

SETTLEMENT OF LIKA AND THREE OTTOMAN *NÂHIYES*: NOVI, MEDAK AND BILAJ BARLETE IN THE 16TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyses demographic, landholding and economic structure in Lika, namely in the three Ottoman *nâhiyes* founded in the second half of the 16th century – the *nâhiyes* of Novi, Medak and Bilaj Barlete, and reconstructs the course of settlement based on the preserved Ottoman tax registers from the 16th century for the *sancâks* of Bosnia, Klis and Krka to which Lika belonged. The said *nâhiyes* were “clustered” geographically and administratively; they were three neighbouring administrative and judicial units in the area where the centre of administration over Ottoman Lika was situated. The area encompassed by the three *nâhiyes* become the nucleus of population density in Ličko polje. The paper records the changes between the census years in the number of settlement and population density, demographic movements, landholding structure and tax system. The paper devotes attention to the characteristics of the Ottoman recolonization policy, the efforts invested by the Ottoman government to repopulate Lika and describes the effects of the measures undertaken. The paper reconstructed the landowning structure based on the information from the tax registers.

AIM, RESEARCH STARTING POINT, SOURCES AND HISTORIOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Recolonization and repopulation politics of the Ottoman Empire, its demographic characteristics, the characteristics of the *sipâhî timâr* system and the landholding system in Lika are still poorly researched topics. There was no systematic research of the demographic and economic history, and of the landholding relations in Lika during Ottoman rule in the 16th and 17th centuries although the past three decades did bring about a number of valuable historiographic contributions which illuminate individual aspects of the demographic, social and economic history of Lika during Ottoman rule.¹

This paper aims to analyse demographic, landholding and economic structure of three Ottoman *nâhiyes* in Lika – Novi, Medak and Bilaj Barlete, and to reconstruct the course of settlement to the extent possible from preserved Ottoman sources

¹ Nenad Moačanin, “Naseljenost Like i izvori feudalne rente početkom XVII. stoljeća pod turskom vlašću,” *Historijski zbornik* XLVI (1993): 61-65; Nenad Moačanin, “Ime Gospić u svjetlu turskih izvora,” *Croatica christiana periodica* 26 (1990): 51-54; Marko Šarić, “Osmanski korijeni Gospića: nahija Novi u 16. i 17. stoljeću,” *Povijesni prilozi* 42 (2012): 215-248.

and literature. The *nâhiyes* were clustered geographically and administratively; these were three neighbouring administrative and judicial units in the area wherein the centre of management of Ottoman Lika was set up. Little is still known about the settlements of the area and their landholding relations, even though the area covered by the three *nâhiyes* was the nucleus of population density in Ličko polje. The *nâhiyes* of Medak and Bilaj Barlete have never been researched, while Novi was incorporated in the study of the Ottoman Gospić.²

This paper finds its main source in the Ottoman tax and land ownership registers or defters (*tâpu tahrîr defteri*) for the *sancâks* of Bosnia, Klis and Krka which is where Lika belonged in the 16th and 17th centuries. The registers used were the registers for the following years: 1528-30³, 1550⁴, 1574⁵, 1585⁶ and 1604⁷. Some of these defters are *icmâl* or synoptic defters, while others are *mufassal* or detailed ones.⁸ In addition to the above, the 1528-30 register is also important⁹ as it gives data on the soldiers paid in cash in the forts of the *sancâk* of Bosnia. The research has uncovered numerous individual documents in the *Mühimme Defteri* series (official registers of important affairs) which give information on the settlement of Lika.

Inspection of Ottoman tax registers for the *sancâks* of Bosnia, Klis and Krka enabled reconstruction of the demographic and economic situation in Lika, specifically, in the three *nâhiyes* once those have been established. Changes between census years in the number of settlements, population density, demographic movements, landholding structure and tax system are recorded. The paper then focuses on the characteristics of the Ottoman recolonization politics, namely the government efforts to repopulate Lika and the end results of the measures undertaken. It also aims to uncover or rather, give a rough sketch of basic directions of migrations from the notes of the census takers in the tax registers and the records in other relevant sources. The paper aims to answer the questions of the level of demographic devastation in the period of the conquest and colonisation of the

² Šarić, "Osmanski korijeni Gospića," 215-248.

³ Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (henceforth BOA), Istanbul. Tapu Tahrir Defteri (henceforth TD) 157, TD 164.

⁴ BOA, TD 284.

⁵ BOA, TD 533.

⁶ BOA, TD 622.

⁷ Tapu ve Kadastro Genel Müdürlüğü, Kuyûd-i Kadime Arşiv (henceforth TK. KKA), Ankara. TD 119.

⁸ The difference in these defters is in the information giving potential of the sources; detailed defters are much richer as they give "detailed" description of the sources of income in a *sancâk* and the division of that income among the *sipâhî*, as opposed to the synoptic defters which give only overviews or the recapitulation of the most important data recorded in the detailed defters.

⁹ BOA, Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler (MAD) 540, 218-219.

space, the course of demographic and economic recovery, population density, characteristics of the Ottoman tax and land policy and the implications of the policy on the landholding relations and population density in the *nâhiyes* of Medak, Novi and Bilaj Barlete.

The paper aims to contribute to the knowledge of social and demographic history of Lika using Ottoman sources primarily. Naturally, a fuller picture of the population density and landholding structure in Lika during Ottoman rule in the 16th century will be created only following the research of demographic and economic characteristics of other *nâhiyes* of Lika (Cvituša, Perušić, Gračac and Zvonigrad) and Krbava.

As it has already been stated, the history of Lika during Ottoman rule has not been sufficiently researched historiographically, and the above mentioned three *nâhiyes* have not been the topic of individual research. Additionally, Ottoman studies are particularly rare. Ottoman studies have incorporated Lika in wider topics such as administrative and social history of the Bosnian *eyâlet*,¹⁰ military history of the *sancâks* of Klis and Krka, or history of the Ottoman frontier zone (*serhad*) in present-day Croatia.¹¹ Until the publishing of the Ottoman historical materials relevant for the *sancâk* of Klis which began with Fehim Dž. Spaho,¹² it was predominantly western sources published by Radoslav Lopašić,¹³ Franjo Rački and Mijo Batinić,¹⁴ as well as Mile Bogović¹⁵ that dominated the studies of the history of Lika under Ottoman rule. Nenad Moaćanin expanded the topic and the

¹⁰ Hazim Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk. Postanak i upravna podjela* (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1982), 59, 73-76, 210-212, 226-227; Hamdija Kreševljaković, *Izabrana djela* (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1991), 114-121.

