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## OTTOMAN ARCHIVES

*Šest stoljeća Otomanskoga Carstva na području Balkana ostavilo je velike tragove. Otomanska država je uspjela razviti i održati harmonične odnose među različitim narodima i vjerama i postići visok stupanj socijalne pravde, zbog čega se može smatrati najmoćnijim i najuniverzalnijim carstvom u svjetskoj povijesti.*

*Turski arhivi imaju veliku važnost ne samo za turski narod i državu, nego i za mnoge zemlje i narode na Srednjem i Bliskom Istoku, u Sredozemlju i na Balkanu. Službeni dokumenti otomanske države i središnjih tijela vlasti čuvaju se u Otomanskom arhivu pri Glavnoj upravi Predsjedništva vlade za državne arhive. Dosta vrijednog gradiva posjeduju i muzeji, knjižnice i pojedine vjerske ustanove. U Otomanskom arhivu čuvaju se dokumenti Carske kancelarije (Divan-ı Hıymayun), Ministarstva financija (Bab-ı Defteri), Visoke porte (Bab-ı Asafi ili Bab-ı Ali) i njihovih mnogobrojnih odjela, zbog čega se Otomanski arhiv s pravom može smatrati državnim arhivom toga razdoblja.*

*Polovica od 150 milijuna dokumenata Otomanskog arhiva odnosi se na balkanske zemlje. Može se reći da je nemoguće pisati povijest Balkana i balkanskih zemalja bez poznavanja dokumenata koji se čuvaju u Otomanskom arhivu. Istraživači iz tih zemalja stoga intenzivno istražuju ovo gradivo, ne samo radi proučavanja povijesti svojih zemalja, nego i kako bi nadopunili vlastite arhive. S nekima od tih zemalja Turska je započela razmjenu mikrofilmova kako bi se olakšalo istraživanje.*

*Sažetak izradio Jozo Ivanović*

As you know the Ottoman Empire existed for six hundreded years. Again as you will remember Balkan area has been under the influence of Ottoman civilization and culture for hundreded years.

But, the Ottoman State while establishing solid and harmonious relations between peoples, religions and creeds and enhancing social justice among the masses had never permitted any discrimination nor made any distinction between the nations under its rule. All these made it the most powerful and universal empire in the world history. Such characteristics bestow upon the Ottoman Empire uniqueness in the history of the world.

The Ottoman State with its political stability, its social justice, its solid structure, its developed and efficacious administration, powerful army and sophisticated military technics, comprehensive judicial system, and activities in culture and architecture, occupies exceptional position on the stage of history.

The law and justice order established in the Balkans and the freedom of religion granted to the peoples on this area facilitated their transition into the Ottoman rule.

The idea of archives in the Ottoman State can be traced back to medieval times; millions of documents kept up safe to the present time bear witness to it.

In the Ottoman State which among Near East and Middle East, Balkan and mediterranean countries had, for centuries, carried out the characteristic of a mighty and powerful state, this idea arised in the early period of its existence. In this respect the Ottoman Archives constitute in the whole Near East, Middle East and Balkan countries an exemplary organization of administrative records established, arranged and kept until our times by a state.

Turkey which inherited from the Ottoman State this rich historical treasure is now one of the few countries possessing qualitatively as well as quantitatively the richest archives on the world. The archives owned by the Turkish people and state are of primordial and indispensable importance not only for Turkey but also for all the countries of the Near East, Middle East and Balkans and some of the Mediterranean countries. Consequently our archival wealth has undoubtedly a national as well as international value and importance.

The official dispatces of the Ottoman State and the central government's archival materials are kept in Istanbul in the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry General Directorate of State Archives. Some of the museums, libraries, offices of the muftis and other official departments possess rich archival materials related to the history of this period.

The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives keeps the records, registers and rolls of central government organizations such as the Imperial Chancery (Divan-ı Hıymayun), the Ministry of Finance (Bab-ı Defteri) and the Sublime Porte (Bab-ı

Asafi or Bab-İ Ali) and their different departments and clerical offices. Due to the particularities of its archival materials the Ottoman Archives carries the feature of being doubtlessly the state archives of that period.

The main characteristic of the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives is its exceptional value not only for bringing light to the cultural, political and economic histories of the Near East, Middle East, Balkan, Mediterranean, Arabian and North African countries but also, in case of necessity, for serving as a basis for substantiating their citizens' claims.

Nowadays researchers from the said countries, in order to establish their own archives, to study, determine and evaluate the questions related to their emergence as independent entities from the sociological point of view, feel the necessity of making researches in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives.

One can say that half of the hundred and fifty millions of documents kept in the Ottoman Archives are relating to the Balkan countries. We have to bear in mind that this region had been for centuries under the Ottoman State's Administration and therefore a great part of the dispatches and letters written out by the Ottoman bureaucracy had been in concern with the Balkans and consequently it goes without saying that documents dealing with the Balkan countries constitute an important part of the Ottoman Archives. Thanks to these documents one can get very important sources concerning the political, military, economic, social, cultural and administrative history of the Balkan countries.

The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives is an unequalled treasure for the history of the Balkans. One can say that there is no possibility of writing the history of the Balkans and the Balkan countries while ignoring the documents kept in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives. Taking into consideration that the documents kept in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives are vital importance both for the history of this region and because they bear witness to the Turkish domination and rule that lasted there for centuries, they are preserved with the greatest care and offered for the access by native and foreign scholars and scientists, researchers, and future generations.

Turkey and some countries like Macedonia, Bulgaria etc., started to exchange the catalogues and microfilms of archival materials to make easy research in Archives.

Turkey have a lot of documents about other countries history, and the other countries have a lot of documents about Ottoman era history. If we want to write correct history, we need this documents. That's why we should exchange our catalogs and some time microfilms of the documents.

Prime Ministry State Archives General Directorate also trying to supporting to other archives with its staff and technical equipment.