

# Being an Ottoman Vlach: On Vlach Identity (Ies), Role and Status in Western Parts of the Ottoman Balkans (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

## Bir Osmanlı Eflakı Olmak: Osmanlı Balkanlarının Batı Bölgelerinde Eflak Kimliği, Görevi ve Vaziyetine Dair (15.-18. Yüzyıllar)

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### *Abstract*

Following the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans, the Vlachs, still a largely nomadic and semi-nomadic population, made special arrangements with the conquerors. They served as a colonising force in newly conquered areas, manning auxiliary military units such as *vojnyuks* and *martoloses*, etc. In exchange, the Ottomans granted the Vlachs wide exemptions and autonomies that made them significantly different from the ordinary subject population – *re'âyâ*. During the course of time, with centralisation and changes to state structure, the economic system and military organisation occurring, many of the services that the Vlachs used to provide for the Ottomans, became superfluous. As a result, the 1520's saw the beginning of Vlach sedentarisation and a reduction of their privileges. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, these privileges resulted in the majority of Vlachs' social standing being equalled to that of the *filuricis*, and later with ordinary *re'âyâ* peasants.

The Vlach response to the pressure of the state was threefold: (1) rebellion and migration to enemy territory, (2) acceptance of new realities and the loss of Vlach quality, and (3), assimilation with the “ruling people” by means of Islamisation. The 18<sup>th</sup> century, on the other hand, witnessed the rise of “conquering Orthodox merchants,” originally Vlachs, who distinguished themselves through wealth acquired in international trade. Despite their success, however, they once again, relatively quickly assimilated into host societies, following the fate of their nomadic predecessors.

**Keywords:** Vlachs, Ottoman Empire, Western Balkans, Serbian Orthodox Church, *vojnyuks*, *martoloses*

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## Özet

Balkanlarda Osmanlı fetihlerinin ardından, hala geniş ölçüde göçebe ve yarı göçebe olan Eflaklar, fatihlerle özel bir anlaşma yaptılar. Yeni fethedilen bölgelerde kolonizatör güçler olarak, *voynuklar* ve *martoloslar* gibi yedek askeri kuvvetler olarak hizmet ettiler. Bunun karşılığında Osmanlılar Eflaklara, geniş muafiyetler ve muhtariyetler bağışlamış ve bu durum onları sıradan tabi halktan - *re'âyâ*'dan önemli ölçüde farklı kılmıştır. Zaman içinde, merkezileşme ve devlet yapısında, ekonomik sistemde ve askeri teşkilattaki değişimlerle birlikte Eflakların verdiği hizmetler gereksiz hale geldi. 1520'lerde yüzyılın sonlarına kadar sürecek olan Eflakların yerleşik hayata geçiş ve muafiyetlerinin azaltılma süreci başladı ve Eflak çoğunluğu ilk önce filuricilerle ve daha sonra sıradan *re'âyâ* köylüsü ile eşitlendi. Eflakların devlet baskısına tepkileri üç başlıktan oluşuyordu: (1) ayaklanma ve düşman topraklarına göç (2) yeni gerçekleri kabul etme ve Eflak niteliğini kaybetme (3) İslamı kabul etme yoluyla "yönetici halk" ile asimilasyon. Diğer taraftan, 18. yüzyıl uluslararası ticarete zengin olarak öne çıkmayı başarmış olan Eflak asıllı "fatih Ortodoks tüccarlar"ın yükselişine şahitlik etti. Ancak tüm başarılarına rağmen, onlar da oldukça hızlı bir şekilde, göçebe atalarının kaderini takip ederek, ev sahibi topluluk içerisinde asimile oldular.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Eflaklar, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Batı Balkanlar, Sırp Ortodoks Kilisesi, *voynuklar*, *martoloslar*

## *Ambiguous Origin(s), Disputed Identity(ies)*

Despite the existence of large numbers of studies,<sup>1</sup> the issue of the origin and identity of the Vlachs still continues to raise controversies in Balkan historiographies. Instead of a thorough analysis, let us briefly summarise the problem, despite the danger of unavoidable generalizations: while historians from Balkan Slavic states, with minor exceptions, are striving to prove Slavic character of the Vlachs, minimizing non-Slavic elements, others, like Romanian or to certain extent Albanian historians, are insisting on their exclusive ancient autochthonous Balcanic, i.e. pre-Slavic origin.<sup>2</sup> Thus, speaking of the origin of the ancient and medieval Vlachs, Roman(ised) people might become modern

<sup>1</sup> For example, the praiseworthy project *vlachs.ro*, run by the Department of Romanian and South Eastern European History, Faculty of History, The University of Bucharest, collected a bibliography of 622 titles, which is, although the project is meticulously and scrupulously conducted, a number that is by no means definite; see: <<http://www.vlachs.ro/Bibliography.htm>> (last accessed: December 4, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> For an example see papers and discussion from the international conference on Vlachs in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries held in Sarajevo in 1973: "Simpozijum – Vlasi u XV i XVI vijeku (Sarajevo, 13-16. XI 1973)," *Radovi Akademije i nauka Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 73, Odjeljenje društvenih nauka, Vol. 22, Sarajevo 1983, pp. 73-177.

Romanians, while “Illyrians” might turn into present-day Albanians. Alternatively, South Slav (i.e., former Yugoslav) historiographies insist on exclusive Slavic character (if not origin) of the Vlachs. As a result, it became a norm (though nowadays more or less abandoned) to write the initial letter of Vlach name in lower-case – *vlab* instead of *Vlab* – in order to emphasize that this community was based by no means on unique ethnic/national identity, but common interest (animal husbandry) and a distinctive, nomadic/semi-nomadic and pastoral way of living. Thus, the term *vlab* was denoting a profession or a way of life, but not ethnicity (*Vlab*), which was denied.

On the other hand, South Slavic historiographies are deeply divided on the question of religious affiliation of the Vlachs. In Croatian and Serbian historiographies in particular, the issue of confessional identity of the Vlachs in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern times, i.e. their Christian Orthodoxy or Catholicism, is elevated into the marker of modern Serbian or Croatian national identity. This is furthermore, sometimes understood to be the proof of “historical rights” of modern nations on certain territories. As a result, unfortunately, ancient and pre-modern identities of the Vlachs are often “modernized” to fit into political vocabulary, while a historical issue is vulgarized by its politicisation and inevitable ahistorisation.

The term “Vlach” originates from the old Germanic word *Walb/Walab*, or, *Welsch*, meaning “Italian,” “French,” or generally “Roman.” Similarly, in medieval Croatian documents in Latin language, the term is translated as *Latinus*, i.e., “Latin.”<sup>3</sup> As for the question of the origin of the Vlachs, let us resort to the “safety” of the middle of the road approach. Despite all of the vagueness and differing opinions of the issue, in general it seems that the Vlachs were descendants of an indigenous Romanised pre-Slavic Balkan population living in the highlands of the central Balkans, such as Illyrians, Thracians, and Dacians, probably with a minor addition of late comers such as Avars and early Slavs.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the population of Roman towns and villages in the Balkans that disappeared after the migration of the Slavs, the nomadic/semi-nomadic Vlachs survived the Slavic wave as an individual entity. In the course of time, however, under the influence of a Slavic environment the outnumbered Vlachs started to Slavicise and at first, became bilingual. By contrast, the Slavic population in some areas adopted the transhumant life-style of the Vlachs.

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<sup>3</sup> Petar Skok, “Vlah,” *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, Vol. 8, Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod, Zagreb 1971, p. 514.

<sup>4</sup> Zef Mirdita, *Vlasi: starobalkanski narod (od povijesne pojave do danas)*, Hrvatski institut za povijest, Zagreb 2009, p. 50; Traian Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds. The First and Last Europe*, M.E. Sharpe, Armonk-London 1994, pp. 127-128.

Branislav Đurđev, the classical Yugoslav authority on Vlachs, proposed the name “Vlach,” although initially an ethnonym, acquired a socio-economic dimension, and became a term for a semi-nomadic herdsman society organized on the basis of a clan-system, different from the sedentary majority of feudal Balkan societies.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, it should not go without notice that Romanian scholar Nicoară Beldiceanu, another great scholar of the Ottoman Balkans, rejected the notion that the Vlachs in the Ottoman sources were pastoral population of Slav origin, and insisted that “the Porte used the term in its ethnic sense.”<sup>6</sup>

In medieval Balkan states, the Vlachs were engaged in certain military services, transport of goods, and colonisation of empty lands; they held a special position and specific legal status, different from other populace.<sup>7</sup> The Balkan states kept the Vlachs isolated from the sedentary population to prevent possible nomadisation of peasants. The feudal system however, started gradually absorbing autonomies of Vlach herdsman and their clan structure, in favour of a sedentary way of life.

The Ottoman conquest and dissolution of Balkan states radically changed the situation; once the pressure of feudal structure was gone, waves of the Vlach migrations submerged certain areas of the Balkans. It seems that movement of the Vlachs was stimulated and encouraged by the Ottomans, who were well aware of the benefits that the Vlach military and their colonising potential represented.<sup>8</sup> In Anatolia and the southeastern Balkans, the Ottomans were using Turkmen tribes – nomadic and semi-nomadic herdsman, known as the Yürüks, as auxiliary troops and colonising agents. However, the fact that the capacities of the Yürüks were not inexhaustible, as well as the geographic factors and climate peculiarities of the Balkans, prevented their spread further than Macedonia and Bulgaria. Therefore, an adequate substitution and

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<sup>5</sup> Branislav Đurđev, “O vojnicima sa osvrtom na razvoj turskog feudalizma i na pitanje bosanskog agaluka,” *Glasnik zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, n. s., 2 (1947), pp. 108-109; Branislav Đurđev, “O uticaju turske vladavine na razvitak naših naroda,” *Godišnjak Istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, 2 (1950), p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Nicoară Beldiceanu, “Les Valaques de Bosnie à la fin du XVe siècle et leurs institutions,” in: Nicoară Beldiceanu, *Le monde ottoman des Balkans (1402-1566). Institutions, société, économie*, Variorum Reprints, London 1976, n. 4, pp. 122-123.

<sup>7</sup> Skok, “Vlah,” pp. 514-515; Nada Klaić, “Položaj vlahu u XIV i XV stoljeću u hrvatskim zemljama,” in: “Simpozijum – Vlasi u XV i XVI vijeku (Sarajevo, 13-16. XI 1973),” *Radovi Akademije i nauka Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 73, Odjeljenje društvenih nauka, Vol. 22, Sarajevo 1983, pp. 107-111.

<sup>8</sup> Branislav Đurđev, “O knezovima pod turskom upravom,” *Istoriski časopis*, 1, 1-2 (1948), pp. 17-18.

assistance for further conquests in the Balkans was found in the Vlachs.<sup>9</sup> However, this does not mean that the Yürüks were completely absent from the Western Balkans. In the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Yürüks are periodically found in some Balkan mines where there were sent by the authorities to work on the production of cannonballs.<sup>10</sup> In the period from 1568 to 1582, the Yürüks from Ofçebolu (Ovçe pole), Tekirdağı, Selanik (Thessaloniki), Naldöken, Kocacık, Yanbolu, Dobruca and Vize, served in the mines of Rudnik and Bac in the *sancak* of Semendire (Smederevo) in Serbia.<sup>11</sup> Interestingly enough, in addition to the Yürüks of Selanik, another Turkish ethnic group served in the mines of Rudnik and Bac as well – the Tatars from Tirhala, and Tatars of Aktav and Bozapa.<sup>12</sup>

The Yürüks are found even further west, in Bosnia, near the very border with the Habsburgs in Croatia. After the discovery of an iron mine close to Kamengrad near Banja Luka, i.e., “between the fortresses of Kamengrad and Ključ,” the Porte ordered casting of iron cannonballs to begin. They sent master workmen, and assigned the population of two villages to the mine on October 16, 1571.<sup>13</sup> In order to improve and enlarge the production in Kamengrad, the authorities decided to involve the Yürüks in the venture, embracing the production and organisational structures employed in Bac and Rudnik. In 1574, the Yürüks of unspecified origin managed to produce thousands of cannonballs (*yumarlak*) despite the unavailability of proper miners

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<sup>9</sup> Đurđev, “O uticaju turske vladavine,” p. 38; cf. Halil İnalçık, “Od Stefana Dušana do Osmanskog Carstva,” *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, 3-4 (1952-53), n. 75, p. 34; Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Sürgünler (III),” *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, 15 (1953-1954), p. 234; Aleksey Kal’onski, *Yurutsite*, Prosveta, Sofia 2007, p. 87.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Olga Zirojević, “Juruci u rudnicima,” in: *Etnogeneza na Jurucite i nivnoto naseluvanje na Balkanot. Materijali od Trkaleznata masa, održana vo Skopje na 17 i 18 noembri 1983 godina*, Makedonska akademija na naukite i umetnostite, Skopje 1986, pp. 49-56. On technology of production of cannon balls in Serbia and Bosnia in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries see: Đurđica Petrović, “Neki podaci o izradi topovskih kugli u Srbiji i Bosni u XV i XVI veku,” *Vesnik Vojnog muzeja u Beogradu*, 11-12 (1966), pp. 162-183.

<sup>11</sup> 7 *Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975-976/1567-1568) <Topkubası>*, Vol. 1, T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara 1997, no. 1070, p. 370, no. 1064, p. 368; cf. Ahmed Refik, *Anadolu’da Türk Aşiretleri (966-1200)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Enderun Kitabevi, İstanbul 1989, p. 10, no. 17, pp. 14-15, no. 86, p. 45; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, *Rumeli’de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlâd-ı Fâtihân*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, İşaret Yayınları, İstanbul 2008, pp. 78, 169; Robert Anhegger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bergbaus im Osmanischen Reich. I Europäische Türkei, Bd. 1*, İstanbul 1943, pp. 148-149, 300; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, İstanbul (henceforth: BOA), Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 46, no. 840, p. 362.

<sup>12</sup> 7 *Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, Vol. 1, no. 3, p. 1; Gökbilgin, *Rumeli’de Yürükler*, p. 169.

<sup>13</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 16, no. 47, p. 27. Cf. Anhegger, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bergbaus*, p. 139.

(*kömiürcü*) and well diggers (*kuyucu*).<sup>14</sup> In the following years, the Yürüks from Tekirdağı, Ofçebolu, Selanik, and Naldöken, as well as a group of Tatars, were employed in six month shifts in this Bosnian mine.<sup>15</sup> The Yürüks of Tekirdağı were the last known Yürüks to work in Kamengrad in 1604.<sup>16</sup> It seems that while the production of cannonballs in Bac was abandoned in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the production in Kamengrad continued into the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and possibly even into the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>17</sup>

It appeared that Yürüks were not overly enthusiastic about their service in Balkan mines. Their disdain was evident as they declined to come to Kamengrad, or showed up late, on several occasions, whilst the authorities were trying to ensure their arrival by threatening heavy punishment (*siyâseten*) and sending culprits to galleys.<sup>18</sup> In general, the Porte was eager to prevent individual abandonment of the Yürük corps and proclaimed that even sons of the Yürüks were not allowed to abandon the Yürük post or status (*Yürüklük*).<sup>19</sup> As is apparent from the Porte's concerns and measures it took to maintain the workforce, the production of iron cannonballs and *darbzen* type of cannon shells in this area was massive and held the utmost importance for the Ottoman state, due to its proximity to the border and its richness in iron.<sup>20</sup>

The main reason the Yürüks were engaged in the mines of Bosnia and Serbia was the fact they specialised in cannonball casting, an operation that could not be conferred to non-specialists. In the period between 1578 and 1605, the Yürüks were officially mentioned in *kânûns* as assistant workers in mines, along with *ma'dencis* and *kürecis*, who were proper miners.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly enough, a population of similar character, the Vlachs, who were abundant in the region, were not used in cannonball production, apart from indirect services such as protection of the mines and miners and the like.<sup>22</sup> Whether the Porte

<sup>14</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 26, no. 744, p. 259.

