

# SETTLEMENTS AND POPULATION OF THE PRESENT-DAY MONTENEGRIN POLIMLJE IN THE SECOND HALF OF 15<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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## Introduction

Geographically, Polimlje (the Lim valley) region falls into three parts: Upper, Central and Lower Polimlje. According to geographers, Upper Polimlje stretches from Gusinje to Berane, Central – from Bijelo Polje to Prijepolje, while Lower Polimlje encompasses the area from Prijepolje to the confluence of the Lim into the Drina river. However, it is a homogeneous geographic region of the Lim river basin comprising certain parts of the territories of the present-day Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Administratively, the Montenegrin Polimlje comprises the municipalities of Gusinje, Plav, Andrijevica, Berane, Petnjica and Bijelo Polje.<sup>1</sup>

Ottoman rules at the end of 14<sup>th</sup> and in the first half of 15<sup>th</sup> century did not, as it seems, result in any significant changes or population movements in these parts. Not even after the final conquest of this area (1455) did any major demographic change or an interruption in the population continuity occur. The fact that all the places in the parishes and wider areas kept their former names bears witness to this notion. Upon the conquest, the Ottoman authorities kept all the former toponyms frequently combining them with either new names or altered old ones.<sup>2</sup>

Fernand Braudel, one of the leading authorities on world history, designated the Ottoman rule as *the liberation of the poor country folk* with regard to the fact that

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<sup>1</sup> Milisav Lutovac, "Dolina Lima – geografski značaj i privredno – geografske promene", *Glasnik Srpskog geografskog društva*, Vol. XLI-1, Beograd 1961, pp. 33–34; Ranko Dragović, *Polimlje: priroda, turizam, održivi razvoj*, Srpsko geografsko društvo, Beograd 2004, pp. 23–24.

<sup>2</sup> Marijan Premović, *Župa Budimlja u srednjem vijeku*, Državni arhiv Crne Gore, Cetinje 2012, pp. 39–40 (hereafter: Premović, *Župa Budimlja*).

the oppression of the country dwellers by their Christian feudal lords reached such proportions that many villagers regarded the Ottoman conquest as liberation in a similar way as the Spaniards greeted the Arabs as liberators from the Goths. The Ottoman state was orderly, resolute to conquer and expand, holding its people and each individual in high esteem. They ordered local princes to populate villages, attracted newcomers by offering various incentives, tax deductions and, while expanding to the north and north-west, they granted special statuses and the people followed. This is well described both in Turkish chronicles and in Serbian and Bosnian records.<sup>3</sup>

The most significant documents for Montenegrin Medieval history are cadastral defters (*tahrîr defterleri*).<sup>4</sup> The defters clearly show how the Ottoman rule expanded on Montenegro territory. The expansion started in 1455 by the invasion of the present-day Montenegrin Polimlje and ended with the fall of Bar and Ulcinj in 1571, with the time span clearly indicating that it was a lengthy process.

The following defters contain valuable information on settlements and demographics of this area: *The Collective Cadastral Defter of the provincial governor Isa-Beg Ishaković*. This census was carried out between 9<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1455 and was a collective schedule;<sup>5</sup> *The Collective Defter of Bosnia Sanjak* was commenced on

<sup>3</sup> Holm Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije od 19. do 21. veka*, Clio, Beograd 2009, pp. 40–42; Šerbo Rastoder, “Katak osvrt na proces islamizacije u Crnoj Gori”, *Drugi susreti crnogorsko – turskog prijateljstva: uloga i značaj Dinastije Crnojević (1451–1530) u istorijskom i kulturološkom sučeljavanju i prožimanju naroda Crne Gore i Turske*, Podgorica, 18–20. juna 2010. godine, *Revija Forum*, Podgorica 2012, p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> There is a considerable number of studies on the Ottoman Censuses of which we only present the following selection: Halil İnalçık, *Hicri 835 Tarihli Suret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Arvanid*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1954; Hazim Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega Ishakovića*, The Oriental Institute, Sarajevo 1964, pp. XXI–LVI (Introduction) (hereafter: Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega*); Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Hüdavendigâr Livası Tahrir Defterleri* 1. Cilt, TTK, Ankara 1988; Ema Miljković–Bojanić, “O značaju osmanskih popisnih knjiga kao istorijskih izvora – na primjeru deftera Smederevskog sandžaka”, *Istorijski časopis*, Vol. XLIX, Beograd 2002, pp. 123–137; Heath W. Lowry, *Fifteenth Century Ottoman Realities: Christian Peasant Life on the Aegean Island of Limnos*, Eren Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2002; Amina Kupusović, “Defteri Hercegovackog sandžaka u arhivu Orijentalnog instituta u Sarajevu”, *Žbornik radova: naučni skup herceg Sijepan Vukčić Kosača i njegovo doba*, Mostar 2005, pp. 69–74; Hatice Oruç, “15. Yüzyılda Bosna Sancağı ve Idari Dağılımı”, *OTAM*, Vol. 18, Ankara 2006, pp. 249–269 (hereafter: Oruç, “15. Yüzyılda Bosna”); Hatice Oruç, “Tahrir defters on the Bosnian Sanjak”, *Archivum Ottomanicum*, Vol. 25, Wiesbaden 2008, pp. 255–282; Ema Miljković, “Osmanske popisne knjige defteri kao izvori za istorijsku demografiju – mogućnosti istraživanja, tačnost pokazatelja i metodološke nedoumice”, *Teme*, Vol. 1, Niš 2010, pp. 363–373 (hereafter: Miljković, “Osmanske popisne knjige”); Heath W. Lowry, *Studies in Defterology: Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, The ISIS Press/ Gorgias Pr. Llc., Istanbul 2012; Ahmed S. Aličić, *Katastarski popis ejaleta Bosna: opširni katastarski popis za oblast hercegovu iz 1585. godine*, sv.1, Dobra knjiga, Sarajevo 2014, pp. VII–XV; Ema Miljković, “Ottoman Census Books as Sources for Historical Demography: Research Possibilities, Exactness and Methodological Doubts”, *Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Defter-i Hâkâmî*, Cilt I, Istanbul 2015, pp. 71–79.

<sup>5</sup> The Defter is kept in the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives in Istanbul as Maliye defteri No 544. The Defter was prepared and published by Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega*, pp. XLVII–XLIX (Introduction).

26<sup>th</sup> January 1468 and completed on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1469.<sup>6</sup> *Individual Defter of the Sanjak of Herzegovina Vilayet* was started in 1475 and completed by the end of 1477;<sup>7</sup> *The Summary Defter of Pasha Sanjak of 1477/8 (1477/8 Tarihli Paşa Sancağı İcmal Tahrir Defteri)*,<sup>8</sup> *The Inventory Defter of the Sanjak of Scutari of 1485 (Defter-i mufassal-i liva-i Iskenderiye sene-i 890-hijri)* was commenced in 1479 and finished between 17<sup>th</sup> February and 18<sup>th</sup> March 1485. The editor of this defter, S. Pulaha, points out that Scutari Defter followed the pattern of comprehensive defters (*mufassal*);<sup>9</sup> *The Summary Defter of Bosnia Sanjak of 1485 and the Comprehensive Defter of Bosnia Sanjak of 1489*.<sup>10</sup> A comparative study of these seven counts has enabled us to present the type of administrative organisation, settlement typology, to trace the demographic changes, land ownership changes, social stratification and statuses, the taxation system, etc.<sup>11</sup>

These censuses, combined with the retroactive method, thoroughly compensate for the deficiency of information for the reconstruction of settlements and demographics in the Middle Ages. The Defters present the situation as it was there and then within the administrative units – nahiyas. Nahiya is an Arab word (*nāhī*) which means side, part, region, area. In the Ottoman state, nahiyas were the basic administrative entities which composed sanjaks. Frequently, a nahiya was a natural geographic whole and bore the name of its centre – a municipality, a town, a larger village, a fortress or the nearest river.<sup>12</sup>

Defters have given us the opportunity to try to estimate the population of villages and nahiyas. They contain information on heads of households,

<sup>6</sup> Oruç, “15. Yüzyılda Bosna”, p. 254; The original Defter manuscript is kept in the Municipal Library of Istanbul as Muallim Cevdet Yazmalari No 0097. The Defter was recently prepared and published by Ahmed S. Aličić, *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna iz 1468/69. godine*, Islamski kulturni centar, Mostar 2008, pp. XI–XXV (Introduction) (hereafter: Aličić, *Sumarni popis*).

