksel, Hamit. "Uzunyayla Çerkeslerinde Din-Gelenek Oydaşmasında Adamey Hafız Ali Efendi'nin Rolü." In *Geçmişten Geleceğe Çerkesler: Kültür, Kimlik ve Siyaset*, eds. Sevdâ Alankuş and Esra Oktay Arı, 293-308. Ankara: Kafkas Yayınları, 2014.
- Yüksel, Hasan. "Kafkas Göçmen Vakıfları." *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 5 (1994): 117-26.
- Zamindar, Vazira F.-Y. *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Zelkina, Anna. "Jihād in the Name of God: Shaykh Shamil as the Religious Leader of the Caucasus." *Central Asian Survey* 21, no. 3 (2002): 249-64.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *In Quest for God and Freedom: The Sufi Response to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus*. London: Hurst & Co, 2000.
- Zetter, Roger. "Reconceptualizing the Myth of Return: Continuity and Transition Amongst the Greek-Cypriot Refugees of 1974." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 12, no. 1 (1999): 1-22.
- Zhemukhov, Sufian. "The Birth of Modern Circassian Nationalism." *Nationalities Papers* 40, no. 4 (2012): 503-24.