<sup>15</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 27, no. 151, p. 60; Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, no. 46, pp. 24-25, no. 48, pp. 25-26, no. 106, p. 56; Petrović, "Neki podaci o izradi topovskih kugli," p. 177; BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 42, no. 674, p. 216.

<sup>16</sup> Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, no. 112, p. 60.

<sup>17</sup> Petrović, "Neki podaci o izradi topovskih kugli," pp. 179-180.

<sup>18</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 27, no. 151, p. 60; Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, no. 112, p. 60. Cf. Petrović, "Neki podaci o izradi topovskih kugli," p. 177.

<sup>19</sup> Refik, *Anadolu'da Türk Aşiretleri*, no. 113, pp. 61-62; Zirojević, *Juruci u rudnicima*, pp. 53-54.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Petrović, "Neki podaci o izradi topovskih kugli," pp. 172-174; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapukulu Ocakları*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Vol. 2, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1988, pp. 46-48; Anhegger, *Beitrag zur Geschichte des Bergbaus*, pp. 138-140, 148-150.

<sup>21</sup> Anhegger, *Beitrag zur Geschichte des Bergbaus*, pp. 93, 291.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Skender Rizaj, "Uloga vlahâ primicûra u rudarstvu Kosova i Srbije u XV i XVI vijeku," in: "Simpozijum – Vlasi u XV i XVI vijeku (Sarajevo, 13-16. XI 1973)," *Radovi*

thought that Turkish Muslim element would be more trustworthy in such a delicate and important military and strategic project than unpredictable Christian Vlachs that might opt for the enemy, remains in the domain of speculation.

Apart from their role in cannonball production, the Yürüks of Selanik were mentioned in their military role in the protection of the *sancaq* of Začasna (Čazma) on the border towards Croatia in 1583, where their commander Mustafa was obliged to stay until there was a need.<sup>23</sup> In general, however, there was no permanent settlement of the Yürük tribes in the western parts of Balkans and apart from the Yürük seasonal service in the mines, the Porte used their Balkan non-Muslim equivalent, the Vlachs, as main assistants to the state in various fields, as well as a powerful colonising force.

Ottoman conquest of the Balkans caused important demographic turmoil and triggered great population movements. Migrations of the Vlachs, as the most significant phenomenon, turned some of once sedentary regions into semi-nomadic ones, while agriculture was substituted with animal husbandry. The change however, did not happen only in deserted regions where the Vlachs replaced previous peasant populations; in some regions, peasants themselves turned to animal husbandry and semi-nomadic ways of life, and revived patriarchal, clan, and tribal structures. It seems that this development was not limited only to Slavs of the Balkans but influenced Albanians and to a certain degree, Greeks as well.<sup>24</sup> A similar process also took place in the time of crisis in Anatolia.<sup>25</sup> The exchange of agriculture with animal husbandry, through its easier and more lucrative modes of production, together with the return to the greater security of clan and tribal structures, developed as the preferred solution for a considerable part of the agricultural population in both Anatolia and the Balkans.<sup>26</sup> A useful framework for studying the phenomenon is provided by Karl Kaser's concept of the Balkan family household and the system of patrilineal clan groups that originated from the old autochthonous cultural pattern of Balkan patriarchy, which emerged within the context of animal husbandry and pastoral economy in mountain regions of western and central

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*Akademije i nauka Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 73, Odjeljenje društvenih nauka, Vol. 22, Sarajevo 1983, pp. 135-138.

<sup>23</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 48, no. 1019, p. 347.

<sup>24</sup> Đurđev, "O knezovima", p. 17-18; Đurđev, "O utjecaju turske vladavine", pp. 42-44; Karl Kaser, *Porodica i srodstvo na Balkanu. Analiza jedne kulture koja nestaje*, trans. by Olivera Durbaba, Udruženje za društvenu istoriju, Beograd 2002, p. 84 (originally published in as: *Familie und Verwandtschaft auf dem Balkan. Analyse einer untergehenden Kultur*, Böhlau Verlag, Wien-Köln-Weimar 1995).

<sup>25</sup> Suraiya Faroqhi, "Rural Society in Anatolia and the Balkans during the Sixteenth Century, II", *Turcica*, 11 (1979), p. 115.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Đurđev, "O knezovima", p. 18.

parts of the Balkans.<sup>27</sup> It is important to bear in mind that this pattern does not contain any ethnic, but only cultural components: thus, Slavic, Albanian and Greek herdsmen occasionally might have had more common features among themselves, than with agriculturalists of the same ethnic origin.<sup>28</sup> In the Ottoman environment, this cultural pattern was solidified and animal husbandry reached from mountains into valleys and spread far beyond its original core, following the direction of Ottoman conquests.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the Vlach migrations did not stop on the Ottoman borders, but poured into neighbouring Dalmatia and Croatia.<sup>30</sup>

The Ottoman chancery used the term “Vlach” (*Eflak*, pl. *Eflakân*, *Eflakân tâ’ifesi*) as an administrative fiscal term for pastoral clan groups performing certain services for the state, including those of military character, in exchange for tax exemptions or reductions.<sup>31</sup> Since ethnic or religious identities of *Eflaks* were not a matter of the chancery’s concern, but the groups’ services to the state, pastoral mode of production, and taxes they were required to pay (*resm-i filuri*), the term *Eflak* in the Ottoman documents might sometimes denote population that is not in a strict sense Vlach. Hence, a number of smaller groups with a status similar to or the same as that of the Vlachs were soon absorbed under the Vlach name.<sup>32</sup> According to *kânûnnâme* of Bosnia from 1542, a group of *derbendcis* (pass guards) that was previously paying taxes and *öşr* according to the *derbendci* custom, became *Vlach* and started to pay the *resm-i filuri* tax like the Vlachs.<sup>33</sup> In this case, a decisive factor to determine who the “Vlach” were, was the payment of the *filuri* tax. Population subjected to the payment of the *harâc* tax – *harâc-güçârlar* – sometimes resorted to adoption of

<sup>27</sup> Kaser, *Porodica i srodstvo*, p. 65. Cf. Nenad Moaçanin, “The Question of Vlach Autonomy Reconsidered,” in: *Essays on Ottoman Civilization. Archiv Orientalni. Supplementa VII (1998). Proceedings of the XIIIth Congress of CIEPO*, Prague 1998, p. 263; Nenad Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb 1999, p. 76.

<sup>28</sup> Kaser, *Porodica i srodstvo*, p. 83.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 106.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

<sup>31</sup> Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, p. 79. This use should not be confused with the term *Eflak* when it designates Danubian Wallachia, i.e., historical Romania, or its inhabitants; cf. Kemal Karpat, “Eflak”, *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Istanbul 1994, Vol. 10, pp. 466-469.

<sup>32</sup> Moaçanin, “The Question of Vlach Autonomy”, p. 268; Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, pp. 84-85; Nicoară Beldiceanu, “La région de Timok-Morava dans les documents de Mehmed II et de Selim I”, in: *Le monde ottoman des Balkans (1402-1566). Institutions, société, économie*, Variorum Reprints, London 1976, p. 121.

<sup>33</sup> “sâir derbendciler âdeti üzere rüsûmların ve öşürlerin edâ iderlerdi hâliyâ zikr olan varoşlarda sâkin olan tâife-i keferu Eflak olub sâ’ir Eflaklar gibi filuri rüsûmi vaz’ olunub.” Branislav Đurđev, Nedim Filipović, Hamid Hadžibegić, Muhamed Mujić and Hazim Šabanović, *Kanuni i kanun-name za Bosanski, Hercegovački, Zvornički, Klisčki, Crnogorski i Škadarški Sandžak*, Orijeentalni institut, Sarajevo 1957, p. 62 (henceforth: *Kanuni i kanun-name*); cf. Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, p. 84.



the Vlach identity in order to reduce the amount of ordinary *re'âyâ* taxes to the level of privileged Vlach dues – *rüsûm-i Eflakiye*, as was established in *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Herzegovina of 1482-1485.<sup>34</sup> Alternately, *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Požega (Pojege) of 1545 explicitly prohibited the settlement of *re'âyâ* on the Vlach land and their “acceptance into Vlach-ness”: “If *re'âyâ* other than those [Vlachs] come from outside, they should not be accepted into the Vlach-ness (*Eflaklık*) and they should be sent back to their places.”<sup>35</sup> Clearly, the government’s prohibition in this case was determined by the concern over the loss of tax revenues. Elements of the population unable to pay full amount of *re'âyâ* taxes – *öşr*, *harâc*, *ispence* and other taxes, due to the poverty and poor quality of the land, as was the case in the *vilâyet* of Montenegro (Karadağ) according to *kânûnnâmes* of 1523, 1529-1536, and 1570, were exempted in exchange for the payment of 55 *akçe*, according to the Vlach custom (*âdet-i Eflakiye*).<sup>36</sup> However, the decision of the Ottoman government to substitute *re'âyâ* taxes with *âdet-i Eflakiye* taxes may have been partly influenced by the warlike tribal character of the Montenegrin society, that corresponded to the “Balkan family household” pattern recognised by the Ottomans through the *Eflakiye* privileges. In addition, *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Bosnia of 1565 and *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Klis of 1574 specified that *re'âyâ* was cultivating *filuri* lands in addition to their *çiftlik*s on *sîpâhî tîmâr*s, were paying *filuri* tax (*resm-i filuri*) according to the Vlach custom.<sup>37</sup> As seen in the examples above under certain conditions, such as payment of the Vlach taxes, the administration might have recognized Vlach status to certain non-Vlach groups. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that an undeterminable though considerable segment of Vlach population originated from non-Vlach groups whom acquired the Vlach status by one way or another.

Similarly to the term “Vlach,” the term “Yürük” had an administrative meaning as well. According to Çetintürk, it lost its exclusive ethnic quality and became predominantly “a legal term” when it entered administrative use along with the introduction of Yürük *kânûns* in the time of Mehmed II.<sup>38</sup> The terms *yürüklük* and *yürükçülük* (“Yürük-ness”) in Ottoman administrative sources,

<sup>34</sup> Ahmed Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tablîleri*, Vol. 2, Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, İstanbul 1990, pp. 408, 410 (henceforth: *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*). *Berât* of 1489-1491, with instructions for the Vlach census in the *sancak* of Smederevo contains almost the same text, see: Dušanka Bojanić, *Turski zakoni i zakonski propisi iz XV i XVI veka za smederensku, krševačku i vidinsku oblast*, Istorijski institut, Belgrade 1974, pp. 93-96. *Kânûn* of the Smederevo Vlachs of 1517-1532 seems to be the copy of Herzegovian *kânûn* and *berât* published by Bojanić, see: *Osmanlı Kanunnâmleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 491-499.

<sup>35</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 334, 337.

<sup>36</sup> *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 156-157, 160; cf. pp. 169-170, 171-172 for *kânûnnâme* of 935-943/1529-1536, and 173-173, 175-176 for *kânûnnâme* of 977-978/1570.

<sup>37</sup> *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 78, 89, 133-134, 137.

<sup>38</sup> Salâhaddin Çetintürk, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yürük Sınıfı Ve Hukuki Statüleri,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2 (1943), p. 109.

denote primarily a distinctive social category, militarised status and special tax regulation.<sup>39</sup> For those Yürüks who ceased to perform prescribed military and other services similar to those of the Vlachs and switched to agriculture, thus becoming *re'âyâ* on *îmârs*, scribes wrote a note "left the Yürük-ness" (*yürüklükten çıktı*).<sup>40</sup> In contrast, due to the term's administrative quality, a non-Yürük might have become Yürük in exchange for the performance of certain state or public services, by the change of tax category or, upon entrance into the Yürük order as a replacement for a deceased Yürük.<sup>41</sup> According to *kâmûn* of the Yürüks from the time of Süleyman the Magnificent, in the case of the required recruitment of new members of the Yürük units, candidates were to be found not only among the sons of the Yürüks, but also among their freed slaves, immigrants of Anatolia living among the Yürüks, as well as converts to Islam.<sup>42</sup> Hence, according to Ottoman understanding, the Yürük status was defined by membership in the order and performance of associated services, not necessarily by one's Yürük origin.

Despite the irrelevance of ethnic origin on the administrative definition of the Vlach status, its general significance should not be overlooked. While the importance of Catholic or Muslim Vlachs, or other, non-Serbian elements should not be underestimated, it seems that the greatest part of the Vlachs in the western Balkans was Orthodox Christian and Serbian(ised), often still bilingual,<sup>43</sup> i.e. *Vlacho-Serbian*. Benedikt Kuripešić (Benedict Curipeschitz), a Habsburg envoy to Süleyman the Magnificent, who travelled through the Balkans in 1530-1531, as one of "the nations and religions" in "Lower Bosnia" (western part of Bosnia), mentioned the Serbs (Surffen), also called the Vlachs (Wallachen), *Ćići* (Zitzen) and *Martoloses* (Marcholosen). According to Kuripešić, they came from Smederevo and Belgrade, and belonged to the religion of St. Paul.<sup>44</sup> In 1658, another traveller, Frenchman Quiclet, who travelled by coach from the Bosnian town of Zvornik (İzvornik) to Istanbul, informed that all coachmen in the region were Serbs, also known as *Morlakes*.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Kal'onski, *Yurutsite*, p. 19.

<sup>40</sup> Gökbilgin, *Rumeli'de Yürükler*, p. 48.

<sup>41</sup> Kal'onski, *Yurutsite*, p. 99-100.

<sup>42</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *XV ve XVIncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî ve Ekonominin Hükûkî ve Malî Esasları. Vol. I. Kanunlar*, Bühraneddin Matbaası, Istanbul 1943, p. 261 (henceforth: Barkan: *Kanunlar*). Cf. Kal'onski, *Yurutsite*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>43</sup> Branislav Đurđev, "Nešto o vlaškim starješinama starješinama pod turskom upravom", *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, 52 (1940), pp. 49-50; cf. Nenad Moaćanin, "Croatia and Bosnia: An 'Eternal' Movement from Integration to Dissolution and Back", in: Almut Bues, ed., *Zones of Fracture in Modern Europe: the Baltic Countries, the Balkans, and Northern Italy*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2005, pp. 99-107.

<sup>44</sup> Benedikt Kuripešić, *Putopis kroz Bosnu, Srbiju, Bugarsku i Rumeliju 1530.*, tr. by Đorđe Pejanović, Čigoja štampa, Beograd 2001, pp. 26-27.

<sup>45</sup> *Priče francuskih putnika sa puta po Otomanskoj Bosni*, tr. and ed. by Miroslav Karaulac, Matica Srpska, Novi Sad 1998, p. 114.