<sup>7</sup> The original Defter manuscript is kept in The Government Archives of Turkey as 05. Ahmed S. Aličić, *Poimnični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina*, Orijentalni institut, Sarajevo 1985, pp. I–III (Introduction) (hereafter: Aličić, *Poimnični popis*).

<sup>8</sup> Tatjana Katić, “Tvrđava Bihor u 15. i 16. veku”, *Durđevi stupovi i Budimljanska eparhija*, Berane–Beograd 2011, pp. 483–498 (hereafter: Katić, “Tvrđava Bihor”).

<sup>9</sup> Selami Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit të Sanxhakut të Shkodrës i vitit 1485*, Akademia e Shkencave e R.P. të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë 1974, pp. 3–46 (hereafter: Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*).

<sup>10</sup> These two defters of 1485 and 1489, which refer to Limski Nikšići Nahiya, were published by: Hatice Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići u granicama Bosanskog i Hercegovackog sandžaka u 15. i 16. stoljeću”, *Historijska traganja*, Vol. 10, Sarajevo 2012, pp. 155–180 (hereafter: Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”).

<sup>11</sup> More on the relevance of the Ottoman Defters as historical sources in: Miljković, “Osmanske popisne knjige”, pp. 363–373.

<sup>12</sup> Hazim Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk: postanak i upravna podjela*, Naučno društvo NR Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo 1959, p. 110 (hereafter: Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*).

males, widows, bachelors, Muslims and monks. These data help to determine an approximate population of the area, their ethnicity and movement. Such approximations are hampered by the fact that people who were relieved of taxation for various reasons were not listed (falconers, paramilitary militias – *derbenci*, etc.) and therefore, based on the *defter*s, we can only research the listed population and not the total population of a cadastral area. These censuses did not list the whole Muslim population. The list item of a household consisted of married couples, males and widows.<sup>13</sup> Estimations of the number of household members in the Middle Ages vary from author to author: some deem that an average number of household members was between 3.5 and 7, while others are of the opinion that there were 4 to 5 members. M. Rašević insists on 4.4 members per household.<sup>14</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan insist on 5 member,<sup>15</sup> Nejat Göyünc insist 3-5 member per household.<sup>16</sup> The most methodologically acceptable estimation is that the number of members per household was 5 if it was headed by a man and 2.5 if the household was headed by a widow.<sup>17</sup> Bachelors, listed in the censuses were multiplied by the coefficient 1. The number of monks has been calculated in the same way as bachelors regardless of the fact that some of them, before becoming monks, were married and had children. This approximation revealed the tendencies in the population size and movement.<sup>18</sup> The household heads had to pay an annual *İспенçe* (tax per capita, personal tax) of 25 *akçes* (Turkish currency).<sup>19</sup> In Polimlje, the taxation per capita varied for Muslim households. Some were completely relieved of paying the individual tax, some paid 6 *akçes* while others paid 9 and the reason for such considerable differences in the taxation

<sup>13</sup> Miroslav Rašević, “Demografske prilike i stanovništvo”, *Naselja i stanovništvo u oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine*, Beograd 2001, pp. 425–428 (hereafter: Rašević, “Demografske prilike”); Siniša Mišić, “Naseljenost Polimlja u srednjem veku”, *Mileševski zapisi*, Vol. 6, Prijepolje 2005, pp. 70–76. The following works have not been used in the presentation of the Polimlje population: *Summary list of Sandzak from 1468/69*, *Summary list of Pasha Sandzak from 1477/8*, *Summary defter Bosnian sanjak from 1485* and *Detailed defter Bosnian sanjak from 1489. year*.

<sup>14</sup> Rašević, “Demografske prilike i stanovništvo”, p. 428; See also: Jusuf Mulić, “Prilog istraživanju mogućnosti procjenjivanja broja stanovnika u Bosni i Hercegovini u vrijeme osmanske vladavine”, *Hercegovina*, Vol. 13–14, Mostar 2001, pp. 42–46.

<sup>15</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Türkiye’de İmparatorluk Devrinin Büyük Nüfus ve Arazi Tahrirleri ve Hakan Mahsus İstatistik Defterler”, *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Vol.II/1–2, İstambul 1941, p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Nejat Göyünc, “Hâne Deyimi Hakkında”, *İ.Ü. Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, Vol. 32, İstanbul 1979, pp. 331–348.

<sup>17</sup> Miljković, “Ottoman Census Books”, pp. 74–75.

<sup>18</sup> Rašević, “Demografske prilike”, p. 430.

<sup>19</sup> Miloš Jovanović, “Tačnost podataka i kontrola”, *Naselja i stanovništvo u oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine*, Beograd 2001, pp. 279–281.

have never been established.<sup>20</sup> Single-member households paid smaller taxes than others and the households headed by widows were relieved of any taxation except *İспенçe*, which was 6 akçes per annum. The number of widows in the defters was small and therefore it can be assumed that, due to unfavourable life circumstances, widowed women frequently remarried in order to improve their situation.<sup>21</sup>

After the Ottoman conquest of these parts, the land was proclaimed state property and, as in other conquered areas, its supreme owner was the Sultan. Estates were categorised as either *hass*, *zeamet* or *timar*. Hass holders were the Sultan, viziers, beylerbeys, sanyak-beys, defterdars and marksmen. According to a classification from around 1516, the annual revenue from a hass was over 100,000 akçes. Zeamet holders were alaybeys, timar kiayas, timar defterdars, the Divan clerks, chaushes (*çavuşes*) and subashis. The annual zeamet revenue was from 20.000 to 100.000 akçes. Timar is an estate granted to a person to collect annual revenue from it no bigger than 19.999 akçes. It was not granted for life and could not be inherited, but was rather a compensation for the military service of the timariot (the holder). Additionally, the timariot was responsible for supervising his timar territory and the peasants who lived on it. The *baştinas* (inheritable plots of arable land) of the peasants who lived on a timar, zeamet or hass had an important role in the timar system. The defters listed *chifliks*, *mezras* (small villages), hass farmland, meadows, orchards and vineyards.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ema Miljković, "Pljevaljsko društvo—preobražaj srpskog trga u osmansku kasabu", *Istorija Pljevalja*, Pljevalja 2009, p. 104.

<sup>21</sup> Miloš Jovanović, "Tačnost podataka i kontrola", *Naselja i stanovništvo u oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine*, Beograd 2001, pp. 279–289; Miljković, "Osmanske popisne knjige", pp. 367–368.

For every count, the High Porte constituted The Census Commission consisting of an *emin* (administrator) and a *katib* (clerk). In the census carried out in the Isa-beg's province, the administrator was named as Aliya, the son of Hadži Jakub, while the clerk's name was left out. In the Bosnia-sanyak census of 1468/69, the administrator was Ays-bey and the clerk was Ahmed. In the individual census of sanyaks of Herzegovina vilayet, the administrator was Melvan Vildar and the clerk was Pir Muhamed. In the introduction to the Scutari sanyak of 1485, the *emin* was Mustafa Saradželdin and with him – Suleyman Abdulah. More about this in: Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega*, pp. XXX–XXXIV (Introduction); Aličić, *Poimenični popis*, pp. I–V, 2; Aličić, *Sumarni popis*, pp. XV–XVI (Introduction); Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 3–9; Skender Rizaj, "O defteru Skadarskog sandžaka iz 1485. godine", *Jugoslavenski istorijski časopis*, Vol. 1–2, Beograd 1980, pp. 106–110 (hereinafter: Rizaj, "O defteru"); Miljković, "Osmanske popisne knjige", pp. 365–366.