¹¹ Aladin Husić, "Vojne prilike u splitsko-zadarskom zaleđu u 16. stoljeću (osmanski serhat 1530-1573)," *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 56 (2006): 125-144; Aladin Husić, "Tvrdave Bosanskog sandžaka i njihove posade 1530. godine," *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 49 (1999): 189-230; Kornelija Jurin Starčević, "Vojne snage Kliškog i Krčko-ličkog sandžaka pred Kandijski rat – osmanska vojska plaćenika," in *Zbornik Mire Kolar Dimitrijević*, ed. Damir Agčić (Zagreb: FF press and Odsjek za povijest Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2003), 79-95; Fehim Dž. Spaho, "Organizacija vojne krajine u sandžacima Klis i Krka u XVII. stoljeću," in *Vojne krajine u jugoslavenskim zemljama u novom veku do Karlovačkog mira 1699.godine*, ed. Čubrilović, Vasa (Beograd: SANU, 1989), 101-114.; Fehim Dž. Spaho, "Neke karakteristike razvitka varoških naselja u Kliškom sandžaku u XVI. i XVII. stoljeću," *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 38 (1989): 241-251.

¹² Fehim Dž. Spaho et al., *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine* (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 2007).

¹³ Radoslav Lopašić, *Spomenici Hrvatske krajine. Knjiga 1. Od godine 1409. do 1610.* (Zagreb: Academia scientiarum et artium Slavorum meridionalium 1884.)

¹⁴ Mijo Batinić, "Njekoliko priloga k bosanskoj crkvenoj povijesti," *Starine JAZU XVII* (1885): 115-145; Franjo Rački "Prilozi za geografsko-statistički opis Bosanskoga pašalika," *Starine JAZU XIV* (1882): 173-195.

¹⁵ Mile Bogović, "Takozvani Glavinicev opis Like i Krbave iz 1696. godine," *Croatica Christiana Periodica* 15, no. 27 (1991): 117 – 128.

continued scientific valorisation of Ottoman sources on the history of Lika.¹⁶ More recently, Marko Šarić gave a significant contribution to the study of the history of Lika in the 16th and 17th centuries.¹⁷ In spite of valuable individual historiographic contributions which do shed light onto certain segments of Lika's history during Ottoman rule, knowledge about it is still inadequate, and Ottoman sources still insufficiently used. Therefore, lacking contemporary comparative studies which would compare the research of early researchers of Lika's past with the new knowledge from Ottoman sources, the works of the older generation of historians who studied Lika in the Ottoman period from Western sources found in Vienna, Graz and other archives are still indispensable references. We are here primarily referring to the work of Stjepan Pavičić; his study on migration and settlements is still a reference point in the research of historical and demographic issues, specifically the research of the population density and migration in Lika immediately before and during the Ottoman rule.¹⁸ Also, works recording Ottoman cultural heritage in Lika are extremely important.¹⁹ Even though historiographic knowledge on Lika under Ottoman rule to date has been incorporated in the synthesis of the history of Croatia under Ottoman Empire,²⁰ we can safely say that the history of Ottoman Lika is still waiting for a detailed scientific study.

ESTABLISHMENT OF OTTOMAN RULE IN LIKA, MILITARY-ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL ORGANIZATION

The *akıncıs* were present in Lika even before the fall of Bosnia in 1463.²¹ Their intrusions were initially sporadic, while following the conquest of Bosnia and organisation of the *sancák* of Bosnia they assumed the characteristics of multiple annual destructive attacks which triggered migration waves and ultimately led to demographic and economic devastation of area. The battle of Krbava in 1493 is in Croatian historiography usually considered the peak of the troubles even though

¹⁶ Moačanin, "Naseljenost Like," 61-65; Moačanin, "Ime Gospić," 51-54.

¹⁷ Marko Šarić, "Društveni odnosi i previranja u sandžaku Lika – Krka u 16. i početkom 17. stoljeća," in *Diplomska radionica prof. dr. Drage Roksandića*, eds. Drago Roksandić et al. (Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 1999), 67-130; Šarić, "Osmanski korijeni Gospića," 215-248.

¹⁸ Stjepan Pavičić, "Seobe i naselja u Lici," *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje južnih Slavena* 41 (1962): 99-139, 151-171.

¹⁹ Milan Kruhek, "Turske utvrde i kule u Lici i Krbavi 1527.-1689. godine," *Senjski zbornik* 40 (2013): 471-508.

²⁰ Nenad Moačanin, *Turska Hrvatska. Hrvati pod vlašću Osmanskoga Carstva do 1791. Preispitivanja* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska 1999), 64-74; Željko Holjevac and Nenad Moačanin, *Hrvatsko-slavonska Vojna krajina u ranome novom vijeku i Hrvati pod vlašću Osmanskoga Carstva u ranome novome vijeku* (Zagreb: Leykam International, 2007), 108-177.

²¹ Ottoman presence around Otočac was recorded in 1445. Ive Mažuran, *Hrvati i Osmansko Carstvo* (Zagreb: Golden marketing 1998), 29.

severely destructive incursions continued following the Ottoman conquest of Knin and Skradin in 1522.²² At the time when the Bosnian *sancâkbeyi* Gâzî Hüsrev Bey conquered Udbina, Komić and Mrsinj in 1527, the *akıncı* incursions have already been going on for some sixty years. In that period the population grew scarce and the previous system of counties was dismantled.²³ Out of the ten counties whose existence was recorded in late Middle Ages under the administration of the Kingdom of Croatia, only Gacka and Brinjska counties remained.²⁴ Other parts of Lika and Krbava came under more or less strict rule of the Ottoman Empire. Although there is no direct confirmation in historical sources, it is presumed that the Ottomans conquered Lika the same year as Krbava.²⁵ The Ottomans have initially decided to append all newly conquered areas between Una and Velebit, together with the parts between Cetina and Zrmanja which were conquered earlier (Karin, Korlat, Ostrovica, Skradin, Knin, Sinj) to the neighbouring *sancâk* of Bosnia under temporary military administration as *Vilâyet-i Hırvat*²⁶ governed by *voyvoda* or *subaşı*. Following their conquest of Klis, the last town of the Kingdom of Croatia south of Velebit in 1537, the Ottomans have rounded off the territory and established the *sancâk* of Klis, with Lika and Krbava being its component parts.