According to the explanation of a Dalmatian historian from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Ivan Lučić (Lucius), the Italian term *Morlacco* originates from Greek *Μαυροβλάχος*, as a combination of the terms *Maurus* and *Vlach*, i.e., “Black Vlach.”<sup>46</sup> Similar explanation is provided by a Lučić’s friend, a historian of the War of Candia and native of Šibenik, Franjo Difnik (Divnić): “In Slavic language they are called Vlachs; however, since they originate from those who are in Bulgaria called Maurovlachs, Italians corruptly call them Morlaks.”<sup>47</sup> In the Dalmatian context and Venetian/Italian use, however, the term “Morlacco” included all Christian Slavic pastoralists of the Dalmatian hinterland and further regions, Catholic Croats, as well as Orthodox Christian Serbs. Dissimilarly, the South Slavic term *Karanlah* (Turkish *kara* “black”), is etymologically the same as *Morlacco*, but semantically slightly different: it denotes Vlachs in general, but it may also refer to people from Moldavia, in historical sources known as Maurovalachia, in Ottoman *Kara Eflak*, “Black Wallachia,” or *Kara Boğdan*.<sup>48</sup>

More reliable sources than traveller accounts are Ottoman documents from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a group of *fermâns*, *berâts* and *hüccets*, in which the term *Eflak* is combined with the terms *Sırf/Serf* (“Serb”) and *Rum* (in wider meaning – “Orthodox Christian,” not exclusively “Greek”). The second, rather ambiguous term *Rum*, originates from the identification of the Byzantium with the Eastern Roman Empire, Greek *Rhōmania*, which borrowed its name to the Ottoman possessions in the Balkans as well: *Rum-ili* (“Land of the Romans”), i.e., *Rumelia*. Vlach adoption of Orthodox Christianity, as well as Byzantine culture, tradition and heritage might led to their identification with the Byzantines as *Rums*, which seems to be acknowledged by the Ottomans as well. It shall be emphasised that the *Rum* identity was much wider than the Greek one, since it integrated all followers of the Orthodox Church, the institution that outlived the Byzantine Empire. On the other hand, given that Greek culture and language were predominant, a number of the Vlachs eventually adopted Greek identity, becoming either Greek, or Graeco-Vlachs/Romano-Vlachs, especially in south-central parts of the Balkans.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the Vlachs’ own ethnic name of the *Aromuns* might have eased the process of identification with *Rums* as well.

In Ottoman administrative use the following combinations of terms are documented: *Rum ve Sırf ve Eflak keferesinin ayinleri* (“rites/customs of the

<sup>46</sup> Grga Novak, “Morlaci (Vlasi) gledani s mletačke strane”, *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje Južnih Slavena*, 45 (1971), p. 600.

<sup>47</sup> Franjo Difnik, *Povijest Kandijskog rata u Dalmaciji*, tr. by Smiljana and Duško Kečkemet, Književni krug, Split 1986, p. 128.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Stoianovich, *Balkan Worlds*, p. 127; Novak, “Morlaci (Vlasi)”, p. 600.

<sup>49</sup> See: D. J. Popović, *O Cincarima. Prilozi pitanju postanka našeg građanskog društva*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Prometaj, Belgrade 2008, pp. 17-18. Cf. Traian Stoianovich, “The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant”, *The Journal of Economic History*, 20, 2 (1960), p. 291.

Orthodox Christian, Serbian and Vlach unbelievers”) in *fermân* from 1615,<sup>50</sup> *Serf ve Eflak milletinde olan râhibler* (“priests in the Serbian and Vlach *millet*”) in a *berât* from 1626,<sup>51</sup> *Rum ve Serf ve Eflak dînleri* (“the creeds of the Orthodox Christians, Serbs and Vlachs”) in *hüccet* from 1662,<sup>52</sup> or *Rum ve Serf ve Eflak piskoposları* (“bishops of the Orthodox Christians, Serbs and Vlachs”) in *fermân* from 1669,<sup>53</sup> *Rum ve Serf ve Eflak keferesi patrikleri* (“patriarchs of the Orthodox Christian, Serb and Vlach infidels”) in *hüccet* of 1688,<sup>54</sup> etc. The use of multiple names – *Rum*, *Serf/Serf* and *Eflak* – however, does not necessary mean the existence of three distinct identities at the given date, but probably reflects earlier realities. By that time, the Vlachs were already Slavicised to a large degree. This is perhaps possible to determine from the expression *Serf ve Eflak milleti*, where the term *millet* is used in singular, possibly indicating the oneness of *Serfs* and *Eflaks*. If this presumption is correct, the amalgamation of the names “Serb” and “Vlach” indicates that the process of sedentarization of the Orthodox Vlachs and their gradual fusion with Serbian peasant population in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century reached a high level and was officially acknowledged by the Ottoman chancery.<sup>55</sup> *Kânûnnâmes* of the *sancak* of Hersek (Herzegovina) depicted the process in detail. Submission of the Vlachs of Herzegovina to *re’âyâ* taxes started in the years after the battle of Mohács (Mohaç) (1526). *Kânûnnâme* from 1528-1532 specified the submission of the Vlachs to the *re’âyâ* taxes was done “according to the Serbian custom” (*Serf âdetince*) upon the sultan’s order.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the Vlachs were subjected to the status of neighbouring *re’âyâ* population of Serbian origin, according to the “Serbian *kânûn*” (*Serf tâ’îjesi kânûni*) and registered into the “Serbian *defter*” (*Serf defteri*).<sup>57</sup> Some thirty years later, *kânûnnâme* of 1585 reported that the Vlachs that settled on deserted lands of Serbian villages in Herzegovina apart from the *filuri* tax, as the genuine Vlach tax, had to pay *ösr* to *sipâbî* according to the “Serbian custom” (*Serf âdeti*).<sup>58</sup> To sum up, it seems that a fiscal status of certain groups or lands they inhabited, might eventually had led to the

<sup>50</sup> Vančo Bošković, “Turski dokumenti o odnosu katoličke i pravoslavne crkve u Bosni, Hercegovini i Dalmaciji (XV-XVII vek)”, *Spomenik Srpske akademije nauka i umjetnosti*, Vol. 131, Odeljenje istorijskih nauka Vol. 7, Belgrade 1992, p. 29, doc. 17 (1024/1615).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36, doc. 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41, doc. 25.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48, doc. 29.

<sup>54</sup> Archive of the monastery of Fojnica, Acta turcica, file 3, VIII/381.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Nedim Filipović, “Islamizacija vlahi u Bosni i Hercegovini u XV i XVI vijeku”, in: “Simpozijum – Vlasi u XV i XVI vijeku (Sarajevo, 13-16. XI 1973)”, *Radovi Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 73, Odeljenje društvenih nauka, Vol. 22, Sarajevo 1983, p. 142. Filipović claims that joint expression “Vlachs and Serbs” is present in Ottoman documents since the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but I was not able to locate any of them.

<sup>56</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 552, 554.

<sup>57</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 551, 554.

<sup>58</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 8, pp. 261, 263.

identification of these groups through their fiscal status, disregarding their actual origin. In this sense, the coexistence of Vlachs and Serbs in the same villages after sedentarization, subject to statuses and taxes bearing Serbian names, along with the sameness of religion and eventually language, in the end resulted in their assimilation into the Serbian ethnos.

At the same time, the process of expansion of the Serbian name over Orthodox Christians under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church, i.e., the Patriarchate of Peć, covering a vast area from northern Macedonia and Kosovo to southern Hungary and from western Bulgaria to the Adriatic Sea, was mediated through the Church and clergy. The Serbian Orthodox Church was closely bound to the Serbian medieval state since its establishment in 1219. When Serbia lost its independence, the church continued to nurture traditions of the state and even incorporated the cult of the Nemanjić dynasty into the liturgy. In addition, the see of the patriarch of Peć carried titles such as “the Serbian throne” (*preston srbski*) or “the throne of all Serbian lands” (*preston vse srbske zemlje*), while the patriarch was entitled “the Serbian patriarch,” or “the patriarch of all Serbian lands.” The expression “the Serbian lands” is not confined to the historical territory of the medieval Serbian state, but included all lands under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć, in the above mentioned extent. Consequently, all Slavic/Slavicised Orthodox Christians under the jurisdiction of the Serbian patriarch were eventually identified as Serbs.<sup>59</sup> However, this process was long lasting and in particular on the level of self-identification, did not finish until modern times and the rise of nationalism.<sup>60</sup>

Interestingly enough, contrary to this practice, Bosnian Franciscan writers and chroniclers in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries did not use the ethnonym “Serbs” to denote the Orthodox Christians in Bosnia but, apart from polemical “schismatics” (*šizmatiči*) or “Old believers” (*Starovirzi*), most widely employed the term “Vlachs” (*Vlasi*).<sup>61</sup> For example, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Franciscan chronicler

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<sup>59</sup> Laszlo Hadrovics, *Srpski narod i njegova crkva pod turskom vlašću*, tran. by Marko Kovačić, Nakladni zavod Globus, Zagreb 2000, pp. 85-95 (originally published as: Ladislav Hadrovics, *Les people serbe et son église sous la domination turque*, Les Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1947); Srećko M. Džaja, *Konfesionalnost i nacionalnost Bosne i Hercegovine. Predemancipacijski period 1463-1804*, tr. by Ladislav Z. Fišić, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1992, pp. 101-102.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Muhamed Hadžijahić, *Od tradicije do identiteta. Geneza nacionalnog pitanja bosanskih muslimana*, Islamska zajednica Zagreb, Zagreb 1990, pp. 50-57.

<sup>61</sup> See: Matija Divković, *Nauk krstjanski za narod slovinski; Sto čudesa aliti zlamen'ja Blažene i slavne Bogorodice, Divice Marije*, ed. by Darija Bagarić, Marijana Horvat, Dolores Grmača and Maja Banožić, Kulturno-povijesni institut Bosne Srebrene, Sarajevo 2013, pp. 192, 270, 283; Nikola Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, ed. by Ignacije Gavran, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Synopsis, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2003, pp. 208-209, 269-270, 274-279 and passim; Bono Benić, *Ljetopis*

Nikola Lašvanin depicted attempts of the Serbian Orthodox Christian patriarch to collect taxes from the Catholics and allegedly convert them to the Orthodox Christianity, as “Vlachization.”<sup>62</sup> Why did the Franciscans, as indigenous people that were usually well aware of local particularities, not use the term “Serb” in the period when it was widely in use by the Orthodox clergy and Ottoman chancery, but preferred terms “Vlach” in general, or “Greek” (*Grk*)<sup>63</sup> and “schismatic Greek patriarch” (*Scismaticus Patriarca Graecus*)<sup>64</sup> when referring to the patriarch or higher clergy? The non-existence or unawareness of ethnic denominations in that time could not be the reason, since chronicler Nikola Lašvanin in the description of a litigation between Catholics and Orthodox Christian clergy in 1661 in Livno (Ihlevne), apart from traditionally used congregational terms “Latins” (*Latini*) and “Christians” (*kristjani*), used ethnonym “Croatian” (*Hrvaćani*) for Catholics, but “Vlach” for the Orthodox Christians.<sup>65</sup> While Matija Divković at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century did not use the term “Vlach” in a negative context, the 18<sup>th</sup> century Franciscan texts which were created in the atmosphere of litigations and open enmities between two Christian communities that often ended up in physical clashes, introduced rather negative and an offensive tone. It seems that the term “Vlach” in these examples was used in a derogatory sense, which an ethnonym could not provide. Bosnian Muslims and Catholics still use the term “Vlachs” interchangeably with the ethnonym “Serb” for Bosnian Orthodox Christians, although Muslims might occasionally apply it to Catholics as well.<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, traditional use of the term “Greek” in the meaning of “Orthodox Christian” in the Western Christendom corresponded to the use of the term “*Rum*” in the Ottoman case.

As already mentioned, not all Vlachs were Orthodox Christian. Croatian, i.e., Catholic Slavic pastoralists, from Dalmatian hinterland were referred to by the name “Vlach” and “Morlak” since the Middle Ages. These groups differed from the Orthodox Vlachs that colonised Bosnia, Dalmatia, Croatia and adjacent regions after the Ottoman conquest and seem to represent the earlier, pre-Ottoman wave of the Vlach colonisation.<sup>67</sup> Some historians, however,

*sutješkog samostana*, ed. and tr. by Ignacije Gavran, Synopsis, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2003, pp. 54, 139, and passim.

<sup>62</sup> “Nijednom ga virom zvaše,  
nit to krivo ne rekoše,  
jer kristjane progonjaše,  
ter ih vlašit hotijaše.” Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, p. 278.

<sup>63</sup> Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, p. 278.

<sup>64</sup> Filip Lastrić, *Pregled starina Bosanske provincije*, tr. by Ignacije Gavran and Šimun Šimić, Synopsis, Sarajevo-Zagreb 2003, p. 145 (Croatian translation), p. 91 (facsimile, Latin).

<sup>65</sup> Lašvanin, *Ljetopis*, p. 270.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Hadžijahić, *Od tradicije do identiteta*, p. 43; Močanin, “Croatia and Bosnia”, p. 103.

<sup>67</sup> See: Skok, “Vlah”, pp. 514-515; Klaić, “Položaj vlah”, pp. 107-111; Nada Klaić, “Društvo u srednjovjekovnoj Hrvatskoj s posebnim osvrtom na njegov razvitak u

question this theory, stressing that the Vlachs were “obviously elastic” in their religious matters and as a matter of fact, might have come during the 14<sup>th</sup> century as Orthodox Christians without neat ecclesiastical organisation and were either Catholicised in the near future,<sup>68</sup> or remained in their own Orthodox Christian faith.<sup>69</sup>

Some of the Ottoman Vlachs that colonised western parts of Bosnia, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia and Hungary were Catholic, as can be seen by non-Ottoman, i.e., Venetian and Habsburg sources, which mention *Morlachi Catholici* in Dalmatia and *Rasciani catolici*, *Katolische Ratzen*, *Meerkroaten*, *Illiri*, *Horvati*, etc., in Croatia and Hungary.<sup>70</sup> A group of Catholic Vlachs that underwent significant migrations in the Ottoman times from Herzegovina to Dalmatia and Croatia, as well as South Hungary (including Bačka), were known by the name of *Bunjevci*.<sup>71</sup>

By contrast, Ottoman sources, in general do not make distinctions between different Christian groups and usually use general terms like “Christian” (*Nasrânî*, pl. *Nasârâ*), *zimmî*, or “unbeliever” (*kâfir*, pl. *kefere*). Precise terms as Orthodox Christian or Serb (see above), and Catholic, such as *Katolik*, *Frenk* or *Latin*, appear in documents that carry evidence of inner Christian rivalry, antagonism, and confrontations, provoked by attempts of the Orthodox Christian clergy to collect church taxes from the Catholics, which resulted in

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Cetinskoj Krajini”, in: *Cetinska krajina od prethistorije do dolaska Turaka. Znanstveni skup – Sinj, 3-6. VI. 1980*. Izdanja Hrvatskog arheološkog društva, Vol. 8, Hrvatskog arheološko društvo, Split 1984, pp. 265-271; Tomislav Raukar, *Hrvatsko srednjovjekovlje. Prostor, ljudi, ideje*, Školska knjiga, Zavod za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskog fakulteta, Zagreb 1997, p. 138-139; Ivan Botica, “Prilog istraživanju najstarijeg spomena vlašskog imena u hrvatskoj historiografiji”, *Radovi. Zavod za hrvatsku povijest*, 37 (2005), pp. 35-46; Novak, “Morlaci (Vlasi)”, pp. 594-595.

<sup>68</sup> Mladen Ančić, “Srednjovjekovni Vlasi kontinentalne Dalmacije”, in: Vesna Kusin, ed., *Dalmatinska Zagora. Nepoznata zemlja*, Zagreb 2007, p. 166.