<sup>22</sup> On the Ottoman timar system and its character find more in: Nedim Filipović, "Pogled na osmanski feudalizam (sa naročitim obzirom na agrarne odnose)", *Godišnjak istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. IV, Sarajevo 1952, pp. 35–50; Olga Zirojević, *Tursko vojno uređenje u Srbiji (1459–1683)*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 1974, pp. 102–105 (hereafter: Zirojević, *Tursko vojno uređenje*); Ömer Lütfi Barkan (1993). "Timar", *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, C.XII/I (MEB), İstanbul 1993, pp. 286–333; Miloš Macura, "Osmanski feudalizam", *Naselja i stanovništvo u oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine*, Beograd 2001, pp. 476–484, 515–517; Ema Miljković, "Turski feudalni sistem na Balkanu u prvom veku vladavine", *Naselja i stanovništvo u oblasti Brankovića 1455. godine*,

## 1. Limski Nikšići Nahiya in the Ottoman Defters of 1455, 1468/69, 1485 and 1489

In the last decade of 14<sup>th</sup> and the first few decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, groups of Nikšić Vlach cattle-breeders populated the deserted parts of Potarje (the Tara Valley) and central Polimlje. This group of cattle-breeders started collaborating with the Ottomans very early and became their subjects long before the fall in 1455. In The Collective Cadastral Defter of the provincial governor Isa-Beg Ishaković of 1455, they were listed as administrative territorial unit of *Limski Nikšići vilayet* (*Lim Niksikler, eflaklardır – Vlasi su*). The village of Kruševo-on-the-Lim belonged to Isa-Beg Ishaković's hass with the revenue of 525 akçes. Three Vlachs from this area were listed as timariots: Stepan, the son of Nikšić (Bistrica), Vladka, the son of Stepan (Cerovo), V'łka, the son of Godevac (Obod), all three of them as sipahis (armed horseman) of the Nikšići vilayet.<sup>23</sup>

The Ottomans considered the Vlachs to have a significant social, political and military influence. In Limski Nikšići vilayet, the Vlachs were given land with an obligation to participate in military campaigns and in that way they were incorporated into the Ottoman military system.<sup>24</sup> This area included 4 rural settlements, 40 houses, 3 single adult members of households, 2 widows, 207 inhabitants and the revenue of 4,051 akçes. Nahiya Limski Nikšići included the area between the Lim and the Tara rivers, Kolašin to the south, Mojkovac to the north-west, and its northernmost part was Bijelo Polje area.

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Beograd 2001, pp. 533–539; Ema Miljković, “Timarski sistem u nahiji Sjenica u drugoj polovini XV veka”, *Mileševski zapisi*, Vol. 8, Prijepolje 2009, pp. 97–99; Leyla Aksu Kiliç, “Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Timar Ve Zeamet Ruznamçe Defterleri”, *Studies Of The Ottoman Domain*, Cilt 7, Sayı 12, Şubat 2017, pp. 106–137.

<sup>23</sup> Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, p. 34; Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega*, pp. 13, 58–59.

<sup>24</sup> Branislav Đurđev, “Teritorijalizacija katunske organizacije do kraja XV veka (katun – knežina – pleme)”, *Simpozijum o srednjovjekovnom katunu*, Sarajevo 1963, p. 149; Branislav Đurđev, “Značaj podataka o Vlasima u popisu krajišta Isa-bega Ishakovića iz 1455. godine”, *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. XV, Sarajevo 1964, pp. 63–64, 76; Nedim Filipović, “Vlasi i uspostava timarskog sistema u Hercegovini”, *Godišnjak Akademije nauka i umjetnosti BiH*, Vol. XII, Sarajevo 1974, pp. 131, 135 (hereafter: Filipović, “Vlasi”); Žarko Šćepanović, *Srednje Polimlje i Potarje. Istorijsko-etnološka rasprava.*, Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti – Etnografski institut, Beograd 1979, pp. 64–66; Branislav Đurđev, “O naseljavanju Vlaha-stočara u sjevernu Srbiju u drugoj polovini XV vijeka”, *Godišnjak društva istoričara Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. XXXV, Sarajevo 1984, p. 16; General overview of the Ottoman census from the fifteenth century to the present territory of Montenegro gave Mitar Pešikan, “O najstarijim turskim popisima predjela SR Crne Gore”, *Glasnik Odjeljenja umjetnosti ČANU*, Vol. 8, Titograd 1988, pp. 49–56, 51 (*Limski Nikšići*); Oruč, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 157–158.

**Table 1:** The provinces of Isa-Beg Ishaković (The Collective Cadastral Defter of 1455), vilayet Nikšići<sup>25</sup>

Villages	Houses	Bachelors	Widows	Gross revenue	Population
Kruševo	5	/	/	525	25
Bistrica	14	1	/	1.220	71
Cerovo	8	1	1	1.220	43
Obod	13	1	1	1.086	68
<b>Total: 4 villages</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4.051 akçes</b>	<b>207</b>

In 1463, after the conquest of Bosnian provinces, the Kovačević province and certain parts of Herzog Stefan Land, the Ottomans turned them into vilayets. These areas were then annexed to the already existing vilayets in the Branković province and in Bosnia forming thus *The Sanjak of Bosnia*.<sup>26</sup> In the 1468/69 defter, Nahiya Limski Nikšići was listed as a part of Jeleč Vilayet and it stated that all the revenue belonged to Ahmed-bey, the son of Isa-Beg Ishaković.<sup>27</sup> The seat of this vilayet was in the town of Jeleč.<sup>28</sup> Here we present the rural settlements of Bijelo Polje area:

<sup>25</sup> Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega*, pp. 13, 58–59.

<sup>26</sup> Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, pp. 115–118; Hatidža Čar–Drnda, “Oblast hercega Stjepana Kosača prema podacima popisa iz 1468/69”, *Žbornik radova: naučni skup herceg Stjepan Vukčić Kosača i njegovo doba*, Mostar 2005, pp. 61–66.

<sup>27</sup> Aličić, *Sumarni popis*, p. 22; Oruč, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 165–166. In Scutari Sanjak Defter of 1485 Ahmet was listed as the holder of a deserted village of Nikolja Crkve Spoče (Rakonje) with the gross revenue of 50 akçes. Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, p. 72.

<sup>28</sup> Aličić, *Sumarni popis*, p. 22.

**Table 2:** The Summary Defter of Bosnia Sanjak of 1468/69 for Nahiya Limski Nikšići<sup>29</sup>

Villages	Houses	Bachelors	Widows	Gross revenue	Population
Kruševa	11	6	/	1.180	61
Gorn(i) Obod	20	2	/	1.435	102
Jabučna	9	6	/	750	51
Cerova	11	5	/	1.396	60
Ravna Reka	18	6	/	1.352	96
Bojišta	9	5	/	972	50
Rakita	7	6	/	665	41
Pali	2	2	/	200	12
Dolna(i) Obod	29	/	/	1.350	145
<b>Total: 9 villages</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>/</b>	<b>8.120 akçes</b>	<b>618</b>

In a way, each nahiya was a semi-military administrative unit within the Ottoman feudal system. This one listed 9 rural settlements, of which some still exist by the same name and some have ceased to exist.<sup>30</sup> These villages had 51 households, 38 adult bachelors and the population of 618 inhabitants – almost three times bigger than in 1455; the gross revenue was 8,120 akçes and no notes were made that these inhabitants were Vlachs. When we compare the data from 1455 and 1468/69 defters, there is a noticeable demographic growth and an inflow of people into this area which caused a rapid increase in the number of settlements and households. This nahiya included the villages of Bijelo Polje, Mojkovac, Kolašin and Nikšić.