The *sancâk* of Klis was territorially wide and it encompassed territories north of Dinara, namely south-western Bosnia. The first *sancâkbeyi* of the *sancâk* of Klis was Murad Bey.²⁷ Parts of Lika and Krbava remained within the *sancâk* of Klis until 1580, when the territory west of Krka river was militarily and administratively separated from the *sancâk* of Klis and appended to the newly established *sancâk* of

²² Moaçanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, 17; Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 56.

²³ During late Middle Ages there were about ten parishes on the present-day territory of Lika: Lika, Gacka, Krbava, Brinje, Buško, Hotuča, Lapac, Nebljuš, Odorjan and Una. Lika parish stretched along the river of the same name in Ličko polje; Željko Holjevac, "Ličko-krbavska županija u identitetu Like," in *Identitet Like: korijeni i razvitak*, ed. Željko Holjevac (Zagreb – Gospić: Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar – Područni centar Gospić, 2009), 429.

²⁴ For the purpose of organisation of defence against Ottoman attacks until the beginning of 1540s Otočac captaincy was established on the Gacka territory, while the Brinje region was appended to the Senj captaincy established in 1469. Both Senje and Otočac captaincies comprised Primorska Krajina with Senj as its center. Primorska Krajina was, in turn, part of the Karlovac Generalate, a component part of Military Frontier in Croatia and Slavonia. Holjevac, "Ličko-krbavska županija," 430.

²⁵ For the assumption that the conquest might have happened in 1528 see: Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 73; Šarić, "Osmanski korijen Gospića," 221.

²⁶ The term was first used in the census of 1528-30 which contains a reference on the presence of Croatian ethnic element in the said area, as well as a reference that the area previously belonged to the Kingdom of Croatia. TD 164, 366-368.

²⁷ The dominant historiographical belief was that the first *sancâkbeyi* of Klis was Tardić from the Šibenik area, while the most recent research of the Šibenik archival material by Kristijan Juran established that his last name was Gajdić. Kristijan Juran, "O podrijetlu i šibenskoj rodbini prvoga kliškog sandžakbega Murat-bega Gajdića," *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 66 (2016): 231-239.

Krka.²⁸ The new *sancâk* encompassed area west and north-west of the Krka river, including Lika and Krbava all the way to the border with the territory governed by the Habsburg Monarchy, as well as the territory of Bukovica and Ravni Kotari all the way to Dalmatia which was under Venetian rule. This *sancâk* is in the historical sources sometimes referred to as the *sancâk* of Lika, as well, which means that during the Ottoman rule the toponym Lika covered the territory of the entire *sancâk* (and was used interchangeably in administrative sense with the official title the *sancâk* of Krka) which in turn testifies to the importance of the Lika component in the management of the *sancâk*.²⁹ However, Ottoman documents record the term Lika as also synonymous of Ličko polje (*Lika sabrâsi*) and the surrounding area, namely the territory of the former Lika county now under Ottoman rule (*Lika nâhiyesi*).

Organisation of the new *sancâk* should be interpreted within the context of the government's planned settlement of Lika and Krbava and Ottoman efforts to improve demographic, military and economic potential of the entire western *serhad* for the purpose of establishing Ottoman defence against Croatia and the Slavonian military border, especially after Karlovac was built in 1579. The *sancâk* of Krka/Lika became a part of the *eyâlet* of Bosnia established in 1580 as the highest military and administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire on the territory of Croatia and Bosnia. The first *sancâkbeyi* of Krka was most likely Mehmed Bey, a progenitor of the famous Memibegović family, while Idris Bey was the second.³⁰ Even though the official seat of the *sancâk* of Krka/Lika was in Knin or Udbina,³¹ *sancâkbeyis* often spent time in Ribnik in Lika, especially at the beginning of the 17th century as they had their *çiftlik*s in and around Ribnik. Thus, for example, *sancâkbeyi* Halil Bey stayed in Ribnik during the rebellion of the Ribnik Vlachs in 1609 when the rebels imprisoned the *sancâkbeyi* in the Ribnik fort from which he escaped to Banja Luka.³² Ottoman tax register from

²⁸ Although there are some doubts in literature about the year of establishment of the *sancâk* of Krka since there is some evidence showing it was established even before 1580, and then abolished (according to the statements of Ottoman annalist İbrahim Peçevi), following the research of Hazim Šabanović a generally accepted year was given. See: Ibrahim Alajbegović Pečevića. *Historija 1520-1576. Volume 1*, translated by Fehim Nametak (Sarajevo: El Kalem 2000), 173; Stjepan Antoljak, "Kada i koliko puta je osnivan Krčki ili Lički sandžak?," *Zadarska revija* 2 (1957): 160-166; Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 73-76.

²⁹ Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 75; Batinić, "Njekoliko priloga," 142; Rački, "Prilozi za geografsko-statistički opis," 182.

³⁰ Memibegović family got its last name after a hypochoristic Memi (from Mehmet). Mehmet Bey or Memi Bey was the *sancâkbeyi* of Krka for two years. In October 1582 he was relieved of duty due to Venetian complaints. He was replaced by Idris Bey. Mehmet Bey spent some time as the *sancâkbeyi* of a temporary *sancâk* of Krupa, when he left for Hungary to become the *sancâkbeyi* of Ostrogon. For Mehmet Bey and Halil Bey Memibegović see: Nedim Zahirović, "Tragom jedne karijere: Halil-beg (Halil-paša) Memibegović od Like preko Jegra do Banja Luke," *Historijski zbornik LXX*, no. 2 (2017), 354.