<sup>69</sup> Drago Roksandić, “Rmanj, an Orthodox Monastery on the Triplex Confinium – Perceptions and Myths, 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries”, in: Egidio Ivetic and Drago Roksandić, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance on the Triplex Confinium. Approaching the “Other” on the Borderlands Eastern Adriatic and beyond 1500-1800*, CLEUP, Padua 2007, pp. 105, 107-111; Bogumil Hrabak, “Naseljavanje hercegovačkih i bosanskih vlaha u Dalmatinsku zagoru u XIV, XV i XVI veku”, in: Ivan Mužić, ed., *Vlasi u starijoj hrvatskoj historiografiji*, Muzej arheoloških spomenika, Split 2010, p. 205.

<sup>70</sup> Marko Šarić, “Bunjevci u ranome novom vijeku. Postanak i razvoj jedne predmoderne etnije”, in: Milana Černelić, Marijeta Rajković and Tihana Rubić, eds., *Živjeti na Krivom putu*, FF Press, Zagreb 2008, pp. 30-31.

<sup>71</sup> Šarić, “Bunjevci u ranome novom vijeku”, pp. 15-43; “Bunjevci,” in: *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, web edition, Leksikografski zavod ‘Miroslav Krleža’, Zagreb 2013, <<http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=10202>> (last accessed on January 31, 2014).

numerous litigations in front of the Ottoman authorities between 1498 and 1700.<sup>72</sup>

Though smaller in number, a Muslim community of Vlach origin was not insignificant at all. A considerable portion of the Vlachs of Bosnia and Herzegovina converted to Islam from the 1530s, following sedentarization and the loss of tax reductions and privileged Vlach status. Conversion to Islam of the Vlachs was highly important for the formation of the Muslim community of Herzegovina in particular.<sup>73</sup>

### *Serving the Ottomans*

As already mentioned, the Ottomans used the Vlachs as a military and colonising element in strategically important areas that were deserted during conquests. The Vlach migrations originated from northern parts of Herzegovina (including parts of modern Montenegro) and southwestern Serbia, i.e., the region called Stari Vlah (İstari Eflak). In the 1470s, many areas in the border-*sancaĥ* of Smederevo in northern Serbia were deserted due to many battles with the Hungarians. In order to resettle desolate regions and secure the border, the Vlachs colonised the entire territory of the *sancaĥ* of Smederevo and big parts of the *sancaĥ*s of Kruševac (Alacahisâr) and Vidin.<sup>74</sup> In the 1460s, the Vlach colonisation began in eastern Bosnia, that is, Podrinje, a strategically important mining region along the river Drina. After the conquest of Herzegovina and the establishment of the *sancaĥ* of Herzegovina in 1470, large groups of the Vlachs began to penetrate further into northeastern Bosnia, especially towards strategically important towns of Maglaj (Maglay), Tešanj (Tešne), and Doboj (Doboy), as well as Zvornik, Teočak, and Tuzla. It seems that the Ottoman conquest of Maglaj, Tešanj and Doboj was achieved with the considerable assistance of the Vlachs.<sup>75</sup> Vlach migrations followed the changing borders caused by Ottoman advances in the north and west. After the fall of the Hungarian marches of Srebrenik (*Srebrenička banovina*, 1512) and Jajce

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<sup>72</sup> See: Boškoviĥ, "Turski dokumenti", pp. 7-95. Cf. Džajza, *Konfesionalnost i nacionalnost*, pp. 176-177; Boris Nileviĥ, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva u Bosni i Hercegovini do obnove Peĥke patrijaršije 1557. godine*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1990, p. 208; Hadrovics, *Srpski narod*, p. 80; Vjeran Kursar, "Non-Muslim Communal Divisions and Identities in the Early Modern Ottoman Balkans and the Millet System Theory," in: Maria Baramova, Plamen Mitev, Ivan Parvev, Vania Racheva, eds., *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe, 16-19th century*, LIT Verlag, Berlin 2013, pp. 103-105, 107.

<sup>73</sup> Filipoviĥ, "Islamizacija vlaha", pp. 145-147, and passim; Snježana Buzov, "Vlasi u Bosanskom sandžaku i islamizacija", *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, 41 (1991), pp. 107-110.

<sup>74</sup> Branislav Đurđev, "Srbija", in: Branislav Đurđev, Bogo Grafenauer and Jorjo Tadiĥ, eds., *Historija naroda Jugoslavije*, Vol. 2, Školska knjiga, Zagreb 1959, pp. 85-86.

<sup>75</sup> Adem Handžić, "Etničke promjene u Sjeveroistoĥnoj Bosni i Posavini u XV i XVI vijeku", in: Adem Handžić, *Studije o Bosni: Historijski prilozi iz osmansko-turskog perioda*, IRCICA, Istanbul 1994, pp. 9-10.



(Yayçe; *Jajačka banovina*, 1528) in Bosnia, and the break up of Hungary in the battle of Mohács in 1526, the Vlachs moved further westward into the newly conquered lands in the *sancaq* of Bosna (Bosnia), on the borders with Habsburg Croatia and Venetian Dalmatia and northwards across the rivers Sava and Danube, into Slavonia and Hungary.

The successive abolishment of the Vlachs' tax exemptions in interior regions led to their movement towards border areas.<sup>76</sup> According to *kânûnnâme* of the *sancaq* of Herzegovina (1528-1532), tax privileges (*resm-i Eflakiye*) granted to the Vlachs of Herzegovina by Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror (1451-1481), were eventually abolished by Süleymân the Magnificent (1520-1566), while the Vlachs were obliged to pay the same taxes as other *harâc*-paying population.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, the Vlach elite – *knezes*, *vojvodas* and *katunars* – remained exempt from the taxes in exchange for military service in the time of campaigns, collection of taxes, and control over Vlach *re'âyâ*. Additionally, some of the *knezes* were granted *tîmârs*.<sup>78</sup> *Kânûnnâme* of the *sancaq* of Smederevo (1536), which lost its border character after the battle of Mohács, explained that remaining Vlachs were subjected to *harâc* and other *re'âyâ* taxes as ordinary *re'âyâ* because their military duties ceased to exist. As in Herzegovina, the elite – the *knezes* and *premiķirs*, retained their privileged position under the same conditions.<sup>79</sup> The Vlachs of the *sancaq* of Zvornik suffered the same fate a decade later, according to the provisions of *kânûnnâme* of 1548.<sup>80</sup> In the Bosnian march in the north-west (*Serbâd*, *Krajina*), due to obvious strategic considerations, taxes were lower in areas closer to the border; e.g., in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the *filuri* tax in areas far from the border was 150 *akçes*, closer to the border 120 *akçes*, while on the border it was 100 *akçes*.<sup>81</sup> In 1604, in the areas in the eastern part of the *sancaq* of Bosnia, *filuri* was 315 *akçes*, in the central region 280 *akçes*, while in the border *nâhiyes* in the north-west – Dubica, Novi, Sana, Krupa and Bihać – it was merely 150 *akçes*, whereas the lowest amount was paid in Kostajnica – 100 *akçes*.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Milan Vasić, "Etnička kretanja u Bosanskoj krajini u XVI vijeku", *Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, 13 (1962), pp. 238-239; Handžić, "Etničke promjene", 12; Adem Handžić, "O društvenoj strukturi stanovništva u Bosni početkom XVII stoljeća" in: Adem Handžić, *Studije o Bosni: Historijski prilozi iz osmansko-turskog perioda*, IRCICA, Istanbul 1994, pp. 238-239.

<sup>77</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 549-550, 553-554.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 551-552, 554.

<sup>79</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 357-358, 366; Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>80</sup> *Kanuni i kanan-name*, pp. 103-104, 118; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 300, 311; cf. Đurđev "Srbija", pp. 89-90.

<sup>81</sup> Vasić, "Etnička kretanja", p. 238.

<sup>82</sup> Handžić, "O društvenoj strukturi stanovništva u Bosni", p. 240.

The Vlach colonisation radically changed the ethnic and religious picture of Bosnia and adjacent regions, while the Orthodox Vlachs-Serbs became a majority in certain areas, even though in some of them they were not present prior to the Ottoman conquest. The role of the Vlachs in the conquest and pacification of the Balkan lands can hardly be overestimated. The Vlachs, together with military and semi-military Christian groups as *martoloses*, *voynuks*, *derbendcis*, and others, helped the Ottomans to conquer and pacify numerous towns and regions. After the conquest they served as guards to numerous fortifications, mountain-passes, bridges, and borders, and performed police and intelligence services. They resettled deserted areas and brought the land to cultivation, worked in mines, transported goods, and traded with products of animal husbandry indispensable to the town economy – wool, milk, cheese, butter, skins and the like. Since the role of the Vlachs was very similar to, if not the same as that of their Turkic counterparts, the Yürüks, Halil İnalçık's conclusions considering the importance of the Yürüks in the Ottoman imperial policy, can be accepted as valid for the Vlachs as well:

*Since employment of the re'âyâ peasants in such enterprises meant a disruption of agriculture, hence a diminution of revenues for the state and the sipâhî class in the provinces, the state preferred to employ the Yürüks for such tasks. From this point of view the Yürüks can be considered the backbone of the entire imperial organization [italics V.K].<sup>83</sup>*

Indeed, the Vlachs and population with Vlach or *filurîci* status in Bosnia and adjacent areas generally provided manpower for other paramilitary orders and groups with special duties, as the *voynuks*, *martoloses*, *derbendcis*, miners, and the like. A genuine example of the Ottoman appreciation of the Vlach role in the border organization is given in *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Požega from 1545:

*Vlachs are settling in desolated arable fields in the border-province, making them inhabited and prosperous. Some Vlachs are cultivating fields, while others are pasturing goats and sheep. In other provinces, they pay 83 akçe per household in return for cultivation of fields, and cattle tax according to the Vlach custom. If this records in the register, these hearths (ocaklar) will become contractors for the performance of the imperial services, defence and security. Indeed, if there were no Vlachs in the border-province, there would be no possibility for settlement and prosperity, and infidel robbers would be coming and going regularly. Sancakbeyi submitted a report to the Footing of the Throne of Exaltation, informing that settlers are beneficial and necessary for the prosperity of the land. It is ordered that every household should give 83 akçe as the Vlach tax.<sup>84</sup>*

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<sup>83</sup> Halil İnalçık, "The Yürüks: Their Origins, Expansion and Economic Role", in: Halil İnalçık, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire. Essays on Economy and Society*, Indiana University Turkish Studies, Bloomington 1993, p. 117.

<sup>84</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 334, 337

In order to win over the resource of such potential, the Ottomans were ready to grant Vlachs privileges and autonomies stretching far beyond the provisions of the *zimmî* regulations designed by Islamic law, following the lines of the *istimâlet* policy, and enacted in special Vlach *kânûns* and *kânûnnâmes* of various *sancaks*. By the means of *istimâlet*, the Ottomans were trying to attract indigenous non-Muslim populations for the Ottoman cause, by temporary confirmation of some previous (pre-conquest) realities. Thus, the Ottomans confirmed some pre-Ottoman laws and customs, as well as statuses and privileges, incorporating a number of members of pre-Ottoman military groups into the army. In addition, elements of the population received tax reductions or exemptions for a certain period of time.<sup>85</sup> On the whole, the Ottoman policy of *istimâlet* was so successful and appealing to indigenous Christians, that they entered various Ottoman services in droves, while in certain areas in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Christian *sipahîs* held up to 50 % of the whole *timar* fiefs.<sup>86</sup>

In the Vlach case, *istimâlet* could mean a reduction of the *re'âyâ* taxes to the *filuri* level, as was declared in the order sent to the *sancakbeyi* of Herzegovina in 1573. Since the Vlachs were faithfully fulfilling castle service, they were given *istimâlet*, and their *harâc* was settled at the amount of 80 *akçe*s like the *filuri* tax.<sup>87</sup> In some instances, *istimâlet* included confessional concessions as well, such as a right to possess churches, and the like. According to a report of Evliya Çelebi in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, a regiment of the Vlachs numbering 1.000, was engaged in the repair of the Buda's castle, in addition to tax reductions, i.e., exemption of the *tekâlif-i örfiye* tax, possessed three "Vlach churches" (*üç aded kenîse-i Eflakân*) in Buda.<sup>88</sup> Obviously, the churches in question belonged to the Serbian Orthodox Church, i.e., the Patriarchate of Peć. Serbs settled in Buda in significant numbers soon after its conquest (1541), and lived in the quarter of Taban, known by the Serbs as "Buda's lower *varoš* of Taban," or "Buda's lower *Rascian* ("Serbian") *varoš*," while Western European travellers mentioned it as *Ratzenstatt*. In addition to Taban of Buda, Serbs lived in a small quarter of Pest (Pešta), in Serbian known as "Bogohranimi grad Pešta", situated in the southern part of the town walls. While first churches were already built in the

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<sup>85</sup> Halil İnalçık, "The Status of Greek Orthodox Patriarch under the Ottomans", in: Halil İnalçık, *Essays in Ottoman History*, Eren, Istanbul 1998, pp. 196-197;

<sup>86</sup> İnalçık, "Od Stefana Dušana", pp. 23-53; Branislav Đurđev, "Hrišćani spahije u severnoj Srbiji u XV veku", *Godišnjak Društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, 4 (1952), pp. 165-169.

<sup>87</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 21, No. 195, quoted in: Sıtkı Çelik, ed., *21 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (Tablil-Metin)*, MA Thesis, İstanbul Üniversitesi, İstanbul 1997, No. 195.

<sup>88</sup> Evliya Çelebi b. Derviş Mehmed Zillî, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi. Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 Yazmasının Transkripsyonu – Dizini*, ed. by Seyil Ali Kahraman and Yücel Dağlı, Vol. 6, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2002, p. 150. On Ottoman Buda see: Sadık Müfit Bilge, *Osmanlı'nın Macaristanı*, Kitabevi, İstanbul 2010, pp. 154-161.

16<sup>th</sup> century, the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century Buda's suburb of Taban became the seat of the newly established Eparchy of Buda, which was a part of the Patriarchy of Peć covered Hungarian territory.<sup>89</sup> Serbs in Ottoman Hungary in general, as well as in Buda in particular, served in great numbers as *martoloses*, members of a military order of Christian origin largely recruited from the Vlach and Vlach-like population.<sup>90</sup> Their importance towards the Ottoman defence system can not be underestimated, since *martoloses* made up to one third of crews of all garrisons in Hungary.<sup>91</sup> In exchange for their loyalty and service, the authorities allowed the spread of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć into this region, resulting in the appearance of many churches in numerous Hungarian towns and villages, such as Baja, Bata (Százhalombatta), Buda, Pest, Budimír (Nagybudmér), monastery in Grabovac (Grabóc), Deska (Deszk), Dunaújváros, Dunaföldvár, Eger, Lipova (Lippó), Mohács, Ostrogon (Esztergom), Pomaz, Rácalmás, Segedin (Szeged), Sent Andreja (Sanct Andrea, Szentendre), Sirig (Szöreg), Kovin (Srpski Kovin, Ráckeve), and Stolni Beograd (Istolni Belgrad, Székesfehérvár).<sup>92</sup> Some of these towns had important garrisons manned with Christian *martoloses* as well,<sup>93</sup> which may further explain the Ottoman benevolence.

This state of affairs reflected special relations between the Orthodox Church and the Ottoman state, which, along the lines of *istimâlet*, allowed the renewal of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1557, among other things, as a reward for Serbian and Vlach participation in the conquests in the western Balkans and Central Europe.<sup>94</sup> The goodwill that existed operated as a stimulus for future cooperation. As İnalçık explained, the recognition of the Orthodox Church was “the most fundamental and perhaps the most effective component of the *istimâlet* policy...”<sup>95</sup> Owing to the Vlach colonisations, Orthodox churches started to appear in the places where there were usually no mention of them previously to the Ottoman conquest, like in central and western part of Bosnia, Dalmatia and Slavonia, as well as Hungary.<sup>96</sup> Despite explicit *sharia* prohibition of the erection of new churches, the authorities were lenient with their

<sup>89</sup> Dinko Davidov, *Spomenici Budimske eparhije*, Prosveta, Belgrade 1990, pp. 290, 293, 295.