There are two more defters for the Sanjak of Bosnia that include Limski Nikšići Nahiya from 1485 (comprehensive) and from 1489 (detailed). The defter of 1485 listed 22 rural settlements. The Sultan's hass had 1 village, and 21 villages were listed as the zeamet of Kasim-bey, brother of Davud Pasha.<sup>31</sup> In Polimlje, the defter listed 9 rural settlements, 147 households that paid the ushri tax (land tax), 34 adult bachelors, 15 Vlach households which paid filuri tax, while the total population was 844 inhabitants.

<sup>29</sup> Aličić, *Sumarni popis*, pp. 22–24.

<sup>30</sup> Aličić, *Sumarni popis*, pp. 22–24; Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 160–161.

<sup>31</sup> Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 162, 165–166.



**Table 3:** Rural settlements and the population in Limski Nikšići Nahiya in Bosnia  
Sanjak Defter of 1485<sup>32</sup>

Villages	Households (subject to ushri tax)	Bachelors	Vlach Households (subject to filuri tax)	Population
Gornji Obod	26	17	/	147
Dolnji Obod, a.k.a. Žari <i>two groups of inhabitants</i> )	19	2	/	97
Jabučna	12	3	/	63
Cerova	10	2	3	67
Pali	6	1	/	31
Rakite sa Poljine Reke	16	1	6	111
Bojište	12	2	2	72
Ravne Reke	25	2	2	137
Kruševa	21	2	2	117
<b>Total: 9 villages</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>844</b>

According to the detailed defter of 1489, there was 27 villages in the Nikšić Nahiya. 4 villages belonged to the Sultan's hass, while the remainder of 23 villages was also listed as Kasim-bey's zeamet. People with the Vlach status (*eflák*) were listed in 15 villages of this zeamet. It is important to mention here that they were not listed as whole villages but only as their parts (*an karye*). Both defters contain a note on the Vlachs in Limski Nikšići Nahiya: *The Vlachs communities (cemaat) in the Nikšić Nahiya, pay according to the Vlach custom since they are long-time sipahis. They pay one filuri, one ram and one ewe with a lamb per house and a tent (çerge) per every 15 houses; additionally, they give one ram per every 60 houses or an equivalent value as afore mentioned. Additionally, they give one sipahi per every 15 houses.*<sup>33</sup> This Vlach population had a military obligation to the Ottoman State for which they were granted certain

<sup>32</sup> Oruç, "Nahiya Limski Nikšići", pp. 165–166.

<sup>33</sup> *Cemaat-i Eflakan-i nahiye-i Nikšići, Eflak adetini verirler, kadim sipahidirler, evden eve birer filuri verir, erkek koyun ve bir kuzulu koyun ve her elli eve bir çergi ve her altmış eve bir koc veyahud bu zıkr olanların bahalarını verirler ve on beş eve bir eşkunci verirler* Oruç, "Nahiya Limski Nikšići", p. 162, note 24.

privileges. They bred cattle and farmed the land for which they paid the *ushri* and *resm* taxes.<sup>34</sup>

**Table 4:** Villages and population in Limski Nikšići Nahiya in the Bosnia Sanjak Defter of 1489<sup>35</sup>

Villages	Households (subject to Ushri tax)	Bachelors	Vlach households (subject to filuri tax)	Population
Gornji Obod	/	/	6	30
Dolnji Obod	19	2	/	97
Jabučna	12	3		63
Carevo (Cerova)	10	2	3	67
Pali	6	1	/	31
Rakite and Poljereka	16	1	1	86
Bojište	12	2	/	62
Ravne Reke and Bistrica	25	2	2	137
Kruševa	21	2	2	117
<b>Total: 9 villages</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>690</b>

The same number of villages was listed as in the previous three defters – 9, 121 households which paid the *ushri* tax, 15 adult bachelors and 14 Vlach households which paid filuria tax. The total population was 690.

## 2. Ljuboviđa Nahiya in Herzegovina Sanjak Defter of 1477

In the Individual Defter of Herzegovina Sanjak, The Vlach Nahiya of Ljuboviđa was designated as territorially belonging to the Lim Valley. In the second part of 15<sup>th</sup> century, a rather sizeable group of cattle-breeders<sup>36</sup> lived in the river basin Ljuboviđe and settled in a large part of the medieval parish (*župa*)

<sup>34</sup> Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 163–166.

<sup>35</sup> Oruç, “Nahija Limski Nikšići”, pp. 165–166.

<sup>36</sup> Aličić, *Poimenični popis*, pp. 50–54.

of Ljuboviđa.<sup>37</sup> Most probably, this Vlach group belonged to a larger pastoral group which had roamed about the wider area of Potarje before permanently settling here. There are records of seven Vlach communities (*cemâats*), headed by Knez Herak Vraneš.<sup>38</sup> The Knez Herak Nahiya was “a community of similar katuns gradually developing into a knez land“. The first communities recorded in the Defter was the one belonging to Vuk, the son of Vranjuš, and Herak’s nephew. The Defter recorded that Vuk owned some baština, as it was customary with the Vlachs, in the villages of Kukanj, Grebšić and Grabova. In a Trebinje village of Gorica, Vuk owned a vineyard and three fields for which he paid a tithe. Such an estate indicated that Vuk was a katun owner of a higher economic, social and political status. Interestingly, no summer or winter abodes of these communities were listed. The second community on the record was headed by Strahinja, the son of Braniš. It is difficult to determine the right family connection between Strahinja and Knez Herak. The leader of the third community was Ivaniš, the son of Bogdan. The fourth community listed in this area belonged to Đurađ (pronounced Dyurady), Knez Herak’s elder son and was the most populated of all the seven communities – it had 71 houses and 4 adult bachelors. The social structure of this community stands out. It included priest Radič, Cvetko – the blacksmith’s son, Vukašin – the tailor’s son, Petar – the musician’s son and an islamised head of a household Hasan, the son of Božidar. The fifth and seventh communities’ leaders – Stepan, the son of Ivan and Kradisav, the son of Paskaš,

<sup>37</sup> Župa was the smallest administrative and territorial unit in the medieval Zeta and Serbia. Originally, it was a geographical unit. It could be a river valley, a ravine, karst, or a cultivated plain. A big number of župas was named after the river valleys in which they were. Župa Ljuboviđa in Polimlje was named after the river of the same name. Sima Ćirković – Rade Mihaljčić, *Leksikon srpskog srednjeg veka*, Beograd 1999, pp. 195–197.

<sup>38</sup> The Knez title was used to denote an independent ruler with political prerogatives who represented the Vlachs and established winter and summer abodes, as well as regulate katuns (summer pastures). A Knez was obliged to organise mercenaries and border guards (*derbenci*) and to assist with collecting the Vlach rent. Only a small number of Vlach leaders could bear the Knez title and katun leadership was hereditary which lead to the formation of the katun head family. Milenko Filipović, “Struktura i organizacija srednjovekovnog katuna”, *Simpozijum o srednjovekovnom katunu*, Sarajevo 1963, pp. 84–91; Desanka Kovačević-Kojić, “Srednjovekovni katun po dubrovačkim izvorima”, *Simpozijum o srednjovekovnom katunu*, Sarajevo 1963, pp. 123–139; Đurđev, “Teritorijalizacija kaunske organizacije”, pp. 162–167; Nedim Filipović, “Napomene o islamizaciji u Bosni i Hercegovini u XV vijeku”, *Godišnjak*, Vol. VII, Centar za balkanološka ispitivanja No. 5, Sarajevo 1970, pp. 147–152; Nedim Filipović, “Islamizacija Vlaha u Bosni i Hercegovini u XV i XV vijeku”, *Radovi ANU BiH*, Vol. LXXIII, Sarajevo 1983, pp. 140–142; Bogumil Hrabak, “Čelnici stočarskih zajednica u istočnoj Hercegovini u XIII–XIV veku”, *Žbornik za istoriju Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 2, Beograd 1997, pp. 139–159 (hereafter: Hrabak, “Čelnici stočarskih zajednica”); Miloš Blagojević, “Vlaški knezovi, prmićuri i čelnici u državi Nemanjića i Kotromanića”, *Spomenica Milana Vasića*, Banja Luka 2005, pp. 43–55.