³¹ Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 76.

³² Šarić, "Društveni odnosi u sandžaku Krka-Lika," 115-116; Rudolf Horvat, *Lika i Krbava. Povijesne slike, crtice i bilješke* (Zagreb: Izdanje Matice Hrvatske, 1941), 14.

1604 tells us that the Halil Bey's *çiftlik* comprised the *mezraâs* of Budak, Drenovica (or by other name Vukšić), Podkovač, and some other *mezraâs* in the *nâhiye* of Novi, while Mehmed Bey *zaim* (which we identify as the first *sancâkbeyi* of Krka) and Ahmed *zaim* had their *çiftliks* in the village of Lovina and on the Lovinac *mezraâ*. In the *nâhiye* of Novi Ibrahim Bey³³ had his *çiftlik*, while, according to the 1574 and 1585 register, Behlul Bey *zaim*³⁴ had, among others, his *çiftlik* in the field near the Ribnik fort. The title bey points to the fact that both Ibrahim Bey and Behlul Bey served as *sancâkbeyis*.

Judicially and administratively Lika and Krbava were under the authority of the *kadı* of the *kadılık* of Skradin with a seat in Skradin. Next, Ottoman sources name Krka or the *kadılık* of Knin.³⁵ The *kadılık* of Krka or the *kadılık* of Knin are two terms for the same judicial seat in Knin competent for all areas west of the Krka river, excepting Ravni kotari which had a separate *kadı* with a seat in Zemunik.³⁶ In addition to the two documents kept in the State Archives in Venice there is also a direct mention of a *kadı* in Lika who has, concurrently with the *kadı* of Zemunik, signed some documents translated into Italian for the purposes of Venetian authorities.³⁷ The *kadı* of Lika could be identical with the *kadı* of Krka or Knin since the *sancâk* was termed Krka or Lika, the title potentially referring to *kadılık*, as well.

LIKA AND KRBAVA IN OTTOMAN REGISTERS FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY: MILITARY STATUS, DEMOGRAPHIC AND LANDHOLDING STRUCTURE

Three strategically important forts in Krbava and Lika – Udbina, Novi and Bilaj – were rebuilt by the Ottomans immediately following the conquest and permanent garrisons were placed in them.³⁸ They have most likely tried to deploy soldiers in the

³³ TD 13/119, 310-313.

³⁴ TD 533, 646; TD 622, 482/A.

³⁵ According to H. Šabanović Krka kadiluk was first mentioned in Ottoman sources in 1591, while A. Jakovljević and N. Isailović claim it was in 1583. See: Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 226; Aleksandar Jakovljević – Neven Isailović, *Petrovo polje u vrelima osmanskog razdoblja (1528.-1604.)* (Šibenik: Državni arhiv u Šibeniku, Javna ustanova Nacionalni park Krka, 2019), 172-173.

³⁶ According to H. Šabanović this *kadılık* was first mentioned in the Ottoman sources in the 1640s, while A. Jakovljevića and N. Isailović claim it was in 1577. This means that there were two *kadis* on the territory west of the Krka river, one for the Kotari, and the other for the remaining part of the *sancâk* of Krka. See: Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, 227; Jakovljević – Isailović, *Petrovo polje u vrelima osmanskog razdoblja*, 172-173.

³⁷ Jakovljević – Isailović, *Petrovo polje u vrelima osmanskog razdoblja*, 173.

³⁸ Western sources also report on the reconstruction of Udbina, Novi and Bilaj. The destiny of Mrsinj remains unclear. According to western sources it was reconstructed by ruler of the *sancâk* of Hercegovina Ibrahim Bey, however Ottoman sources currently do not confirm that the Ottomans have assigned it a garrison. Horvat, *Lika i Krbava*, 12.

Bunić fort mentioned in a detailed register from 1528-30 as well, but failed.³⁹ Other towns from the pre-Ottoman period, such as Komić, Vranik, Podlapac, Kukovac, Radavac and Zelengrad remained derelict or were deserted altogether, Gračac including.⁴⁰ The first Ottoman source which confirms the presence of Ottoman soldiers (*nefer*) in the towns of Lika and Krbava is the synoptic (*icmâl*) defter from 1528-1530 which gives a list of forts and their garrisons in the *sancâk* of Bosnia.⁴¹ The sources clearly state that the Ottomans have awarded the central military and defence role on the territory of western *serhad* to Udbina. At the time there were 107 *ulûfeciyan*⁴² soldiers in Udbina. Those were soldiers paid in cash for their military service. The Imperial Treasury paid the *nefers* of Udbina 473 akçe, which amounted to 170.980 akçe on the annual basis, a considerable sum. The size of the garrisons and a princely sum the state awarded to *nefers* of Udbina testifies not only to the importance of Udbina for the defence of Krbava, but also reveals general military and strategic plans of the Sublime Porte in the western *serhad*. In Novi (or Novigrad as it was occasionally referred to in the Ottoman registers), which protected Lika, there were 73 *ulûfeciyan* whose service was paid for from the Imperial Treasury at 316 akçe per diem, or 111.864 akçe per annum. The Ottomans had fifty-five soldiers in Bilaj at 247 akçe per diem, or 86.436 akçe per annum. In 1530 the Ottomans had the total of 235 paid soldiers in Lika and Krbava whose service cost them 369.280 akçe.⁴³ All of the *nefers* belonged to the ranks of the *mustahfiz* or fort keepers, while other branches of the military service were not formed as yet. In this early period of the establishment of the Ottoman rule occupying key towns, manning them with guards and fortifying them was of prime importance, because that kept transport routes towards Knin and the Ottoman maritime port of Obrovac well protected. The Ottomans have subsequently placed operational military ranks in those forts (*azaps* and *martoloses* as mobile infantry, and *fârises* as light cavalry) which were necessary for further raids toward Senj and Otočac captaincies and for the successful waging of the “small war” at the border, while they distributed artillery (*topcuyân*) in the forts following frequent attacks which required firmer defence. However, considering that tax registers from the first half of the 16th century mention the *harâmibâşı* and the *beşlü* as owners of individual plots of land in Lika and in Krbava this proves that squads of the *harâmîs* and the *beşlüyan* were present in the above mentioned forts before the middle of the 16th century.⁴⁴

³⁹ TD 157, 1082. According to western sources Bunić was rebuilt in the middle of the 16th century. Pavičić, *Seobe i naselja*, 131.