<sup>90</sup> Milan Vasić, *Martolosi u jugoslovenskim zemljama pod turskom vladavinom*, Akademija nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo 1967, pp. 50-62; Mark L. Stein, *Guarding the Frontier. Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe*, Tauris, London-New York 2007, pp. 89-92.

<sup>91</sup> Stein, *Guarding the Frontier*, p. 92.

<sup>92</sup> Davidov, *Spomenici Budimske eparhije*, pp. 47-48, 284-390.

<sup>93</sup> See: Vasić, *Martolosi*, pp. 57-60.

<sup>94</sup> Branislav Đurđev, *Uloga crkve u starijoj istoriji srpskog naroda*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1964, pp. 122-123.

<sup>95</sup> İnalçık, “The Status of Greek Orthodox Patriarch”, p. 197.

<sup>96</sup> Zdravko Kajmaković, *Zidno slikarstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo 1971, pp. 120-121; Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 84-85, 114-115; Džaja, *Konfesionalnost i nacionalnost*, pp. 105-106.

Orthodox Christian allies and turned a blind-eye to such transgressions. According to some estimations, more than 100 churches and monasteries were newly erected or renovated in the territory of the Patriarchate of Peć,<sup>97</sup> while at least several dozen were also newly erected in the territories of Bosnia and Dalmatia.<sup>98</sup>

By the nature of their service as Ottoman auxiliary troops, the Vlachs were exempted from certain classical restrictions of the *zimmî* status designed by Islamic law – possession of arms and riding horses. The first *kânûns* for the Vlachs of Braničevo (Braničeva) and Vidin of 1467-1468, and Smederevo of 1476-1477 and 1481, specified the Vlachs were obliged to provide one *voynuk* (from South Slavic *vojnik*, “soldier”) from five *filuri* (taxation-units), that is households.<sup>99</sup> Later *kânûns*, such as sections of the universal *kânûnnâme* of Sultan Beyâzid II (1481-1512), Vlach *kânûns* for Smederevo and Braničevo and Vidin (1501, 1516, 1527), and sections of the universal *kânûnnâme* of Sultan Süleymân the Magnificent, were more extant: the Vlachs were obliged to provide one *voynuk* or *gönder* (“lance”) per five households for guarding unsafe places, while in the case of the campaign, all Vlachs were supposed to participate as horsemen.<sup>100</sup> Stipulations in Vlach *kânûns* of Bosnia and Herzegovina were somewhat different, as in *kânûns* of Vlachs of the *vilâyet* (“district”) of Hersek of 1477, the *vilâyet* of Pavlovići (Pavli) of 1485, the *nâbiye* of Nikšić (Nikšik, in modern Montenegro) of 1485, the *nâbiye* of the fortress of Maglaj, in the *vilâyet* of Kral (Kraljeva Zemlja) of 1485 and 1489. Instead of providing one soldier (*voynuk* or *gönder*) per five households as guards, the Vlachs of Bosnia and Herzegovina had to send one horseman (*eşküncü*) per ten households (or 15 households in the case of Nikšić Vlachs) to participate in campaigns.<sup>101</sup> While the *voynuks* and *gönders* were foot soldiers (sometimes accompanied with beasts of burden – *bârgırs*),<sup>102</sup> used as auxiliary troops within the borders of their *sancaks*, the *eşküncüs* were horsemen with active military duties in the campaigns.<sup>103</sup> Groups among the Vlachs that were included in

<sup>97</sup> Sreten Petković, *Zidno slikarstvo na području Pečke patrijaršije, 1557-1614*, Matica Srpska, Novi Sad 1965, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> Kajmaković, *Zidno slikarstvo*, p. 132. For incomplete list of newly erected churches and monasteries see: Nilević, *Srpska pravoslavna crkva*, pp. 144-171; Olga Zirojević, *Crkve i manastiri na području Pečke patrijaršije do 1683. godine*, Narodna knjiga-Istorijski institut, Belgrade 1984, pp. 59-202. Cf. Machiel Kiel, *Art and Society of Bulgaria in the Turkish Period*, Van Gorcum, Assen/Maastricht 1985, pp. 193-195.

<sup>99</sup> Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, pp. 12-13; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 1, pp. 528, 530.

<sup>100</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 73, 107, Vol. 3, , pp. 449, 456, 459, 463, Vol. 5, pp. 368, 370, Vol. 4, pp. 398, 428; Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, pp. 15-16, 27, 30, 33.

<sup>101</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 1, pp. 494-495, 496, Vol. 2, pp. 380-381, 382; *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 12-14; A. Akgündüz misread the name of the *nâbiye* of Nikšik as “Yekşinik”, see: *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 380, 382.

<sup>102</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 358, 366.

<sup>103</sup> Later, however, in some areas the *voynuks* were occasionally used as horsemen as well. Cf. Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, *Tarib Deyimleri ve Terimleri Sözlüğü*, Vol. 1, Millî Eğitim

*yoldaşlık* (“comradeship”), i.e. accompanied Ottoman army in the campaigns, were exempted from all taxes, including *filuri*, upon *mu’áf nâme* (“exemption letter”) of *sancakbeyi*, as was laid down by *kânûns* of Herzegovina (1482-1485) and Smederevo (1489-1491, 1517-1532).<sup>104</sup>

By the 1530s, however, the Vlachs in these areas lost their military role due to border changes, and were subjected to the *re’âyâ* status, while only their leaders – *knežes*, *premičürs*, *voyvodas*, and *katunars*, continued to serve as horsemen in the time of the campaigns. In contrast, the Vlachs in border areas, such as the *sancak* of Požega in 1545, retained their military duties and privileges, obviously due to the strategic importance of the Danube route.<sup>105</sup> Benedikt Kuripešić, who passed through Bosnia in 1530, noted that local Christians were unsatisfied with the change of their status from that year. While they were previously paying only 50 *akçes* per household, after the conquest of great parts of Croatia and Hungary, the Ottomans imposed new levies: a poll tax of 30 to 40 *akçes*, taxes on animals and land, and household tax. In addition, the population was subjected to the levy in children, that is, each year every third, fourth or fifth child was taken from the Christian families.<sup>106</sup> Most likely, the population in question were the Vlachs who lost their privileges, and were subjected to *re’âyâ* taxes and *denşirme*.

Soon after the Vlachs lost their privileges, their name started to disappear from the Ottoman legislation. However, not all Vlachs were subjected to the status of ordinary *re’âyâ*. Some retained certain exemptions, like that of *öyr* in exchange for certain services, often of a semi-military character. The Vlachs, were now often designated as *filuriciyân*, or *filurici tâ’ifesi*, i.e., the payers of the *filuri* tax, which substituted *öyr* and other *re’âyâ* taxes.<sup>107</sup> On the other hand, the titles of the Vlach leaders, *knežes* and *premičürs*, continued to appear in the sources, indicating probable Vlach origin of *re’âyâ* under their authority. Since around 1620 the Vlachs in the border areas started to lose their privileged status as well and eventually became ordinary *re’âyâ*, due to changes in border defences and the establishment of the system of fortresses and captaincies allegedly staffed exclusively with Muslims.<sup>108</sup>

Basımevi, Istanbul 1971, p. 675 (gönder), Vol. 3, pp. 595-597 (voynuk); Đurđev, “O vojnicima”, pp. 83-85, 90; Yavuz Ercen, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara 1989, pp. 8-12.

<sup>104</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 409, 412; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 494, 498; Bojanić, *Turski zakonik*, p. 96.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Nenad Močanin, *Town and Country on the Middle Danube, 1526-1690*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2006, p. 32.

<sup>106</sup> Kuripešić, *Putopis*, p. 27. Cf. Močanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, pp. 82-84.

<sup>107</sup> Močanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, pp. 86-87. Cf. Halil İnalçık, “Filori,” *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol.13, Istanbul 1996, pp. 106-107.

<sup>108</sup> Močanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, pp. 87-89.

### *Vlach Organization*

Social stratification of the Vlach clan organisation had already started before the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans. The Vlach chieftains and their officials, known as *knežes*, *premičurs* (*premičur*, *primičur*, from Latin *primicerius*), *protogers* (*protuder*), *voyvodas* (*vojvoda*), *katunars*, *lagators*, *teklis* (*teklis*), *čelniks* (*čelnik*), and the like in Latin documents from Dubrovnik and other Dalmatian towns, where they were known as *comes* or *comes catuni*, originated from the patriarchal leaders of the clans and were organised into *katuns* or Vlach pastoralist villages, of which some were not necessarily territorialised. In the course of time, these patriarchal clan leaders, under the influence of a feudal economy and due to the incorporation into military systems of Balkan states, gained large military and administrative power over their clans and tribes. Unsurprisingly, the level of feudalisation of the function of the Vlach chieftain was not the same in all clans or tribes and in all regions, due to varying economic, political and geographical conditions. After the conquest, Vlach *katun* organisations with their chieftains were incorporated without significant changes into the Ottoman system.<sup>109</sup>

One of the most important segments of the *istimâlet* policy at the time was the adoption of parts of the old system and the preservation of old statuses and rights. This was considered the best way to ensure the smooth incorporation of desirable groups within the populace. Remarkable levels of integration of pre-Ottoman arrangements was indicated not just by the pre-Ottoman Slav, Serb or Byzantine origin of terms concerning the Vlachs, but also by other terms connected to land regulations and taxes, such as *baštine* (South Slavic, from Old Slavonic, *baština*, inheritable land),<sup>110</sup> *penesz* (Hungarian, “money”),<sup>111</sup> *resm-i obručina* (South Slavic, wine tax),<sup>112</sup> *resm-i filuri* (Italian/Hungarian, “florin,” one golden coin tax),<sup>113</sup> *monopolya* (Latin, “monopoly” on wine selling),<sup>114</sup> *pulug resmi*

<sup>109</sup> Đurđev, “O knezovima”, pp. 15-16, 20; Beldiceanu, “Les Valaques de Bosnie”, pp. 128-130; Gliša Elezović, *Turski spomenici*, No. 1, Vol. 1, Belgrade 1940, pp. 1157-1160, note 1; Nedim Filipović, “Vlasi i uspostava timarskog sistema u Hercegovini”, *Godišnjak Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 12, *Centar za balkanološka istraživanja*, Vol. 10, Sarajevo, 1974, pp. 131, 140-141; Milan Vasić, “Knežine i knezovi timarlike u Zvorničkom sandžaku u XVI vijeku”, *Godišnjak Istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, 10 (1949-1959), p. 248; cf. Klaić, “Društvo u srednjovjekovnoj Hrvatskoj”, pp. 268-269.

<sup>110</sup> See: *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 4, pp. 300, 302 – *baštine* in *kânûnnâme* of Süleymân the Magnificent; *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 24-25, 31 – *baštine* in *kânûnnâme* of the vilâyet of Bosnia in 922/1516.

<sup>111</sup> Barkan, *Kanunlar*, p. 301 (*Kanunnâme-i Reayâ-i Budun ve Livâ-i Estergon ve Livâ-i Hatvan ve Livâ-i Novigrad*, from the time of Süleymân the Magnificent), 318 (*Hatvân Livâsi Kanunnâmesi*, from the time of Mehmed IV (1648-1687)), 321 (*Kanunnâme-i Livâ-i Kopan ve Şamanturna*, from the time of Selim II (1566-1574)), 322 (*Kanunname-i Reayay-i Livâ-i Lipve*, from 1554).

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 284-285 (*Silistre Livâsi Kanunu*, from 1569).

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305 (*Kânun-i öşur ve harac ve sayir rûsûm ve bac-i reayay-i livâ-i Pojaga*, from 1545), 250 (*Kanunnâme-i Kbtzyân-i Vilâyet-i Rumelî*), and *passim*; *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 12-14

(South Slavic, “plough tax”),<sup>115</sup> etc. Occasionally, the incorporation of pre-Ottoman laws was explicitly mentioned in *kânûnnâmes*, stressing that certain prescriptions originated from “the time of the king” (*kral zamanında*), and were based on “the king’s law” (*kânûn-ı kral*), or prescribed that procedures should follow “the old custom” (*adet-i kadîme*).<sup>116</sup> Significantly enough, Selim I (1512-1520) eventually decided that “void customs known as the law of Despot” (*despot kânûni dimekle ma’ruf olan ayın-i bâtil*) in Serbia should be eventually suspended and replaced by the *sharia* and “the old law” (*kânûn-ı kadîm*), which might have meant, according to Beldiceanu, renewal *kânûnnâme* designed by his reformist grandfather, Mehmed the Conqueror.<sup>117</sup>

Vlach *katuns* were occasionally integrated into the territorial organisation of the Ottoman Empire, in such a manner that borders of the smallest Ottoman administrative units – *nâhiyes*, corresponded to tribal or clan divisions, as was the case with certain tribes in Herzegovina (Banjani, Riđani, Nikšići, Drobnjaci, etc.). In regions where the Vlachs passed through the process of sedentarisation and adopted agriculture as *Eflak re’âyâsı*, as was the case in the *sancak* of Požega, Vlach settlements were organised into *knezlıks* (*knežina*), which corresponded to a village or *nâhiye*.<sup>118</sup> In Ottoman legislation, the term *katun* referred to a fiscal unit consisting of 20 *filuris* as Vlach households in the beginning, according to *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Braničevo (1467/1468), while later its number rose to 50 *filuris*.<sup>119</sup> Later on however, obviously in connection with sedentarisation of the Vlachs and changes in taxation, this term disappeared from legislation. Nevertheless, the term *katunar* (“the head of the *katun*”), appeared in *kânûn* of the *sancak* of Herzegovina of 1528-1532, along with the terms *knez* and *voyvoda*, as Vlach leaders that were enjoying tax-

(*kânûns* of *cemâ’at-i eflâkân vilâyet-i Hersek* from 1477, *vilâyet-i Pavli* from 1485, and *nâhiyet-i kaĶa-i Maglay-i eflâkân* from 1489), and *passim*.

<sup>114</sup> *Kanuni i Kanun-name*, pp. 158, 162, 170, 172 (*kânûnnâmes* for Montenegro from 1523).

<sup>115</sup> Barkan, *Kanunlar*, p. 304 (*kânûn* of Požega).

<sup>116</sup> See: Barkan, *Kanunlar*, pp. 301, 318, 320, 323 for “*kral zamanından*”, and p. 304 for “*adet-i kadîme*”; *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 16-17 for “*kânûn-ı kral*.”

<sup>117</sup> Beldiceanu, “La région de Timok-Morava”, pp. 114-115; for the text of the decree, see: *Ibid.*, p. 128, fol. 42r. Cf. Nicoară Beldiceanu, “Sur les valaques des Balkans slaves à l’époque ottomane (1450-1550)” *Revue des études islamiques*, 34 (1966), pp. 92-93. See also: Mehmed Begović, “Tragovi našeg srednjovekovnog prava u turskim pravnim spomenicima”, *Istoriski časopis*, 3 (1951-52), pp. 67-84; Mehmed Begović, “Tragovi našeg krivičnog prava u turskim zakonskim spomenicima”, *Istorijski časopis*, 6 (1956), pp. 1-11.