together with Strahinja's, Ivaniš's and Đurađ's communities, spent winters in the village of Ljuboviđa, and summers in Jelenjak, Vrato, Potrk, Krnja Jela, Kričani, Konj, Stup, Igrač, Boranj, Kamena Voda, Žar, Barica, Žjebato, Stoga, Ponikvica, Jeleška and Duga. All these cattle-breeders spent winters near the Ljuboviđa river, while their summer abodes stretched over a much wider area of the Tara valley – the area of Nikšić of Potarje and Krička. Listed as number six, was a special community owned by Knez Herak. He also had a younger son of an unknown Christian name who, after converting into Islam, went by the name of Ibrahim. This Herak's son was not listed in the katuns of the Vlach Nahiya and we can only assume that he was sent to Istanbul as a young boy before 1477 and converted there. During the '80s of 15<sup>th</sup> century, Ibrahim was a renowned Ottoman representative. Knez Herak's community spent winters in Ljuboviđa with other communities, but in the summer they stayed only in Jelenjak. This by no means meant he was denied summer abodes but rather that he was privileged in a certain way and could enjoy a secured grassland on Vilenjak – the best pasture, without having to roam widely. Knez Herak had been in a years-long service of the Herzegovina Sanjak-bey, was well connected in the Porte and hence had an important role and was given responsible duties. His property comprised timars, chifliks, and even – for a short while – the Trebinje priest nahiya. Despite the numerous duties, he never stayed outside his katun for long. When he was absent, his son Đurađ would replace him as the leader of the community. The Vlach Nahiya had 220 houses (of which 75.9% connected to the Vraneš family) and the total Vlach population was 1.128 inhabitants. This defter clearly shows that the processes of social stratification and sedentism in these parts had already been well underway among the Vlachs. Later, some communities were excluded from Ljuboviđa Nahiya thus forming a new nahiya named Vraneš.<sup>39</sup>

Two symposiums on Medieval Katuns (1961) and on Vlachs (1973) greatly contributed to the research of Vlachs and their katuns.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, p. 166; Aličić, *Poimenični popis*, pp. 50–54; Bogumil Hrabak, "Herak Vraneš", *Godišnjak Istorijskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. VII, Sarajevo 1955, pp. 53–64; Filipović, "Vlasi", pp. 140, 144–155; Žarko Šćepanović, "Pregled prošlosti Bijelog Polja i okoline", *Bijelo Polje*, Beograd 1987, pp. 94–95; Hrabak, "Čelnici stočarskih zajednica", pp. 151, 154; Đuro Tošić, "O vlaškoj skupini Vraneši u nahiji Ljuboviđa", *Mileševski zapisi*, Vol. 2, Prijepolje 1996, pp. 101–115; Gordana Tomović, "Župa Ljuboviđa", *Kralj Vladislav i Srbija XIII veka*, Beograd 2003, p. 59.

<sup>40</sup> *Simpozijum o srednjovjekovnom katunu održan 24. i 25. novembra 1961. g.*, Naučno društvo SR Bosne i Hercegovine, posebna izdanja knj. 2, Odjeljenje istorijsko-filoloških nauka knj. 1, Ed Milenko S. Filipović, Sarajevo 1963; *Radovi*, knj. LXXIII, Odjeljenje društvenih nauka knj. 22, Ed. Desanka Kovačević -Kojić, Sarajevo 1983; Review of national historiography of the Vlachs announced Ema Miljković, "Vlasi u domaćoj istoriografiji", *Braničevski glasnik*, Vol. 7, Požarevac 2010, pp. 5–22.

**Table 5:** The Individual Defter of Herzegovina Sanjak of 1477, Ljuboviđa Nahiya<sup>41</sup>

<b>Communities</b>	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Bachelors</b>	<b>Total population</b>
Vuk	35	4	179
Strahinja	17	5	90
Ivaniš	24	5	125
Đurađ	71	4	359
Stepan	12	3	63
Knez Herak's	44	4	224
Kradisav	17	3	88
<b>Total: 7</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.128</b>

### **3. Rural settlements of Bihor fortress commander in Pasha Sanjak in 1477/78**

During the Ottoman conquest, a considerable number of fortresses were destroyed in Polimlje. In the literature, Bihor has also been treated as one of the destroyed towns. However, the he count of the commander of Bihor fortress recorded activities in the years after the conquest.<sup>42</sup> That was actually the Summary Defter of Pasha Sanjak which included the area round Bihor at that time. The Defter listed 27 soldiers in the town of Bihor, all Muslims: the commander of the fortress (dizdar), imam and 25 garrison soldiers (mustahfiz). This defter lists the names of the garrison soldiers. Their source of income were timars which they held in the surrounding villages: Goduše, Poda, Donje Lozne, Radulića, Vrbice, etc. For this village, the defter documented the number of houses, bachelors, widows and gross income. One of the timariots was Dizdar Ilija who held tenure of the following villages: Zaton, Dobrinje, Donja Dubova, Rudna Brda, Jasen, Hranovci and Vlčak. He collected his income from 7 villages (155 houses, 28 bachelors, 13 widows, in total 11,415 akçes).<sup>43</sup> The Defter listed 49 rural settlements, one abandoned mezra, 940 households, 58 adult bachelors, 58 widows with the total revenue of 66,695 akçes and 5,084 inhabitants.

<sup>41</sup> Aličić, *Poimenični popis*, pp. 50–54.

<sup>42</sup> More on this in: Marijan Premović, “Poljoprivreda nahije Bihor u XVI vijeku”, *Glasnik Bihora*, Vol. 1, Petnjica 2016, pp. 49–55.

<sup>43</sup> Katić, “Tvrđava Bihor”, pp. 483–498.

**Table 6:** Bihar Register in Pasha Sanjak of 1477/78<sup>44</sup>

<b>Villages</b>	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Bachelors</b>	<b>Widows</b>	<b>Gross Revenue</b>	<b>Population</b>
Zaton	82	13	6	4.915	438
Dobrinje	4	2	1	427	24
Donja Dubova	30	6	2	2.061	161
Rudna Brda	8	2	1	537	44
Jasen	16	1	1	855	83
Hranovci	13	2	1	1.995	69
Vlčak	5	1	1	625	28
Godiša (Goduša)	69	10	4	4.091	365
Vrbnica	12	4	1	790	66
Lešnica	10	5	2	858	60
Crniš	20	14	/	1.535	114
Trpeza	39	14	3	2.269	216
Suhodol	60	22	2	4.156	327
Potoci	10	3	/	797	53
Bešani (Pišanje)	6	2	1	572	34
Dobridol	15	1	/	910	76
Barošić	10	6	1	931	58
Kovač	10	3	/	746	53
Durven (Drveni)	10	2	/	680	52
Lagator	38	6	3	2.499	203
Paljuh	10	3	/	1.098	53
Ponor	8	1	/	493	41
Pećnice	40	18	2	3.456	223
Vrbica	55	11	5	3.016	298
Rujšte	22	4	1	1.220	116
Kalica	6	1	1	474	33

<sup>44</sup> Katić, "Tvrđava Bihor", pp. 492–498.