⁴⁰ TD 284, 23, 231, 402.; Spaho et al., *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 22, 234, 413.

⁴¹ MAD 540, 218.

⁴² From *ulûfe* – wages.

⁴³ MAD 540, 218.

⁴⁴ TD 284, 418, 420.

The area which falls within the scope of this research was in the first Ottoman register listed as *Lika nâhiyesi*. The *nâhiye* of Lika then encompassed all conquered territories from the Gračac fort to the Novi fort, that is to say, from the frontier which separated the territory of the Ottoman Empire from the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia. Under the title of the *nâhiye* of Lika some other conquered areas in Krbava were listed as well, which were governed by the Ottomans from Udbina, although the register mentions *Korbava nâhiyesi*. Ottoman rule in Lika was established with great difficulty, primarily due to sparsity of population. Depopulation was massive. The synoptic register (*icmâl*) from 1528-30 reads in one place that “the *nâhiye* of Lika is empty space” (*Nâhiye-i Lika alân hâli dir*).⁴⁵ In numerous places in the same source Lika is listed as *nâhiye* which is in *dâr ül-harb*,⁴⁶ “in the house of war,” “in war territory” even though forts of Novi and Bilaj were firmly under Ottoman control.⁴⁷ The detailed register from 1528-30 describes numerous *mezraâs* in Lika, as horrible places (*mahûf yerler*) related (*mutasil*) to *dâr ül-harb*.⁴⁸ Thus it is stressed that the area has become a part of the Empire through conquest and that it borders with a country ruled by non-Muslims. Also stressed was the military and political reality of frequent intrusions of Croatian forces from the Senj and Otočac captaincies, as well as from Bihać as a result of which the Empire could not guarantee the safety of Muslims and *zimmîs*⁴⁹ or secure permanent revenue required for the functioning of the Ottoman *sipâhî-timâr* system.

In 1530 about 40 *mezraâs* were recorded in the *nâhiye* of Lika.⁵⁰ No settlement was recorded as a village (*karye*). Of the total of about 40 *mezraâs* 17 were inhabited, with the total of 127 tax units (*hâne*) 106 of them held by Christians, 15 held by Muslims, and 6 held by single individuals (*mücerred*).

More densely populated *mezraâs* were Mahovci, Moročani and Mazine (16 Christian households or tax units called *hâne*, 1 single individual and 2 Muslim households), Papračani (16 Christian households or *hâne*, 2 Muslim households), Poljice (2 Muslim households, 13 non-Muslim households), Bukovljani (1 Muslim household, 1 single individual and 14 non-Muslim households), Morovi (13 Christian households, 1 Muslim household), Podstražno (9 Christian households, 1 Muslim household, 1 single individual), Nova Vast (9 Christian households),

⁴⁵ TD 164, 47.

⁴⁶ TD 164, 367.

⁴⁷ TD 164, 2, 47.

⁴⁸ TD 157, 1080-1081.

⁴⁹ *Zimmî* – subject of the Ottoman empire paying poll tax, non-Muslim.

⁵⁰ In Ottoman tax terminology *mezraâ* was an abandoned or depopulated village. Even though they were deserted, *mezraâs* had visible remnants of earlier settlements, such as houses, wells and other infrastructure used by previous inhabitants. Also, those could have been areas that the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages used for agriculture.

while the following *mezra'as* were sparsely populated: Čelopek (8 Christian households), Bisić (4 Muslims, 2 single men), Dugošani (5 Christian households, 1 single, 1 Muslim), Lovine (5 Christian households), Zapujani (1 Christian household, 1 Muslim household), Zabužani (4 Christian households), Četenić (4 Christian households), Kožile (4 Christian households).⁵¹ For certain *mezra'as* such as Kožile, Dugošani, Zapujani, Bukovljani, Nova Vast the records state that they were populated by Vlachs (*Eflâkân*).⁵²

The Ottoman authorities have turned large parts of vacant land into agricultural land given up for lease, namely into *çiftliks*, which were leased out to interested individuals for fixed low amounts.⁵³ In the years 1528-30 there were eight *çiftliks* in Lika and Krbava. The following people appear in registers as *çiftlik* holders: 1) *Voyvoda* Sinân,⁵⁴ from the entourage of the former Bosnian *sancâkbeyi* Yûnus paşa;⁵⁵ 2) *Voyvoda* Dragoje, Dragiša and *beşlü* Ali;⁵⁶ 3) Turahân, son of Karagöz and Petar, son of Vukša;⁵⁷ 4) Yahyâ, son of İsmail, Dragić, son of Dragiša and Radoje;⁵⁸ 5) *beşlü* Hasan and *beşlü* Temurhân;⁵⁹ 6) Hasan and Dâvud;⁶⁰ 7) *beşlü* Hasan, *çavuş* Hüseyin, Ferhâd Lugić and a few other interested individuals;⁶¹ 8) Petar Gučić.⁶²

From the revenue from the lease of *çiftliks* and the farming of *mezra'as* Ottoman Empire could only partially cover the cost of four military endowments or *timâr*s which had the following registered owners: Ca'fer, son of Udovičić, knez Čulin,

⁵¹ Names of villages and *mezra'as* are herein written without question mark if a toponym has been located or its reading determined beyond doubt irrespective of the fact that it cannot be located today. Question mark is used next to toponyms for which there is any number of possible readings, and it has not been possible to determine which of those is the correct one. In resolving the issues with toponyms I have used the works of Stjepan Pavičić and Ivica Matajic.

⁵² TD 157, 1077 – 1078.

⁵³ For *çiftliks* as *mezra'as* given up for lease for small amounts of money in unsafe frontier areas see: Močanin, *Turska Hrvatska*, 126.

⁵⁴ *Voyvoda* Sinan's *çiftlik* encompassed the territory between the destroyed forts of Vranik and Komić, and villages of Gornji and Donji Smokrići, Podal and Namlina (?). The estimated income from that *çiftlik* was part of the *knez* Čulin's *timâr* and it amounted to 750 *akçe*. The source does not give information on permanent residents of the *çiftlik*. TD 164, 364.