<sup>118</sup> Đurđev, “O vojnicima”, pp. 21-23.

<sup>119</sup> Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, pp. 12 (*kânûn* of the Vlachs of Braničevo 1467/1468), 16, 33 (*kânûns* of Vlachs of Smederevo of 1501 and 1527/1528); *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 1, pp. 527, 530 – *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Semendire of 886/1481, Vol. 2, pp. 73, 107 – the universal *kânûnnâme* of Beyâzid II (1481-1512); Vol. 4, pp. 398, 428 – the universal *kânûnnâme* of Süleymân the Magnificent.



exempted land (*bastine*) and some other privileges in exchange for their services.<sup>120</sup>

The Vlachs were enjoying certain territorial and, at the early stage preceding sedentarisation and submission to the *re'âyâ* status, social autonomies that were not confined to a specific territory.<sup>121</sup> They belonged to imperial *hâses* and were subjected to *sancakbeyi*, who was entitled to collect taxes from the Vlachs (*rîisüm-i Eflakiye*). However, they were not obliged to perform any manual duties for him or for anybody else. For cultivation of land on *sipâhî timârs* outside their villages, they had to pay only half of the '*üyr*.<sup>122</sup>

The Ottomans were ready to reach such a compromise with the Vlachs not only because of the importance of their military services. Their inclusion into the *timâr*-system regarding their semi-nomadic pastoralist mode of production could have posed more problems than advantages. As a matter of fact, the presence of the *timâr*-holder in this case was entirely unnecessary, as was suggested by Đurđev:

*The sipâhî was not needed here for the sake of economy (from which he would not have benefit), neither for maintenance of the authority, nor for collection of taxes, and not even for the military service. The only person required was a commander because of military service and semi-military duties of the Vlachs, that is, one part of them [italics V.K].*<sup>123</sup>

That Ottoman commander was *sancakbeyi* or *voyvoda* as his deputy, while all other matters were transferred to Vlach chieftains – *knežes* and *premiķiurs*. According to *kânûns* before the 1530s, *knežes* and *premiķiurs* had certain immunities, and received one-tenth from the fines collected by *sancakbeyi*.<sup>124</sup> *Kânûns* for the Vlachs of Herzegovina and Smederevo (1482-1485, 1489-1491, 1517-1532) informed that *knežes* and *premiķiurs* were not merely clan or tribal leaders that represented the Vlachs in front of the Ottoman regime, but were incorporated into the system as officials of the state. *Knež* had the authority over the Vlachs in his *nâbiye*, while *premiķiur* had the authority over the Vlachs in his village as *premiķiurlük*. In addition, *premiķiur* was entitled to *katun* consisting of at least ten *filuris*, and possessed between one and eight *ratays*. *Knežes* and *premiķiurs* that were hiding people under their authority from the census-taker, however, were supposed to lose their position and status: *knežes* were losing

<sup>120</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 552, 554.

<sup>121</sup> Vasić, "Knežine", p. 252.

<sup>122</sup> Bojanić, *Turski zakonik*, pp. 12-13, 15-16, 30, 33; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 1, pp. 494-495, 496, 528, 530, Vol. 2, pp. 73, 107, 380-381, 382, Vol. 3, pp. 449, 456, 459, 463, Vol. 5, pp. 368, 370, Vol. 4, pp. 398, 428; *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 12-14.

<sup>123</sup> Đurđev, "O vojnaucima", p. 123.

<sup>124</sup> Bojanić, *Turski zakonik*, pp. 13, 15, 16, 27, 30, 33-34; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 1, pp. 528, 530, Vol. 2, pp. 73, 107, Vol. 3, pp. 449, 456, 459, 463, Vol. 5, pp. 368, 370.

their *ratays* (servants of nomadic origin – *haymâne*, working on their land as landless peasants) with their taxes, their *knezlik* (the position of *knez*, and/or the territory under *knez*'s authority), and their *tímárs*. *Premikürs*, on the other hand, were losing *ratays* with their taxes, and were subjected to the payment of the *filuri* tax as ordinary Vlachs.<sup>125</sup>

The Ottomans however, were resolute in preventing any kind of self-government of the Vlachs, or any other group for that matter, that might have brought into question their exclusive authority and direct control over their subjects, as was attested in *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Smederevo of 1516:

*The community of the Vlachs and others should not organise the izbor [izbor, "congress"] and assemblies (cem'iyet), and elect ikmets [kmet, the prominent peasant who mediates in inter-village disputes] among themselves. Those who are ikmets and those who are giving prominence to them are breaching the outmost limits of the law. Those who are the cause for this will be punished as is due.*<sup>126</sup>

In the period after the battle of Mohács (1526), along with the status of the Vlachs, the position of *knezes* and *premikürs* began to change as well. Whereas in previous times some of *knezes* in certain areas, only occasionally possessed *tímárs*, now, while their military role lost importance and the Vlach mode of production changed from semi-nomadic pastoralist towards the sedentary-agriculturalist one, a need for a large number *sipâhîs* to strictly administer and control Vlach *re'âyâ* arose. As already mentioned, *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Herzegovina of 1528-1532, which abolished Vlach privileges, provided the Vlach leaders – *knezes*, *vojvodas*, *katunars*, *lagators* and *teklîqs* with *tímárs* of two categories: *tímárs* lower than 800 *akçe*, and *tímárs* of 800 *akçe* or more. Here, holders were obliged to join the army in campaigns in addition to ordinary services they were required to provide.<sup>127</sup>

According to *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Zvornik of 1548, after the Vlachs were subjected to the *re'âyâ* status, *knezes* and *premikürs* became responsible for the collection of their *harâc* and other taxes. Each *premikür* had the responsibility for collecting taxes from *re'âyâ* of his village. Each *knez*, on the other hand, was responsible for the control of *premikürs* on the territory of his *nâhiye*. Furthermore, *knezes* were obliged to help state officials (*emîns* and *kuls*) in the collection of taxes. Both functions were inheritable from father to son. While *premikürs* were enjoying an exemption from personal and land taxes on their *baştines*, *knezes* were additionally receiving *tímárs*. *Knezes* with *tímárs* higher than 1000 *akçes* were obliged to participate in military campaigns in Hungary as horsemen, while *knezes* with *tímárs* lower than 1000 *akçes* were allowed to send

<sup>125</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 408-409, 410-411; cf. Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, pp. 95-96; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 2, pp. 492-494, 496-498.

<sup>126</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 3, pp. 460, 463; Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, p. 31.

<sup>127</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 551-552, 554.

a substitute on their behalf (*bedel*).<sup>128</sup> Similar stipulations could be found in *kânûns* and *kânûnnâmes* for the *sancaks* of Smederevo (1536),<sup>129</sup> Bosnia (1530),<sup>130</sup> Požega (1545,<sup>131</sup> 1579-1580)<sup>132</sup>, Srijem (one from the time of Selim II (1566-1574),<sup>133</sup> the other from 1588-1589<sup>134</sup>), as well as in the tractate of Sofyalı ‘Alî Çavuş on the *tîmâr* organisation of the Empire (1653).<sup>135</sup>

As a result, *knezeş* and *premiķiurs* were filling the posts of state officials in the villages and *nâhiyes*, as explicitly stated in *kânûn*: “*kebhüdâs* (“stewards”) of *nâhiyes* are called *knezeş*, while *kebhüdâs* of the villages are called *premiķiurs*.”<sup>136</sup> In this way *knezeş* and *premiķiurs* as *kebhüdâs* of the Vlach *re‘âyâ* and *filuricis* represented an alternative for the classical *tîmâr*-holders, *sîpâbîs*. Following the allotment of *tîmârs*, *knezeş* officially became the members of the *sîpâbî* class. From the financial point of view, however, it seems that *knezeş* did not profit from the assignment of *tîmârs*, since they consisted of their former *baştines*, *çiftlik*s, and dues received from *ratays*.<sup>137</sup>

The number of *knezeş* was considerably high. While *kânûnnâme* of the *sancak* of Zvornik asserts that every *nâhiye* had its *knezeş*, the number of *knezeş* according to the official registers was in decline: 31 *knezeş tîmârs* in the *sancak* of Zvornik in 1530 decreased to eleven in 1567.<sup>138</sup> However, it was possible that the number of *knezeş* without *tîmâr* was higher. On the other hand, *kânûnnâmes* of the *sancak* of Srijem provided the following pattern: in the time of Selim II (1566-1574), there were 136 *knezeş* and *premiķiurs*,<sup>139</sup> while in 1588-1589, their number decreased to 87.<sup>140</sup> This decrease seems to be caused by the gradual dissolution of the *tîmâr* system during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In these circumstances, *knezeş* that were not ready to accept this fate, responded either by further

<sup>128</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 300, 311; *Kanuni i kanan-name*, pp. 103-104, 118.

<sup>129</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 357-358, 366; Bojanić, *Turski zakonik*, pp. 45-46.

<sup>130</sup> *Kanuni i kanun-name*, pp. 41, 46; *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 6, pp. 428, 434.

<sup>131</sup> *Osmanlı kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 5, pp. 333, 336; Branislav Đurđev, “Požeška kanun-nama iz 1545 godine”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, n. s., 1 (1946), pp. 132, 136.

<sup>132</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 8, pp. 267, 275.

<sup>133</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 7, pp. 491, 497.

<sup>134</sup> Branislav Đurđev, “Sremska kanun-nama iz 1588-9 godine”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, n. s., 4-5 (1950), pp. 274, 281-282.

<sup>135</sup> Hamid Hadžibegić, “Rasprava Ali Čauša iz Sofije o timarskoj organizaciji u XVII stoljeću”, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, n. s., 2 (1947), p. 191; cf. Đurđev, “Nešto o vlaškim starješinama”, pp. 53, 60-61.

<sup>136</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 8, pp. 267, 275.

<sup>137</sup> Nedim Filipović, “Bosna i Hercegovina”, in: Branislav Đurđev et al., *Historija naroda Jugoslavije*, Vol. 2, Školska knjiga, Zagreb 1959, p. 136.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.

<sup>139</sup> *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 7, pp. 491, 497.

<sup>140</sup> Đurđev, “Sremska kanun-nama”, pp. 274, 282.

assimilation with the regime through Islamisation, or, conversely, by treason, rebellion and migration to enemy territory, along with their Vlachs.<sup>141</sup>

This generally accepted picture, however, should be somewhat modified, since the practice of appointing *knežes* with *berâts* did not die out completely in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but some of them remained in service in Herzegovina until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although in a somewhat reduced capacity.<sup>142</sup> The situation seems to have been similar in other parts of Bosnia. For instance, on the occasion of enthronement of sultan Ibrahim (1640-1648), *berât* of knez Sivonja in the village of Dubnica (Dubniçe) in the *nâbiye* of Sjenica in *kâdîluk* of Yeni Pazar in Bosnia, was renewed and his *mu'âf ve müselleme* status was confirmed.<sup>143</sup> In a similar manner, *zimmî* Miloš was appointed *knež* of a village in the *nâbiye* of Ostrovica in the *sancak* of Klis, upon the death of his brother knez Selak in 1675.<sup>144</sup> Thus, the disappearance of Christian *knežes* should more likely be dated later into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when new economic structures occurred, symbolised by the disappearance of *timârs* and appearance of *çiftluks*. In the new system, there was no place for *timar* holders in general, let alone Christian *sipâhîs* and *knežes* of the Vlach origin.

In relation to the question of inner autonomy of the Vlachs and their leaders, it has to be noted, even in the early period when the Vlachs enjoyed wide privileges, *knežes* and *premiķiurs* were not only representatives of the Vlachs in front of the authorities, but at the same time served as Ottoman agents. They were assisting Ottoman officials in tax collection, registration of Vlachs, and had a share in fines collected by *sancakbeyi*. The fact that the Vlachs had to pay penal taxes (*cürm ü cinâyete*) according to *kânûn*, as asserted in *kânûn* of the Vlachs of Smederevo of 1516,<sup>145</sup> reveals that matters relating to penal law were not autonomous. In the case of penal offences punishable by fines and corporal or capital punishments (*cürm ve sîyâset*), *kâdî* had to authorize the punishment.<sup>146</sup> Hence, from the judiciary point of view, the Vlachs were deeply incorporated in the legal system of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, the government achieved further control over the Vlachs through *vojvodas* as agents of *sancakbeyis*, who were settled in each *nâbiye* among the Vlachs. Any attempt to achieve any degree of self-government, as was *zbor*, was harshly forestalled and prevented. Later, when the Vlachs lost their privileges and exemptions, while *knežes* were formally recognized as state officials by inclusion into the *timâr* system, the process of levelling the social status of the Vlachs with that of the ordinary *re'âyâ* was accomplished.

<sup>141</sup> Đurđev, "O knezovima", pp. 26-28; Filipović, "Islamizacija vlahâ", p. 145.

<sup>142</sup> Đurđev, "O knezovima", pp. 27-28 and passim.

<sup>143</sup> BOA, İbnülemin. Askeriye, Dosya 26, Gömlek 2318.

<sup>144</sup> BOA, İbnülemin. Askeriye, Dosya 5, Gömlek 459.

<sup>145</sup> *Osmani Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 3, pp. 459, 463; Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, p. 30.

<sup>146</sup> *Osmani Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 3, 459, 463; Bojanić, *Turski zakoni*, 31

### *Combatant Vlachs? Paramilitary and military orders of the supposed Vlach origin: voynuks and martoloses*

Since the Vlachs provided a pool for recruitment of auxiliary troops, such as *voynuks* and *martoloses*, these two Christian semi-military groups shall be discussed in brief. The issue of the origin of *voynuks* and *martoloses* is still a matter of discussion. The majority of scholars accepted a theory that *voynuks* and *martoloses* originated from pre-Ottoman lower military nobility, i.e., free peasant-soldiers, who enjoyed tax exempt lands (*baština*). Two facts indicate this: firstly, they were registered in the early Ottoman registers as the “sons of old *sipâhîs*” (*kadîmî sipâhî ođlu*) according to *defter* of the *sancak* of Arvanid (1431), or “of the *sipâhî* origin/descent” (*sipâhî neslinden*) as in *defter* of Braničevo (1467-1468), which supposedly indicate their origin from old Balkan nobility; and secondly, the etymology of their names points to the services in medieval Balkan states.<sup>147</sup> On the other hand, Đurđev proposes a theory that *voynuks* and *martoloses* originated from those Vlachs that were employed in the military services of the medieval Balkan states.<sup>148</sup> In any case, it seems that these orders were in some way connected with the Vlachs.<sup>149</sup> Vast extensions of Ottoman territory required expansion of the body of the *voynuks* and *martoloses* to be ordered into border services. In order to meet these needs, the basis of the orders were widened to include portions of other privileged classes and groups of the Christian population. Since the Vlachs were the most numerous of these groups, it is possible that certain number of members of the *voynuk* and *martolos* orders originated from this pool. In a similar manner, Turkish *Yürüks* were related to Muslim semi-military groups such as *müsellems*, *yayas*, and *akıncıs*, as well as *dođancıs*, *kürecıs*, *yađcıs*, and *şapcıs*, auxiliary professions that granted civilians privileged status of *mü’áf ve müsellem re’âyâ*.<sup>150</sup> Likewise, a number privileged groups of *re’âyâ* that performed certain manual services in the Western Balkans, such as *derbendcıs*, *pâsbâns*, *köprücüs*, *taşcıs*, *tuzcıs*, *filuricıs*, and others, may have been of Vlach origin as well.<sup>151</sup>

In the *sancak* of Klis, for instance, the Ottomans mobilised and militarised two thirds of the domicile population of the region of Cetina in the Dalmatian

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<sup>147</sup> Vasić, *Martolosi*, pp. 42-43; İnalçık, “Od Stefana Dušana,” pp. 43-44; Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluđunda Bulgarlar*, pp. 2-3; Aleksandar Stojanovski, *Raja so specijalni zadođženia vo Makedonija (vojnuci, sokolari, oriđari i solari)*, Institut za nacionalna istorija, Skopje 1990, pp. 8-22. On the origin of the term *martolos* see: Vasić, *Martolosi*, pp. 19-22; Robert Anhegger, “Martoloslar Hakkında”, *Türkijyat Mecmuası*, 7-8, 1 (1940-1942), pp. 283-286.