Dobrokov (Dobrakova)	6	2	/	570	32
Žurin	9	4	2	881	54
Gornja Lozna	10	4	1	956	56
Donja Lozna	10	5	2	1.023	60
Podá	5	4	1	552	31
Vraševa (Vrševa)	31	7	1	1.938	164
Kačor (Kačmor)	11	3	/	796	58
Zalužje	11	2	/	854	57
Lukavica	13	6	1	1.369	73
Crhilj (Crhalj)	14	/	1	975	72
Gučina	7	2	/	550	37
Kurdivik (Kradenik)	13	2	/	913	67
Stepan Dol	5	1	/	499	26
Kodijova (Godeva)	62	4	1	3.846	316
Dragulin	4	1	1	464	23
Radulić	8	3	/	687	43
Šućenovci	14	3	1	1.015	75
Kalina (Šítari)	9	3	/	630	48
Hezane	16	5	/	1141	85
Tuzina	31	21	4	2.123	186
Bučeva (Buđeva)	30	5	1	1.821	157
Donji Sutivan	8	4	1	659	46
Gornji Sutivan	5	3	1	427	30
<b>Total: 49 villages</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>66,695 akčes</b>	<b>5,084</b>

#### 4. The Inventory Defter of the Sanjak of Scutari of 1485

The Sanjak of Scutari was formed as a separate administrative unit after the fall of Rozafa fortress in 1479. Scutari was defeated by Bali-bey Malkočević. First, a comprehensive inventory of the newly conquered territory was completed and then the administrative unit named the Sanjak of Scutari was formed (it belonged

to Eyalet of Rumeli). A governor – Sanjak-bey was appointed for the entire area.<sup>45</sup> Administratively and territorially, this region was divided into four municipal units – *kazas* – Scutari (Iškodra, Skadar), Depedōĝen (Podgorica), Ipek (Peć) and Bihor. Owing to this detailed inventory defter of 1485 we have a comprehensive insight into the demographics and economy of the Sanjak of Scutari, the list of its inhabitants and their duties. This is the only Ottoman defter to list all the villages in in Upper and Central Polimlje of that time.<sup>46</sup>

### a. Plav Nahiya

Plav Nahiya included villages in Plav-Gustinje ravine, downstream by the Lim from Novšić to Sućeska. Many of the villages listed in the Defter have kept their names to this day, but a few cannot be found by the names they then had. Compared to other nahiyas in the Lim valley, Plav Vilayet had the biggest population. The village with the biggest number of households was Ribari and the smallest was Novšić.<sup>47</sup> The population of the 15 villages of this nahiya was 5,562 inhabitants. Based on the data in the Defter, the villages were of medium size to big. As these defters were kept for fiscal purposes, we can reasonably assume that Ottoman authorities strove to enlist all the taxpayers of their respective areas. Hence, the reliability of the taxpayers' information on the record must have been very high. The Defter allows us to gain an insight into which crops were grown and what the duties that farmers paid for each particular sort of crop were.

<sup>45</sup> Hazim Šabanović, "Upravna podjela jugoslovenskih zemalja pod turskom vladavinom do Karlovačkog mira 1699 god.", *Godišnjak Istoriskog društva Bosne i Hercegovine*, Vol. 4, Sarajevo 1952, p. 185; See: Mustafa Işik & Zeki Çevik, "17 Numaralı, H.890/M.1485-1486 Tarihi Tapu Tahrir Defterine Göre Nefs-i İpek", *Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Defter-i Hâkânî*, Cilt I, Istanbul 2015, pp. 29–43; Ahmet Köç, "15. Yüzyıl Sonlarına Doğru İskenderiye Sancak Beyinin Hasları", *Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Defter-i Hâkânî*, Cilt I, Istanbul 2015, pp. 45–69.

<sup>46</sup> Rizaj, "O defteru", pp. 105–125.

<sup>47</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 96–112; Miomir Dašić, "Društveno – političke prilike na teritoriji današnje sjeveroistočne Crne Gore od druge polovine XV do kraja XVII vijeka", *Istorijski zapisi*, Vol. 1–2, Titograd 1986, pp. 23–24; Mustafa Memić, *Plav i Gusinje u prošlosti*, Veljko Vlahović – Kultura, Beograd 1989, pp. 39–43.



**Table 7:** Villages and population of Plav Nahiya in the Defter of Scutari of 1485<sup>48</sup>

<b>Villages</b>	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Bachelors</b>	<b>Widows</b>	<b>Gross revenue</b>	<b>Population</b>
Ribar	284	/	/	22.828	1.420
Gusiñje	96	21	4	6.692	511
Trepča	37	3	2	2.395	193
Vojihmino	39	/	4	2.507	205
Kirušova	50	/	4	2.953	260
Grad	32	/	2	2.061	165
Ivraža	92	4	/	4.858	464
Komaran	65	/	4	3.894	335
Novšić	21	/	2	1.479	110
Velika	75	/	6	4.250	390
Ržanica	88	/	4	5.166	450
Mašnica	42	/	3	2.783	217
Gornja Ulotina	80	/	4	4.154	410
Luzi	38	/	2	2.112	195
Donja Ulotina	46	/	3	2.551	237
<b>Total: 15 villages</b>	<b>1.085</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>70.684 akçes</b>	<b>5.562</b>

### **b. Izla Rijeka Nahiya**

The Scutari Defter of 1485 listed 12 villages in *Izla Rijeka* Nahiya. Today, almost all villages bear the same or slightly altered name and are situated in the region of Andrijevića stretching from Lukin Vir on the both banks of the Lim upstream to Sućeska and in the basin of the Zlorečica river. The Nahiya comprised 248 houses, 30 bachelors (*bekâr*) and 12 widow households. Same as its neighbouring nahiyas, Izla Rijeka Nahiya belonged to Scutari Sanjak-bey hass with the annual revenue of 15,837 akçes.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 96–112.

<sup>49</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 112–119; The names and locations of these settlements brings Mitar Pešikan, “Zetsko-humsko-raška imena na početku turskog doba (drugi deo)”, *Onomatološki prilozi*, Vol. IV, Beograd 1983, pp. 84–85 (hereafter: Pešikan, “Zetsko-humsko-raška imena”).

**Table 8:** Villages and population of Izla Rijeka Nahiya in 1485<sup>50</sup>

<b>Villages</b>	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Bechelors</b>	<b>Widows</b>	<b>Gross Revenue</b>	<b>Pooulation</b>
Crešnjjevo	23	10	2	1.977	130
Zabrda	16	2	1	1.150	85
Slatina	15	3	1	932	80
Gludi	25	10	1	1.917	138
Seoca	30	/	3	1.762	157
Božić	18	/	1	579	93
Podi	10	/	/	580	50
Andžilat	7	/	/	395	35
Pravoševo	14	/	/	710	70
Đulići	28	/	2	1.583	145
Cecuni	36	1	1	2.093	183
Konjusi	26	3	/	1.759	133
<b>Total: 12 villages</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15.837 akçes</b>	<b>1.299</b>

### c. Komnin (Budimlja) Nahiya

All the settlements of *Komnin (Budimlja)* Nahiya belonged to the Sanjak-bey's hass, i.e. his personal estate. Although the nahiya was officially called Komnin, the Ottoman Defter of 1485 stated that the villages belonged to Budimlja (probably derived from a common personal name) which meant that the original name of the parish remained as the regional toponym. Komnin Nahiya had 29 villages – from Zaostro to Babino in the north Trepča, Šekular, and Gornja Rženica in the south.<sup>51</sup> Many of the villages still exist and thanks to the invaluable research of Academician Mitar Pešikan, we know names and geographical position of many of them.<sup>52</sup>

According to Scutari Defter of 1485, that was the first time that the Muslim

<sup>50</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 112–119.

<sup>51</sup> Premović, *Župa Budimlja*, pp. 43–46.

<sup>52</sup> For all historical and geographical research of the demographics of Polimlje, Academician linguist Mitar Pešikan's work is invaluable. He was a great language expert and could precisely identify the origin of toponyms. Pešikan, "Zetsko-humsko-raška imena", pp. 75–82.

households of this area had been listed. Budimlja had a Muslim community of households headed by Širmerd, Ramazan, Karadža and Kurto. Budimlja was listed as a square (pazar) and the sanak-bey collected 4,200 akçes from the square.<sup>53</sup>

For the demographics of this area it is very important to point out that Scutari Defter of 1485 noted a considerable number of migrants in Budimlje which indicates a revival of villages of this area. However, not all the households of Budimlje Nahiya were listed. The Administrator's note asserted that apart from the listed households of the villages of Lumenica (Lubnice) and Gošin, the remainder of the villagers "did not show up for the enumeration".<sup>54</sup>

**Table 9:** The villages and population of Komnin (Budimlja) Nahiya in 1485<sup>55</sup>

Villages	Households	Bachelors	Widows	Gros Revenue	Soldiers and yamaks	Population
Budimlja	29	10	7	8.863 akči	8	176
Šekular	30	10	2	7.460	11	165
Papranište	39	12	3	2.948	/	214
Peknik	23	10	2	2.339	8	130
Borovca	8	3	/	744	/	43
Zabarana	8	3	/	773	/	43
Dolina Zagradina	18	8	/	1.672	/	98
Vojnička	32	10	3	3.226	/	178
Buče	29	6	2	2.168	/	156
Gošin	4	/	/	436	/	20
Podstrane	26	5	2	2.424	/	140
Mačta	18	3	2	2.086	/	98
Dapsić	33	8	3	2.420	/	180
Kaludari	11	4	2	1.380	/	64
Črnovrh	7	2	2	1.250	/	42

<sup>53</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 73–74; Premović, *Župa Budimlja*, p. 42.