⁵⁵ Yûnus-paşa was Bosnian *sancâkbeyi* from 1512 until 1513, and from 1514 until 1515.

⁵⁶ Their *çiftlik* encompassed the territory of *mezra'a* around Gračac, near the destroyed forts of Radavac and Zelengrad. TD 157, 1081.

⁵⁷ Their *çiftlik* encompassed the territory of *mezra'a* Trnovljani and Mioćani in Lika. TD 157, 1081.

⁵⁸ The *çiftlik* encompassed *mezra* Projani (?) and the lands of Juraj Sudac (judge?). TD 157, 1081.

⁵⁹ The *çiftlik* encompassed Veliko and Malo Podkrbavje and Pećani near Udbina in *Vilayet-i Hırvat*. TD 157, 1082.

⁶⁰ The *çiftlik* encompassed summer pasture Mazine near Udbina. TD 157, 1082.

⁶¹ For their *çiftlik* it was specified that it is situated in the *Vilayet-i Hırvat*, covering numerous *mezra'as* near fort Bunić and fort Komić. TD 157, 1082.

⁶² His *çiftlik* encompassed *mezra'as* Gospina Gorica and Jošane in Krbava. TD 157, 1083.

knez Vukašin, son of Sladoje and Petar Preić. In addition to the uncertain revenue from *mezra'as* and *çiftliks* all over Lika and Krbava, some of them had revenue from the estates situated deeper in the *sancâk* of Bosnia, in safer areas. To others yet the Sublime Porte gave a monetary supplement to the basic revenue received from Lika and Krbava endowments which speaks of the level of demographic and economic devastation of that space.

Ca'fer, son of Udovičić was a Bosnian *sipâhî* discharged from service (*mazûl*), or "waiting" for new service. His family also had endowments in the *nâhiyes* of Sinj, Cetina and Vrlika.⁶³ His *timâr* in Lika encompassed 14 inhabited *mezra'as*: Moročani, Mahovci, Mazine, Poljice, Lovine, Zabužani, Čelopek, Četenić, Nova Vast, Kožile, Bisić, Dugošani, Zapujani and Bukovljani. These *mezra'as* were farmed because the register gives figures of production levels, and the total estimated revenue of these *mezra'as* was 6.475 *akçe*.⁶⁴ There were 11 Muslim households, 5 single individuals and 73 non-Muslim households in those *mezra'as*. In addition to these, Ca'fer had a more reliable source of revenue through a levy from military village of Poljanica (or Bilosalić) in the *nâhiye* of the Saraj in Bosnia, with 14 Muslim households, one non-Muslim household and three one-person households.⁶⁵

Revenue from *timâr* of knez Vukašin, son of Sladoje came from *mezra'as* in Papračani, Morova and Podstražno and amounted to 995 *akçe*. Sublime Porte added 1.295 *akçe* to this amount to form a smaller *timâr*. The three *mezra'as* had 33 Christian households or *hâne*, 4 Muslim households and one single individual household.⁶⁶ Ottoman policy of granting *timârs* to Vlach *knezes* who were thus incentivised to settle their Vlach communities or *cemâats* in the vacant areas can be traced to the earliest days of control over the said territory.

Another discharged Bosnian *sipâhî* became a holder of *timâr* – Petar Preić. His *timâr* encompassed numerous *mezra'as* and a few *çiftliks* in Lika and Krbava, as well as in the neighbouring *nâhiyes* of Zrmanja, Popina, Ostrovica and Srb. His endowment in Lika included *mezra'a* Morovi assigned to Sladoje and Orthodox priest (*pop*) Vukašin, zemin of the *varoş* of fort Gračac, *mezra'as* Mahori, Purišani, Nadgorica (Jadgodica?) and Zapotočani which were assigned to Ca'afer, "mezra'a of the *nâhiyes* of Lika" assigned to Nikola Bedović, *mezra'a* Podribnica(?) and Mendova (Medova – Medak?) assigned to Pavle and Radivoje, *mezra'a* Zrnić assigned to Ivaniš, *mezra'a* Novosel near the Gračac fort assigned to Vuk Grujac,

⁶³ Another member of the Udovičić family, Hasan, most likely brother to the above mentioned Ca'fer, had holdings in the *nâhiyes* of Neretva and Visoko. See: Fazileta Hafizović, "Posjedi zvaničnika i njihovih porodica u Kliškom sandžaku u 16. stoljeću," *Znakovi vremena* 13/48- 49 (summer-autumn 2010), 256.

⁶⁴ TD 164, 366.

⁶⁵ TD 164, 366.

⁶⁶ TD 164, 367.

çiftlik hold by knez Dragoja and Dragiša, *çiftlik* hold by Turahân, son of Karagöz, and Petar, son of Vukša, *çiftlik* hold by Yâhya, son of İsmail and Dragić, son of Dragiša and Radoje, *mezraâ* Gudušić (Godušić), Gaćepeći and Lišić assigned to tailor Hüseyin, *mezra* Zrninica assigned to Grgur, *mezraâ* Kolunić assigned to Obrad, *mezra* Borslatković assigned to *Koca* Mahmûd, *mezraâ* Gradičina Podvrbcë (Pod Vrebac?) assigned to Dervîş Behrâm and his brother, *mezraâ* Kukovac Varoš assigned to Ca'fer bey Udovičić, *mezraâ* Lovinac assigned to Mehmed Ağa, *mezraâ* Ban Dol assigned to İskender.

Petar Preić's endowment included *çiftlik* of *beşlü* Hasan and *beşlü* Temurhân in the *Hrvat vilâyeti*, *çiftlik* of Hasan and Dâvud near Udbina, *çiftlik* of *beşlü* Hasan, *çavuş* Hüseyin and Ferhâd Lugić in Krbava, *mezraâs* Duga Vas and Korita in Krbava assigned to Blaž Trgočić, and *çiftlik* of Petar Gučić which encompassed *mezraâs* of Gospina Gorica and Jošane.