<sup>148</sup> Đurđev, “O vojnucima, pp. 104-108; Đurđev, “O knezovima”, p. 25.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Beldiceanu, “Sur les valaques des Balkans”, pp. 92-93.

<sup>150</sup> Gökbilgin, *Rumeli’de Yürükler*, pp. 23-24, 50-51.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Halil İnalçık, “Osmanlılar’da Raiyyet Rüsümü”, in: Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluđu. Toplum ve Ekonomi Üzerinde Arşiv Çalışmaları, İncelemeler*, Eren, Istanbul 1993, pp. 52-53, 61-62; İnalçık, “Filori”, pp. 106-107.

hinterland during the fights with the Venetians in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>152</sup> This population belonged to the Balkan family pattern, who were apparently either colonised Orthodox Christian, or indigenous Catholic Vlachs. Certain stipulations in *kânûnnâmes* and *kânûns* hint at the link between the Christian military orders and the Vlachs. Vlach duty was to provide one *voynuk* per five households for guarding unsafe places, according to *kânûns* of the *sancaks* of Braničevo and Vidin and Smederevo, as well as sections of universal *kânûnnâmes* of Sultans Süleymân and Beyâzid (see above). The Vlachs, *voynuks* and *martoloses* were often present in the same areas, especially on borders, where they had similar duties. Consequently, Western European sources often do not distinguish the Vlachs from *martoloses*<sup>153</sup> or *voynuks*. For Benedikt Kuripešić the Vlachs, Serbs, and *martoloses* represented a single “nation/religion”, while Ottoman captive, Croatian Bartol Đurđević (Bartholomaeus Georgievits, 1526-1538), described *voynuks* (*voiniblar*) as “Vlachs, ‘Greek’ followers.”<sup>154</sup> On the other hand, Ottoman chronicler Câfer İyânî (d. 1611-1612) in his chronicle “Tevârih-i Cedîd-i Vilâyet-i Üngürüs,” the history of the Ottoman – Habsburg struggle in Hungary (1585-1595), claims the same: *martoloses* that betrayed the Ottomans during the Habsburg siege of the town of Estergon, were the Vlachs.<sup>155</sup> Since the author was a native of Pecs (Peçuy) and personally participated in the events in Hungary, his testimony may be accepted as adequate.<sup>156</sup> According to Đurđev’s explanation, *voynuks*, as well as *martoloses*, were originally military classes among the Vlachs, which started to differentiate and detach simultaneously with Vlach sedentarisation and their own inclusion into the Ottoman military organisation.<sup>157</sup>

### *Question of disappearance of Christians from state services*

Christian presence in state services, however, were not granted for eternity, but became liable to mundane changes of a pragmatic nature. Hence, when the state reached a sufficient degree of centralisation and development, and thus became self-sufficient, some services provided by certain groups of subjects became dispensable, whilst the privileges granted in exchange for their performance became an unnecessary financial burden.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the 1520s saw the start of a process of gradual reduction and eventual abolition of various

<sup>152</sup> Vasić, *Martolosi*, pp. 53, 82-84

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>154</sup> Kuripešić, *Putopis*, pp. 26-27; Bartolomej Georgijević, *Običaji Turaka (u XVI. vijeku). De Turcarum moribus*,” tr. by Ivo Badrov, Skopje 1922, p. 24.

<sup>155</sup> Câfer İyânî, *Tevârih-i Cedîd-i Vilâyet-i Üngürüs*, ed. by Mehmet Kirişcioğlu, Kitabevi, İstanbul 2001, pp. 70, 59a-59b.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Mehmet Kirişcioğlu, “Müellif ve Eserleri”, in: Câfer İyânî, *Tevârih-i Cedîd-i Vilâyet-i Üngürüs*, ed. by Mehmet Kirişcioğlu, Kitabevi, İstanbul 2001, pp. xv-xxxii.

<sup>157</sup> Đurđev, “O vojnicima,” p. 124.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. İnalçık, “Osmanlılar’da Raiyyet Rûsûmu,” pp. 50-51.

services performed by paramilitary and quasi-governmental bodies. In the northwestern part of the Balkans, those services were performed largely by non-Muslims. Fiscal pressure on these groups resulted in discontent in some parts and rebellions against the authorities, with an exodus to the enemy territory in Dalmatia and Croatia, where they could continue performing the same services and enjoying similar or greater privileges and autonomies than they previously held in the Ottoman realm.<sup>159</sup> It has to be mentioned, however, that even under such circumstances Ottoman land did not stop to be appealing to some Vlachs, who occasionally changed their minds and decided to return to the old masters. A large number of *uskoks* who crossed the Ottoman border over to the “infidel land” in the time of Husrev Bey (roughly between 1521 and 1541), probably following the cancelation of Vlach privileges after 1526, decided to return to the Ottoman territory in 1576.<sup>160</sup> The Ottomans were eager to win them over and granted them *istimâlet* and permission to return and settle, along with a two year exemption from taxes. In this case the term *uskoks* most probably designated the Vlachs in general. Otherwise, it was a specific designation of the Habsburg borderland militia, widely deployed in actions and raids against the Ottomans, which were largely manned with the Vlachs as well. Originally, the term designates those who “jumped in” (Croatian *uskočiti*) into the Habsburg or Venetian territory from the Ottoman realm, i.e., refugees and immigrants in general sense.<sup>161</sup> Venetian sources sometimes used the term *uskok* as a synonym for the Vlach: in 1599, Nicola Dandolo, the Venetian governor of Dalmatia and the commander of the fleet, informed the Senate of Venice that “almost all *uskoks* are Turkish subjects of Morlak ethnicity.”<sup>162</sup> Half a century later, Evliya Çelebi explained the term in a similar way. In the description of a Habsburg and Venetian attack on the town of Knin in Dalmatian hinterland, Evliya noted that among the enemy troops were the “adulterous *uskoks*, who were once Ottoman subjects who went to Franks” (*biçim re'âyâ vî berâyâmız iken Fireng'e tâbi' olup Uskok olan fâcirîn...*).<sup>163</sup> In the account of the Ottoman attack on the fortress of Ribniçe near Šibenik, Evliya

<sup>159</sup> See: Karl Kaser, *Slobodan seljak i vojnik. Rana kriviška društva (1545-1754)*, tr. by Josip Brkić, Vol. 1, Naprijed, Zagreb 1997, pp. 55-66 (originally published as: *Freier Bauer und Soldat. Die Militarisierung der agrarischen Gesellschaft in der kroatisch-slavonischen Militärgrenze (1535-1881)*), Böhlau Verlag, Vienna 1997); Novak, “Morlaci (Vlasi)”, pp. 588-589 and passim.

<sup>160</sup> BOA, Mühimme Defteri, Vol. 28, p. 154, no. 361.

<sup>161</sup> See: Catherine Wendy Bracewell, *Senjski uskoci. Piratstvo, razbojništvo i sveti rat na Jadranu u šesnaestom stoljeću*, tr. by Nenad Popović and Mario Rossini, Barbat, Zagreb 1997, pp. 53-87 (originally published as: *The Uskoks of Senj. Piracy, Banditry and Holy War in the Sixteenth-century Adriatic*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1992); Nenad Moačanin, “Uskoks (Uskoci; Uscocchi; Uskoki)”, in: Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, Facts on File, New York 2009, pp. 579-580.

<sup>162</sup> Quoted in: Novak, “Morlaci (Vlasi)”, p. 595.

<sup>163</sup> Evliya Çelebi b. Derviş Mehemed Zillî, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi. Topkapı Sarayı Bağdat 307 Yazması'nın Transkripsyonu – Dizini*, ed. by Yücel Dağlı, Seyit Ali Kahraman, İbrahim Sezgin, Vol. 5, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2001, p. 243.

in a similar manner remarked that the leader of besieged Venetian forces was the “infidel *uskok* by the name of Šarić, who left our subjecthood and recognized Venice” (*bizim re‘âyâlgımızdan Venedik’e tapup Uskok olan Şarik nâm kâfir*).<sup>164</sup>

The Ottomans were successful in attracting the Vlachs from Venetian territory even in the exact time when privileges of the Ottoman Vlachs were cancelled. According to the summary land register (*icmâl-i tabrîr-i defter*) of the *sancak* of Bosnia in 1530, there was a huge group of the Vlachs from the *vilâyet* of Istria (*Eflakân-i vilâyet-i İstre*), settled on *hâses* of the Bosnian *sancakbeyi* Husrev Beg in the newly conquered border region in Dalmatian hinterland called *vilâyet-i Hirvad*, belonging to the *kâza* of Skradin (İskradin).<sup>165</sup> Their name suggests that these Vlachs migrated to the Ottoman territory from Venetian Istria, a region that was in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries often used by Venetian authorities for settling Vlach immigrants from Bosnia, Croatia and Dalmatia.<sup>166</sup> In any case, in the late 1520s Ottoman pastures seemed greener to the Vlachs of Istria. They settled on the territory of nine Ottoman *nâhiyes* and lived in 89 villages (plus two *cemâ‘ats*), and were registered as 686 households of “infidels” (*hâne-i gebrân*) and four *baştines*. On the whole, they were organized in ten big *cemâ‘ats* that consisted of four to 15 villages, under the leadership of *knežes* and a *vojvoda*. Interestingly enough, it seems that the Islamisation process had already started, since two men were registered as Muslims.<sup>167</sup> Ten years later, however, the number of villages and households of the Vlachs of Istria in the same region remarkably diminished: now they lived in 43 villages and seven *nâhiyes*, while the number of the households fell to 322.<sup>168</sup> Apart from a reduction in numbers, the organisation of the settled Vlachs changed as well. In 1540, only three *cemâ‘ats* remained, while the Vlach elite diminished to two *primikjurs* and two *knežes* as well. While it is possible that some of the Vlachs of Istria left the Ottoman territory during the war with Venice (1537-1539),<sup>169</sup> abolition of Vlach privileges, as well as sedentarisation must have further

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>165</sup> 91, 164, MAD 540 ve 173 Numaralı Hersek, Bosna ve İşvornik Livâları İcmâl Tabrîr Defterleri (926-939 / 1520-1533), Vol. II, T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara 2006, pp. 40-46.

<sup>166</sup> Miroslav Bertoša, *Istra: Doba Venecije (XVI.-XVIII. stoljeće)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ZN “Žakan Juri”, Pula 1995, pp. 61-65; August Kovačec, *Istrorimunjsko-hrvatski rječnik (s gramatikom i tekstovima)*, Znanstvena udruga Mediteran, Pula 1998, pp. 242-244.

<sup>167</sup> 91, 164, MAD 540 ve 173 Numaralı Hersek, Bosna ve İşvornik Livâları İcmâl Tabrîr Defterleri, pp. 41, 45.

<sup>168</sup> Snježana Buzov, “Vlasi Istrije na području sjeverne Dalmacije u popisnim defterima 16. stoljeća”, *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju*, 40 (1990), pp. 244-257.

<sup>169</sup> Kornelija Jurin Starčević, *Osmanski krajiški prostor: rat i društvo u jadransko-dinarskom zaleđu u 16. i 17. stoljeću*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Zagreb 2012, p. 170.



diminished their number, i.e., reduced their visibility in Ottoman sources. In this regard, the somewhat accelerated rhythm of Islamisation – ten households of new Muslims of indicated Vlach origin, as well as two “older” Muslim households (a Muslim with a Muslim father, and Hasan *terzi*), might indicate the process as well.<sup>170</sup> In 1550, the Vlachs of Istria were assimilated to other populations of the region, and their name – *Eflakân-i İstre* – disappeared from the sources. The designation “Istria,” however, still remained in the name of 13 villages in four *nâhiyes*.<sup>171</sup> Nevertheless, colonists from Istria appeared once again in the region in 1568, when the *sancakbeyi* of Klis was ordered to find place for “two hundred households of Istrian infidels (*İstriye'nin kâfirleri*) [who] came from the enemy territory (*dârü'l-harb*) and were settled around the fortress of Knin.”<sup>172</sup> The newcomers were subjected to the privileged tax of two *filuri* to the state, and 30 *akçes* to the *bey*s. Although it is not clear whether these settlers were the Vlachs, it seems possible that *Eflakân-i İstriye* returned to Ottoman pastures once again.

Another example of successful Ottoman struggles for the Vlachs against neighbouring Christian states and the strategy employed was provided in the order to assign *timâr* of 13.000 *akçes* to monk Andrija, the head of the monastery of Zalužje in the *nâhiye* of Zmijanje near Banja Luka in 1560.<sup>173</sup> The monk was awarded on the suggestion of the *sancakbeyi* of Bosnia, Malkoç Bey, as a recognition of his faithful 24 year long service on the border, providing help and persuading people from the enemy territory to settle in the Ottoman domain. According to the data from the tax register (*tabrir defteri*) of Bosnia of 1604, the *nâhiye* of Zmijanje was largely populated by the population of the Vlach origin, which can be assumed from the nature of the land holdings that were by large *baştinas*, type of land often connected with the Vlachs and *filurici* population; the fact that *knezes* were still present in many villages, as well as from the names of obvious non-Slavic, Vlach origin, such as Radul, Herak and Drakul.<sup>174</sup> It is possible that monks who succeeded Andrija, Đuriša Vukašinov and Andrija Radakov, continued Andrija's service, since there was a number of newly settled people in Zmijanje at this time as well. However, it seems that the Vlachs in this *nâhiye* lost their Vlach quality in the eyes of the chancery, since there are only two people mentioned as the Vlachs in the village of

<sup>170</sup> Buzov, “Vlasi Istrije”, pp. 247-256.

<sup>171</sup> Buzov, “Vlasi Istrije”, pp. 245-246; Jurin Starčević, *Osmanski krajiški prostor*, p. 171.

<sup>172</sup> 7 *Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975-976 / 1567-1569)*, tıpkıbasım, Vol. 2, T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara 1997, n. 2468, p. 901; Cf. Jurin-Starčević, *Osmanski krajiški prostor*, p. 173.

<sup>173</sup> BOA, *Mühimme Defteri*, Vol. 4, no. 1757, p. 170.

<sup>174</sup> *Opširni popis Bosanskog Sandžaka iz 1604. godine*, ed. and tr. by Adem Handžić, Vol. I/2, Bošnjački institut Zürich – Odjel Sarajevo and Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, Sarajevo 2000, pp. 387-400.

Grahovine.<sup>175</sup> On the other hand, a certain number of people were recent converts to Islam, which is again one of recognisable features of the process of the Vlach sedentarisation.