<sup>54</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, p. 80.

<sup>55</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 73–91.

Babina	27	10	2	2.205	/	150
Goražde	37	10	1	2.688	8	198
Tihodol	14	1	1	1.151	/	73
Dragosava	15	2	1	1.335	/	80
Din	6	1	1	730	/	34
Gorni Zagrad	24	9	1	2.353	/	131
Vrapotok	29	8	4	2.581	/	163
Čaglavina	5	1	1	738	/	28
Trepča	43	10	7	3.204	/	242
Rženica	24	5	2	2.608	/	130
Zaostro	28	10	2	2.418	4	155
Parica	8	2	1	862	/	45
Lumenica	10	7	2	437	/	62
Zagorje	33	10	1	1.081	/	177
Velid	/	/	/	/	6	/
<b>Total: 1 square, 28 villages</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>20.355 akçes</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3.415</b>

#### d. Komarani Nahiya

In Central Polimlje, the census for this sanjak listed *Komarani* Nahiya (between Bijelo Polje and Brodarevo). All the villages of Komarani Nahiya belonged to the Sanjak-bey hass. The Christians of the nahiya were listed as Vlachs (*janë eflakë*) and were obliged to pay the Vlachs' duty and that is the reason why *İспенçe* and other taxes were left out.<sup>56</sup>

The Table below shows that the nahiya comprised 15 villages, 1 monastery, 169 houses, 2 bachelors, 12 widows while the gross revenue was 12,512 akçes. Nahiya Komarani also included some villages of Prijepolje and Bijelo Polje

<sup>56</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i regjistrimit*, pp. 91–96; Rizaj, “O defteru”, pp. 106–116; Ferko Šantić, “Prijepoljski kraj u popisu Skadarskog sandžaka 1485. god.”, *Simpozijum Seoski dani Sretena Vukosavljevića*, Vol. XIII, Prijepolje 1990, pp. 273–280; M. Pešikan corrected S. Pulah's interpretation in several places. Pešikan, “Zet-sko-humsko-raška imena”, pp. 76–79.

regions. The toponym Komarani has remained to this day and now refers to the area on the left side of the Lim between Brodarevo and Bijelo Polje.<sup>57</sup>

**Table 10:** Villages and population of Komarani in 1485<sup>58</sup>

<b>Villages</b>	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Bachelors</b>	<b>Widows</b>	<b>Gross Revenue</b>	<b>Population</b>
Orahovica	28	/	1	/	142
Nišnica	11	/	1	/	57
Kobac	23	/	2	/	120
Kava	3	/	1	/	17
Jara	2	/	/	/	10
Orašac	30	/	2	/	155
Borovina	10	/	1	/	52
Belohova	11	/	2	/	60
Zakot	7	/	/	/	35
Bukovik	11	/	/	/	55
Komadin	4	/	/	/	20
Griharova	12	/	2	/	65
Opnica	8	/	/	/	40
Oplad	8	/	/	/	40
Monastery St. Peter	/	2	/	/	2
Sila	1	/	/	/	5
<b>Total: 15 villages, 1 monastery</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12.512 akçes</b>	<b>875</b>

#### **e. The Voynuks of Budimlje and Bihor in Scutary Defter of 1485**

The last part of the Defter lists the voynuks of this sanjak. For some of the villages of Budimlje and Bihor areas, a considerable number of voynuks, members of this special military class comprising voynuks and their assistants - yamaks, were listed in the Defter. They had all been recruited in the villages of these areas. *The voynuks* lived as a privileged community. The institute of voynuks is of a Slav

<sup>57</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 91–96.

<sup>58</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 91–96.

origin. This organisation had been taken over by the Ottomans after the Battle of Maritsa. Voynuks were recruited from the local Christian population, low-rank nobility and Vlachs. They could be employed in the various military services such as border defence, patrol service in the border areas or incursions into the enemy territory to perform military intelligence tasks. As a reward for performing their military duties both here and in other regions, the voynuks were given to exploit their *baştinas* free of any state taxes or feudal obligations. If they failed to fulfil their military duties, they received a corporal punishment. The *yamaks* – voynuks’ assistants – were recruited from their families – sons, brothers, cousins and other relatives and also received some tax deductions. The lowest ranking voynuk units were called *koplja* (spears). They were composed of a voynuk and 2 to 7 *yamaks*. The lowest rank officers were called *lagators*, while the senior officers were *çeribaşıs* and Voynuk Sanjak-bey. The *lagators* had two to three times more *yamaks* than ordinary voynuks.<sup>59</sup>

Voynuks and *yamaks* were listed individually by their names for the following villages of *Budimlje* and *Bihor* nahiyas: Budimlje, Goražde, Šekular, Zastro, Bidić, Petnjik, Ezmenica, Zamčina and Gusnova.<sup>60</sup>

It has not been established what sort of obligations these voynuks and *yamaks* had towards their highest superior officer, Scutari Sanjak-bey, but most probably they were not very high. In Vidin Sanjak, a voynuks’ *koplja* paid 2 *akçes* per year to their Sanjak-bey. Judging by the names of these voynuks, it can be concluded that *yamaks* from one village could be brothers but they served voynuks who were not their brothers. Sometimes an uncle and nephews were listed and some voynuks were marked as somebody’s relatives. The voynuk organisation could also conscript priests’ sons and occasionally common villagers with certain privileges. The data from Scutari Defter of 1485 reveal that the armoured men (*cebelu*) had 6 to 7 assistants, while common voynuks had 3 to 4.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> More on this in: Branislav Đurđev, “O vojnucima, sa osvrtom na razvoj turskog feudalizma i na pitanje bosanskog *aganluka*”, *Glasnik zemaljskog muzeja*, Vol. II, Sarajevo 1947, pp. 75–137; Zirojević, *Tursko vojno uređenje*, pp. 162–169; Miljković, “Turski feudalni sistem”, p. 542; Bogumil Hrabak, “Vojnuci u Trgovištu (Rožaju), Bihoru, Budimlji, Peći i Klopotniku 1485. godine”, *NovopazarSKI zbornik*, Vol. 30, Novi Pazar 2007, pp. 83–89; Voynuks wore black clothes without exception and such uniforms were obligatory for their assistants – *yamaks*, as well. The *katun-nama* states about Voynuks: if a voynuk was summoned into a campaign, he had to go to Istanbul with a horse and a scythe. Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanli İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1989, p. 22.

<sup>60</sup> Pulaha, *Defteri i registrimit*, pp. 411–413.

<sup>61</sup> More on this in: Zirojević, *Tursko vojno uređenje*, pp. 162–169; Hrabak, “Vojnuci”, pp. 83–89; Com-

Although there is no accurate information on where the voynuks and yamaks from these parts served, they were definitely included in the defence system of the sanjak. Their units were stationed in Budimlje, Šekular and other villages which clearly shows that the Ottoman authorities readily employed medieval soldiers and free baština holders to serve their goals.<sup>62</sup>

### Conclusion

The Ottoman Defters rank among the most significant historical sources as they contain various information on settlements and population and are a good starting point for establishing the essential facts. These logs clearly indicate how the Ottoman state expanded on the territory of Montenegro. The expansion was a lengthy process starting in 1455 with the conquest of the present-day Montenegrin Polimlje and competing in 1571 with the fall of Bar and Ulcinj.