Landholdings in Lika and Krbava yielded little revenue, the total of 1.725 akçe (*mezraâ* Lovinac yielded the most, 285 akçe). The source does not give information about permanent residents of *mezraâs* and *çiftliks* which were part of Petar Prejić's endowment (it states that they are situated on dangerous territory and that they cannot be farmed, thus fixed low revenue amounts are given).⁶⁷ The total amount of revenue from all of his landholdings was 3.908 akçe.⁶⁸ The government paid out a monetary supplement to this low *timâr*, undoubtedly to motivate the colonisation of Lika.

Even a glance at the names of the individuals who were assigned *mezraâs* and *çiftliks* in Lika in this earliest period of Ottoman rule, as well as a glance at the names of taxpayers who inhabited the *mezraâs*, reveals that ethnic and religious affiliation was multifarious. There were Muslims and Christians, mostly new immigrants. Yet there were autochthonous inhabitants left as well, which can be deduced from their names such as Ivaniš, Grgur and Blaž which are listed as tenants of *mezraâs*. Additionally, in some *mezraâs* Vlachs were predominant.

The register of 1550 testifies to the fact that the demographic and military situation in the *nâhiyes* of Lika was not stable even twenty years on. Localities marked as *mezraâs* now exceed fifty in number, and much more are now described as dangerous places which cannot be farmed which is the reason for their abandonment. Such examples are *mezraâs* Gudušić (Godušić), Gaćepeći and Lišić⁶⁹,

⁶⁷ TD 164, 367-368. In addition to the above mentioned, Petar Preić's endowment comprised of *mezraâ* Hotešić in Zrmanja assigned to knez Lazar, *mezraâ* Obrenić in Popina assigned to Karagöz, *mezraâ* Čutnić in Srb assigned to Kara Ca'fer, as well as five *çiftliks* in the *nâhiyes* of Saraj and Dubrovnik.

⁶⁸ TD 164, 367-368.

⁶⁹ TD 284, 231; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliskog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 235.

Morovi and Smojčina near Gračac⁷⁰, Zrnić⁷¹, *mezraás* Trivljani and Misočani⁷², priest (*pop*) Stepan's *mezraá* near Gračac used by Vuk, Cvetko and Radovan⁷³, *çiftlik* of Yâhya, son of İsmail, Dragić, son of Dragiša, Radojina, son of Brajko and Vukić, son of Vukosav which comprised *mezraá* Projani (?) near Novi which was previously owned by Juraj Sudac (judge?) and *mezraá* Krbava and the land hold by Juraj, son of Vukša⁷⁴, *mezraá* Gradičina Podvrbče (Pod Vrebac?) hold by Derviş Behrâm and his brother 'Alî⁷⁵, *mezraá* Dubnić hold by Kara Ca'fer and Kurd⁷⁶, *mezraá* Borslatković owned by *Koca* Mahmûd⁷⁷, *çiftlik* of *beşlü* Hasan, Temurhân and İskender which comprised *mezraás* Malo and Veliko Podkrbavje and Pećani⁷⁸, *mezraás* Podribnica (?) and Mendova (Medova – Medak?),⁷⁹ *mezraás* Zrnica, Podmijača and Trnova Mala which were owned by a few Christians,⁸⁰ etc.

There are numerous references in the register that *reaya*⁸¹ in Lika changed sides or inhabited a different place. Thus for example, *reaya* left *mezraás* Bukovljani,⁸² Dugošani,⁸³ Ravna Popina,⁸⁴ *mezraá* Bisić known as the land of Grgur Milaković,⁸⁵ Lovina, Lovinac and Podžirje,⁸⁶ Kožili,⁸⁷ Zapujani,⁸⁸ etc. Such notes of the census takers point to the conclusion that, even though population was sparse in the ini-

⁷⁰ TD 284, 235; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 234-235.

⁷¹ TD 284, 251; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 257.

⁷² Which were *çiftlik* of Temurhân, son of Karagöz, Petar, son of Vukašin, Vukdrag, son of Juraj, Petko and Stepko. TD 284, 392; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 404.

⁷³ TD 284, 394; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 406.

⁷⁴ TD 284, 396; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 407.

⁷⁵ TD 284, 401; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 412.

⁷⁶ TD 284, 414; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 425.

⁷⁷ TD 284, 415; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 425.

⁷⁸ TD 284, 420; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 429.

⁷⁹ TD 284, 400; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 411.

⁸⁰ TD 284, 419; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 429.

⁸¹ Subjects of the Ottoman Empire who paid taxes and primarily farmed the land.

⁸² According to the census taker's note this *mezraá* previously had 6 households of *reaya*, but they have left their place of residence and have settled elsewhere. TD 284, 399; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 410.

⁸³ TD 284, 231; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 235.

⁸⁴ There were 3 Christian households recorded there before. Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 370.

⁸⁵ TD 284, 379; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 392.

⁸⁶ In *mezraás* Lovine, Lovinac and Podžirje at the time of the census there was no one, even though earlier records show 5 inhabitants. TD 284, 396; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 408. TD 284, 396.

⁸⁷ Earlier records show 4 inhabitants, but they all ran away. TD 284, 407; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 418.

⁸⁸ Earlier records show two persons living there. TD 284,408; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 419.

tial period of the Ottoman rule, Lika still had a larger population in 1530 than in 1550. Migration from the Ottoman to the Habsburg and Venetian territory began already in 1530s and continued for the rest of the 16th and throughout the 17th centuries. There was a number of reasons for it, but the most important was constant insecurity. Devastating invasions of uskoks near Senj which began after 1537 drove away the remaining inhabitants which left their different ways; some to the area controlled by the Habsburgs, other deeper into the Ottoman inland, others yet into the Venetian Dalmatia and Istria. Udbina, Novi and Bilaj forts have also been attacked multiple times.⁸⁹

Plots in Lika that had once been farmed, but were by the middle of the 16th century abandoned were used by transhumance pastoralists (*hâymâneler*) as summer pastures. The government has therefore decided to start collecting fees for grazing on such plots. For example, from the areas of the devastated forts of Komić, Vranik and Podlapac the government collected revenue for grazing in the amount of 1.500 *akçe*.⁹⁰ *Mezra'â* Otrić in Popina which became the property of Karagöz and Nasûh, sons of 'Abdullâh and has served as a grazing ground of the stock owned by *cemâ'at* lead by knez Vukosav,⁹¹ etc.