The attraction of the Ottoman realm for the Vlachs in Dalmatia was still irresistible even in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. According to Dalmatian chronicler Difnik, despite Venetian victories over the Ottomans during the war of Candia, and mass migrations of the Ottoman Vlachs to the Venetian territory, the *kethüda* of the Bosnian pasha managed to secretly persuade some of the poorest Vlachs to migrate back to the Ottoman side by promises to pardon the treason and provide the required assistance. Well aware of the danger of these secret negotiations, the Venetian authorities decided to act, and murdered some of the Vlachs involved, by drowning them, while others were pacified by rations of state grain.<sup>176</sup>

Significant segments of the Ottoman Vlachs were conciliatory and ready to accept the new realities. According to the Moaçanin's interpretation, the cancellation of privileges and reduction to the *re'âyâ* status did not however, necessarily represent a loss for the Vlachs, since due to the fact that border regions suffered from depopulation, taxes were not significantly increased.<sup>177</sup> In addition, cessation of military services might have represented considerable relief for the Vlachs.<sup>178</sup> A segment of the Vlachs, however, decided to try to relieve their own position by an attempt to enter the system. Since all higher state positions were the preserve of the Muslims, the only proven way to become competitive in such circumstances seemed to be conversion to Islam. In addition, conversion was beneficial even if a person was not particularly ambitious, but preferred to accept his or her fate and become an ordinary subject – *re'âyâ*, since the overall taxes of Muslim subjects were somewhat lower than that of Christians. The Balkan historiographies, at least the ex-Yugoslav, concluded that this process represented an assault of Muslim state on Christian elements in its body, based, if not exclusively, than significantly enough, on religious grounds.<sup>179</sup>

Some of these arguments, such as the exclusivity of higher offices for Muslims, are hard to ignore. However, if this process is put into wider perspective, that is, if the focus is removed from the predominantly Christian

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., p. 396.

<sup>176</sup> Difnik, *Povijest Kandijskog rata*, p. 217.

<sup>177</sup> Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, pp. 87-88.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>179</sup> See: Filipović, "Vlasi i uspostava timarskog sistema," pp. 217-218; Filipović, "Islamizacija vlahâ," p. 145; Vasić, *Martolosi*, pp. 163-166; Vasić, "Knežine i knezovi," pp. 249-250; Đurđev, "O knezovima," pp. 27-28; Branislav Đurđev, "Uloga srpske crkve u borbi protiv osmanske vlasti," *Pregled*, 1 (1953), p. 38; Đurđev, *Uloga crkve*, pp. 138-140. For the description of the state pressure in the 15<sup>th</sup> century see: Nedim Filipović, *Princ Musa i šejh Bedreddin*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo 1971, pp. 275-278.

context of the north-western Balkans towards the mainly Muslim environment of Anatolia, than it will be possible to notice that such austere developments were not affecting non-Muslims in particular, but were going on in the Muslim context as well. Similarly to the Vlachs, their Muslim counterparts, the Yürüks, vanished as an administratively recognized entity in the years after the great war of 1683-1699, lost their privileges and became ordinary *re'âyâ*.<sup>180</sup> Some Muslim paramilitary orders like *akıncıs*, *yayas*, and *müsellems*, completely lost their privileges, while other groups, as *doğancıs*, *yağcıs*, *at-çekens*, etc., managed to preserve only smaller parts of previous exemptions. Only the religious dignitaries – *imâms* and *batıbs*, were allowed to preserve their previous status.<sup>181</sup> By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the brigandage by former troops discharged from duty, accompanied by various malcontents, such as *sipâhıs* who lost their *tümârs*, nomads, and jobless graduates of *medreses* (*sofıas*), turned Anatolia in the period from 1595 to 1606 into havoc, resulting in irreparable material and human losses.

Uprisings of the Muslim population, on the other hand, were not limited to Anatolia, just as uprisings in the Balkans were not exclusively a Christian phenomenon. Cancellation of certain privileges and the introduction of new taxes in Bosnia incited rebellions by Muslim population in the 1630s. In 1636, Muslim peasants raided and destroyed the courthouse of Sarajevo. The uprising of 1650 was led by the highest religious authority in Bosnia, *molla* of Sarajevo Hasan Efendi Arapoğlu (Arapović). The peak of the unrest was reached in 1682, when a rebellious mob stormed the court of Sarajevo and killed the judge (*kâdî*) and his assistant (*na'ib*).<sup>182</sup> The unrests resurfaced after the introduction of the *taksit* tax in 1720. This time, however, the janissaries of Mostar and Sarajevo joined the rebels, known as *yaramazlar* and *delibaşıs*. After the ten-year long lawlessness in Bosnia, open rebellion was brought to an end by the harsh measures employed by Mehmed Pasha Kukavica (Kovaca) in 1756.<sup>183</sup> Put in this light, revolts by the Christian population and their paramilitary groups, brigandage, collaboration with Christian states in the time of war, or immigration to the enemy territory, acquired another socio-economic dimension that should be taken into consideration together with the previously overstressed confessional element.

<sup>180</sup> Çetintürk, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Yürük Sınıfı,” pp. 115-116.

<sup>181</sup> İnalçık, “Osmanlılar’da Raiyyet Rüsûmu”, pp. 50-51.

<sup>182</sup> Avdo Sućeska, “Seljačke bune u Bosni u XVII i XVIII stoljeću”, *Godišnjak Istorijiskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, 17 (1966-1967), pp. 163-207.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, passim; Avdo Sućeska, “Položaj raje u Bosni u u XVIII stoljeću, *Dijalog*, 6 (1978), pp. 68-70; Michael Robert Hickok, *Ottoman Military Administration in Eighteenth-Century Bosnia*, Brill, London-New York-Köln 1997, pp. 116-117, 129-130, 134-135.

### *Vlach as Merchants and Town People*

It would be wrong, however, not to mention that a considerable portion of the Vlachs lived a life that did not correspond to the idea of nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism, but were sedentary and engaged in trade.<sup>184</sup> Even though the Vlachs lost their “Vlach” character in the eyes of the administration after the sedentarisation during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a cunning observer such as Evliya Çelebi mentioned the Vlachs in a couple of north-western Balkan and Hungarian towns and villages in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to Buda, Evliya encountered Vlachs in Sarajevo, who lived in ten *maballes* along with “Serbs, Bulgars and Latins.”<sup>185</sup>

Even in the pre-Ottoman late medieval, period the Vlachs were involved in trade, in the beginning mainly in transport of goods by caravans between Dubrovnik and other Dalmatian towns and the Balkan interior, which soon became their monopoly. In time however, they became involved in trade as merchants as well, trading initially with goods they produced themselves, such as cheese, meat, leather and wool, which would expand later on onto other commodities, such as precious metals, textile and the like.<sup>186</sup> After the incorporation of the Balkans into the Ottoman realm, the Vlach trade started to flourish in the new setting of a unified market within the vast boundaries. The Vlachs took part in raising, lucrative international trade between Balkan centres and Italy, via Dubrovnik, Split and other Dalmatian towns. The impact of the border crossing trade of the Vlachs on the local level, i.e., for Dalmatian towns, can hardly be overestimated. The narrow coastal strip of Venetian Dalmatia lacked agricultural lands and heavily depended on food imports from neighbouring Bosnia.<sup>187</sup> For example, the production of grain in Šibenik, the biggest Dalmatian town, met the needs of its townsmen merely for two months of the year, while the remaining amount of grain had to be imported.<sup>188</sup> Gianbattista Guistiniano, who came to Šibenik in 1553, highly esteemed the value of the Vlach trade for the town:

*Trade that is maintained between those [people] from Šibenik with the Morlaks, Turkish subjects, is large, useful and needed. It is large, because it amounts over 50.000 ducats a year. It is useful, because its benefit is felt by the state, commune*

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<sup>184</sup> Beldiceanu, “Sur valaques des Balkans”, pp. 31-32.

<sup>185</sup> Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, Vol. 5, p. 224.

<sup>186</sup> Dušanka Kovačević-Kojić, “Učešće Vlaha u trgovinskoj razmjeni tokom XIV i XV vijeka”, in: “Simpozijum – Vlasi u XV i XVI vijeku (Sarajevo, 13-16. XI 1973)”, *Radovi Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 73, Odjeljenje društvenih nauka, Vol. 22, Sarajevo 1983, pp. 79-84.

<sup>187</sup> Ivan Pederin, *Mletačka uprava, privreda i politika u Dalmaciji (1409-1797)*, Časopis “Dubrovnik”, Dubrovnik 1990, p. 134.

<sup>188</sup> Grga Novak, “Šibenik u razdoblju mletačke vladavine 1412-1797. godine”, in: Slavko Grubišić, ed. in chief, *Šibenik. Spomen zbornik o 900. obljetnici*, Muzej Grada Šibenika, Šibenik 1976, p. 182.

*and private entrepreneurs; it is needed because if this traffic was taken away, Šibenik would not only suffer, but it would be ruined completely, since if Morlaks did not bring foodstuff to Šibenik, such as cheese, meat, grain, honey, wool, blankets, wax and many other stuff, people of Šibenik would not have where to supply from. Morlaks export from Šibenik [the following goods]: oil, spices, wine, broadcloth, copper, white wax, sugar goods, and many other stuff, which is useful to individuals in the town. In addition, they export salt in great quantities.<sup>189</sup>*

Participation in lucrative trade initiated the process of social stratification among the Vlachs already in the late middle ages. A telling example of this phenomenon in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman setting was registered in the court records of Sarajevo. The death of *zimmî* Ilija, son of Aranid, in the caravanserai of Husrev Beg in 1565, raised great attention amongst various parties on the issue concerning his inheritance. Firstly, the officer of state treasury (*beytü'l-mâl*) called Sûfi 'Alî bin 'Abdullah, upon the news of death of *zimmî* Ilija, who died without legal heir, ordered Keyvân bin 'Abdullah, who borrowed from Aranid 56 golden coins (*şiluri*) for purchasing broadcloth (*çuba*) "from the sea" (*derjadan*), to pay the debt back to state treasury.<sup>190</sup> Before long, however, a person called Aranid son of Lalko, *zimmî* from the village of Bukan, belonging to the Vlach *cemâ'at* of knez Selak from the *nâhiye* of Vrhovine in the *kaza* of Brod, appeared in the court with the claim that he, as the father of Ilija, has the right to inheritance, and not state treasury. In order to prove his claim, Aranid provided a certificate of *kâdî* of Brod with written testimony of two Muslims on his behalf.<sup>191</sup> However, in order to ensure the collection of debts and acquire a guarantee for remaining issues, Aranid assigned Sûfi 'Alî, the officer of state treasury, as his representative in the case.<sup>192</sup> Afterwards, Sûfi 'Alî confiscated the debt of Keyvân bin 'Abdullah to late Ilija in the amount of 56 golden coins.<sup>193</sup> In addition, he seized 800 *akçes* that Ilija gave as a loan to his namesake, Ilija son of Vuksan.<sup>194</sup> Together with this, a couple of people that sought the money from Ilija's inheritance appeared as well. Tur'alî bin 'Alî put a claim for 636 *akçes* from the value of the Ilija's broadcloth as his own capital. Upon the testimony of two Muslim witnesses and his own oath, the sought amount, was awarded to him.<sup>195</sup> Following the same protocols, including witnesses and oaths, 250 *akçes* of invested capital were returned to Hâcî İbrahim bin İskender from the value of Ilija's cloth as well.<sup>196</sup> This example

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<sup>189</sup> Quoted in: Novak, "Šibenik", p. 266.

<sup>190</sup> Gazi Husrev Beg's Library, Sarajevo (henceforth: GHB). Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 192/3.

<sup>191</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 197/1.

<sup>192</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 197/2.

<sup>193</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 198/2.

<sup>194</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 198/3.

<sup>195</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 198/4.

<sup>196</sup> GHB, Sicil of Sarajevo, Vol. 2, p. 199/1.

already illustrates in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, certain Vlach merchants accumulated considerable capital, engaged in border crossing trade with Dubrovnik, Dalmatian towns and/or Italy, were involved in partnerships with Muslims, as well as money lending to other Vlachs. Similarly, the Aranid's claim for Ilija's inheritance, as well as his actions in court, showed that he well understood the court procedures and the basics of Ottoman legal system. As for the Aranid and Ilija's Vlach identity, apart from obvious Vlach markers such as *knež* and *cemâ'at*, the tax register of Bosnia of 1604 shows that the *nâbiye* of Vrhovine was still largely inhabited by the population of Vlach origin who enjoyed *baştinas*, while some of the villages were still headed by *knežes*. However, they were not registered as the Vlachs by name, while a certain level of Islamisation was present as well.<sup>197</sup>

The 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the full rise of the "conquering Orthodox Balkan merchants," who pushed away domestic Catholic rivals and Ragusan merchants, and established themselves even in centres outside the Ottoman borders, such as important European towns of Buda, Pest, Vienna, and Trieste.<sup>198</sup> These influential merchants, in Slavic sources known as *Cincari*, came from Graeco-Vlach backgrounds, in geographical terms, from the region between historical Macedonia, Epirus, and Thessaly, with the centre in Moskopolje.<sup>199</sup> Some of them rose up even further, like the Sina family, which came from Moskopolje to Sarajevo in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Simeon Sina, born in Sarajevo in 1753, moved to Vienna via Slavonki Brod, where later he established a bank and transacted business throughout Europe and the Ottoman Empire. In order to manage his business affairs in the Ottoman market, he founded a bank in Sarajevo. He was en-nobled by Austria in recognition of his merit for export in the Ottoman Empire and development of transit trade, as well as the foundation and development of the domestic industry.<sup>200</sup> His sons John and George continued their father's business, and in recognition of their activities and contribution to the state and society, received the title of barons. George Sina was particularly successful, becoming one of the richest bankers, investors and traders not only in Austria but also in Europe as a whole. His son Simeon, the last male offspring of the Sina family, left the banking business, entered diplomacy and spent some time as the ambassador of Greece in Vienna, Berlin and Munich respectively. In addition, he distinguished himself as philanthropist and benefactor of arts and sciences.<sup>201</sup> The

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<sup>197</sup> *Opširni popis Bosanskeg Sandžaka*, ed. and tr. by Amina Kupusović, Vol. 3, Bošnjački institut Zürich – Odjel Sarajevo and Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, Sarajevo 2000, pp. 447-461.

<sup>198</sup> See: Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," pp. 234-313.

<sup>199</sup> Popović, *O Cincarima*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 149-151.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 151-158. Cf. Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant", pp. 302; Stoica Lascu, "Balkan Vlachs – Autonomies and Modernity", in: Maria

philanthropy of the Sina family, however, was not only confined to Austria-Hungary and Greece. Along with two Ottoman sultans and various European royalties and highest nobility, *il barone di Sina* significantly contributed by a donation to the establishment of Artigiana, a nursing house for European immigrant workers in the Istanbul's quarter of Pangaltı (Harbiye), founded by Giacomo Anderlitch from Rijeka (Fiume) in 1838.<sup>202</sup> However, despite their wealth, influence and contribution to the development of modern national bourgeoisie in their host countries, this new potent generation of Vlach merchants was gradually assimilated into Greek, Serb, Bulgarian and Albanian identities during the long 19<sup>th</sup> century and eventually disappeared as a separate entity,<sup>203</sup> sharing the fate of their nomadic predecessors.

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Baramova, Plamen Mitev, Ivan Parvev, Vania Racheva, eds., *Power and Influence in South-Eastern Europe, 16-19th century*, LIT Verlag, Berlin 2013, pp. 203-204.

<sup>202</sup> P. Aurelio Palmieri, *L'associazione commerciale Artigiana di Pietà in Constantinopoli. Cenni storici 1837-1902*, Naples 1902, pp. 8-9.

<sup>203</sup> Popović, *O Cincarima*, pp. 21, 303-307; Lascu, "Balkan Vlachs," p. 207.

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