In this paper, Montenegrin Polimlje refers to the territories of the following medieval nahiyas: Limski Nikšići, Ljuboviđa, Plav, Izla Rijeka, Komnin and Komarani. These nahiyas were situated in the area of the present-day north Montenegro. The following defters provide an abundance of valuable information on the settlements and population of this area: The Collective Cadastral Defter of the provincial governor Isa-Beg Ishaković of 1455, The Summary Defter of the Sanjak of Bosnia of 1468/69, The Individual Defter of The Sanjak of Herzegovina Vilayet of 1475/7, The Summary Defter of Pasha Sanjak of 1477/8, The Summary Defter of Bosnia Sanjak of 1485, The Inventory Defter of the Sanjak of Scutari of 1485 and the Comprehensive Defter of Bosnia Sanjak of 1489. The area of today's Bijelo Polje comprised two large Vlach nahiyas – Limski Nikšići and Ljuboviđa. In 1455, Limski Nikšići was a part of Isa-Beg Ishaković Province but about ten years later it was annexed to Bosnia Sanjak. In 1475/77, Ljuboviđa Nahiya was in Herzegovina Sanjak. In 1485, nahiyas Plav, Izla Rijeka, Budimlja and Komarani were in Scutari Nahiya constituting Bihor Kaza. Bihor fortress was in this area and its commanders held timars in the rural settlements listed in Pasha Sanjak Defter of 1477/78. The sanjaks of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Pasha and Scutari bordered in Montenegrin Polimlje. The Appendix at the end of

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pare: Aleksandar Stojanovski, "Popis vojnuka s kraja XV veka", *Vranjski glasnik*, Vol. XXXII, Vranje 1989, pp. 146–152.

<sup>62</sup> Miomir Dašić, *Šekular i Šekularci od pomena do 1941. godine*, Crnogorska akademija nauka i umjetnosti, Podgorica 2006, p. 140.

this paper contains two maps with numerous villages added and with the borders of nahiyas and sanjaks of the second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century outlined.

The population growth can be best observed for Limski Nikšići Nahya. The demographic changes of every village were well recorded in the defters. In the villages of Limski Nikšići, the population was 618 and was almost three times as big as in 1455. The inflow of people, and a sharp increase in the number of inhabitants, households and villages was obvious. The 1485 Defter enumerated 844 people while four years later, a downward tendency was recorded when the population decreased to 690. Scutari Sanjak Defter recorded a certain number of newcomers, migrants and widows which all point to a certain degree of revival of the settlements in this area. In Bihor and Budimlje areas, the 1485 Defter listed voynuks and their assistants – yamaks who were incorporated into the military defence system on the territory of Scutari Sanjak.

Ottoman records show that the settlements of this area included a town (Bihor), Budimlja Square, a number of villages – usually smaller in size (6 – 20 houses), some medium-size ones (21 – 80 houses) and only a few bigger villages with over 81 households. The greatest population density was in Plav Nahiya and the smallest in Limski Nikšići. According to the data provided by these defters, in the period between 1455 and 1489, the population of 19,722 inhabitants was listed. A considerable number of villages listed in the defters have continued from the Middle Ages to the modern times.



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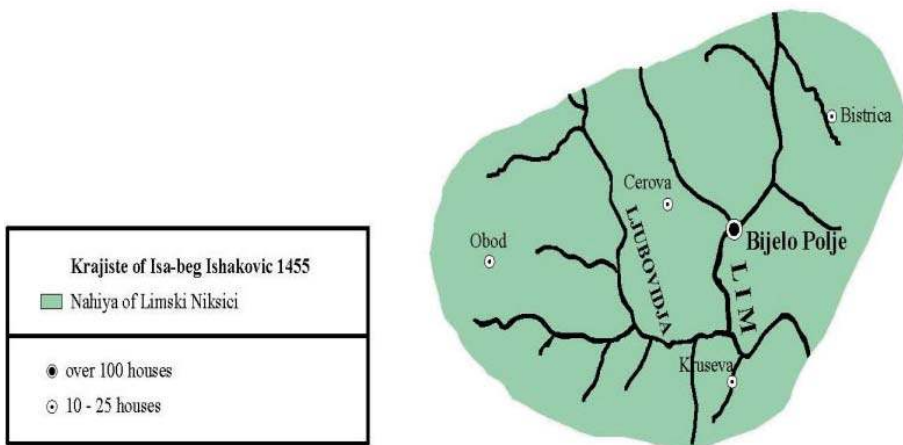
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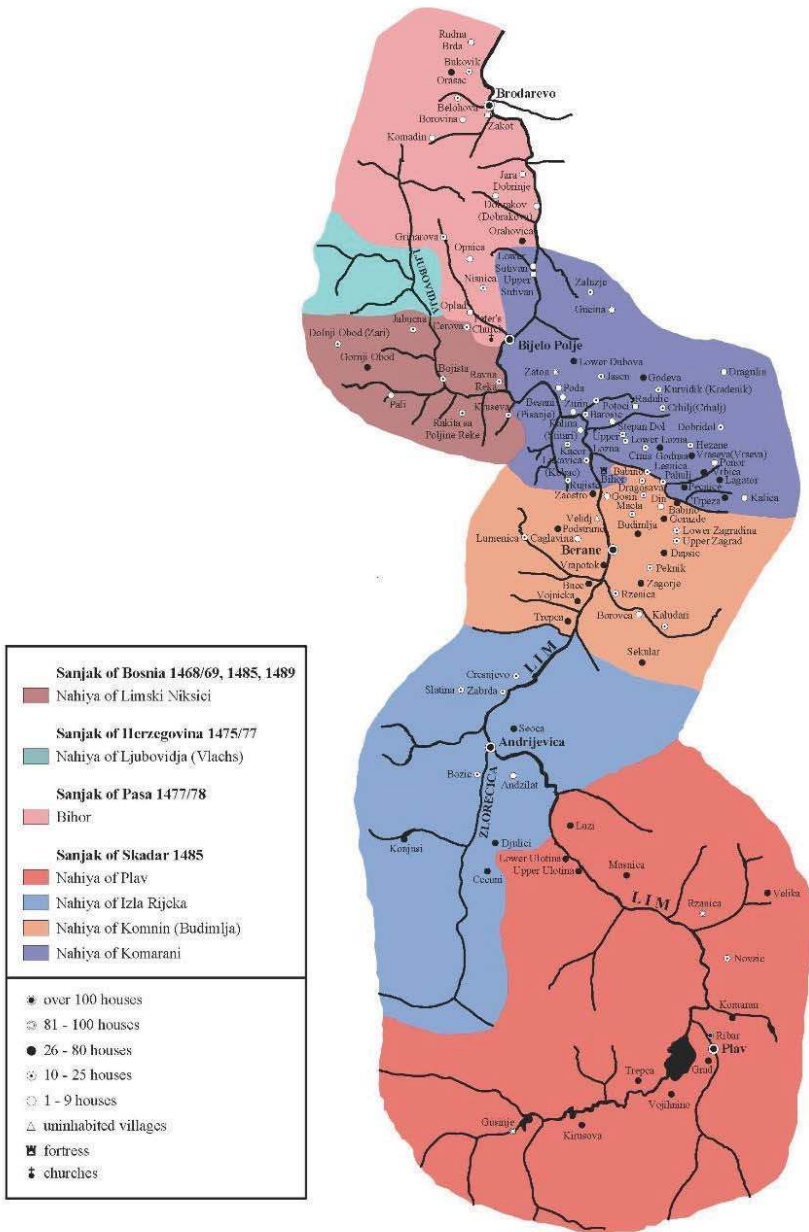
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## APPENDICES



**Appendix 1:** Montenegrin Polimlje in the second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century



**Appendix 2:** Montenegrin Polimlje in the second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century