Fertile plots were still occasionally being farmed by lease holders. For some *mezra'as* it was recorded that they are being farmed "from the outside" (such as for example *mezra'as* Poljice⁹², Nova Vast⁹³, Lovine⁹⁴, Četečić⁹⁵, Čelopek⁹⁶) with no mention of the actual holders, while in other cases records state who used the land. For example, a few Christians – Radoje, Bože, Vukašin, Pavko, Vuksan, Đurašin, Milun, Radica, Pribila, Dobrica and Dobrila – inhabitants of the village of Bitelić in the Sinj-Cetina region gave permission to be recorded as users of the land and water mills in *mezra'as* of Morovi and Smojčina near the Gračac fort.⁹⁷ Inhabitants of the village of Bitelić as holders of *mezra'as* are listed in the records from 1520-30.⁹⁸ Also, transhumance pastoralists from the same village,

⁸⁹ Western sources report that Udbina was devastated in 1544. Ottoman sources also describe heavy devastation of Udbina in 1570/71. Novi and Bilaj were devastated already in 1530. Pavičić, *Seobe i naselja*, 129, 130; Mühimme defteri (MD) 12, 224; MD 14, 276.

⁹⁰ TD 284, 23; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 22. The government collected income by taking a sheep or its counter value depending on the amount of livestock (25 *akçe* for a large herd or flock, 15 for the middle-sized one, and 10 for a small one).

⁹¹ TD 284, 250; Spaho et. al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 256.

⁹² TD 284, 386; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 398.

⁹³ TD 284, 386; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 399.

⁹⁴ TD 284, 392; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 404.

⁹⁵ TD 284, 396; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 408.

⁹⁶ TD 284, 231; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 234.

⁹⁷ TT 284, 231; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 234 - 235

⁹⁸ TD 157, 1080.

both Christians and Muslims – Ca'fer, son of Murâd, Hızır son of priest, Cvetko, son of Dobrila, Radoje, Radojko, Radivoj, Radosav, Vukoje, Radica, Ivan, son of Radica – used the mills and *mezráas* of Mahori and Purišani near the fort of Novigrad, and Nadgorica (Jadgodica?), Zapotočani, Podstrana, Papračani, Plićani, Tomljani, etc.,⁹⁹ while the three “new Muslims” (İskender son of Vukosav, Şâhîn son of Radojko and Ahmed son of Miločić) from the village of Radovina near fort Duvno in the *sancâk* of Herzegovina, used *mezráa* Mahdol.¹⁰⁰ The latter speaks volumes about the origins of migration in the period from 1530s to 1550s, and of the course of Islamization. Listing Eastern Orthodox priest (*pop*, from Greek *papás* – father) reveals that Eastern Orthodox population has immigrated, while listing recently Islamized population immigrating from the *sancâk* of Herzegovina points to Islamization of Vlachs as well.¹⁰¹

Çiftliks were still owned by Muslim soldiers and eminent people in the *sancâk* who were paying *resm-i tâpu* to the Imperial Treasury. Thus for example *çiftlik* which comprised of *mezráas* Mala and Duga Poljica, Štitar and Mahovci became the property of *sipâhî* Divâne Mustafâ *harâmîbâşı* and Murâd, son of falconer Mustafâ, after the two have paid 400 *akçe* into Imperial Treasury¹⁰²; meadow (*çayır*) Plana near Udbina became a *çiftlik* of saddle maker Mehmed¹⁰³; Voyvoda Sînân, member of entourage of the former Bosnian *sancâkbeyi* Yûnus Paşa remained the owner of *çiftlik* comprising *mezráas* of Donji and Gornji Smokrići, Podalj and Namlina (?) situated between the destroyed forts of Vranik and Komić, and part of the Ričice *mezráa* near Gračac, etc.¹⁰⁴ And while some Muslim soldiers did reside in the forts and did farm the land leased to them together with their families, eminent individuals from the Ottoman administration undoubtedly did not live in the said *çiftliks*, and have instead left other interested individuals to farm their land.

SETTLEMENT OF LIKA

The Ottoman Empire implemented the policy of settlement of Lika in the period 1550 to 1585 in the time of Malkoç Bey Kara Osmanoğlu, the *sancâkbeyi* of Klis, Ferhâd Bey Sokollu, the *sancâkbeyi* of Klis and Bosnia and Mehmed Bey, the *sancâkbeyi* of Krka. The aim of the settlement process was to strengthen Ottoman military positions toward the Primorje captaincy. In 1560 the sultan ordered Ferhâd Bey Sokollu that 70 destroyed forts in the Lika and Krbava *nâhiyes* near the forts of

⁹⁹ TD 284, 392; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 404.

¹⁰⁰ TD 284, 421; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 430.

¹⁰¹ Šarić, “Osmanski korijeni Gospića,” 230.

¹⁰² TD 284, 418; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 428

¹⁰³ TD 284, 430; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 438.

¹⁰⁴ TD 284, 430; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 439.

Gračac and Udbina be settled and revitalized. It was to be executed by giving (not leasing!) the land around the forts suitable for settlement to interested individuals, issuing of the land deed (*tâpu*) and payment of the *tapu resmi* (*resm-i tâpu*) to the state. The order stressed that the agricultural land shall not be given to the stock breeders and *çiftlik* holders (who do not have a permanent residence), but to those who shall farm the land and live there permanently (*reaya*).¹⁰⁵ A wave of colonisation in Lika had to have begun even before 1550 because a Spanish source from 1560 states that Malkoç Bey, the *sancâkbeyi* of Klis had settled 8.000 to 15.000 “Turkish” households in Lika in the past few years.¹⁰⁶ Ivan Lenković, captain from Senj has in 1551 reported to Habsburg king Ferdinand that “the Turks” have populated the border with the Kingdom of Croatia with a few thousand inland Vlachs with over 100.000 sheep and cattle.¹⁰⁷ Even though the central government had a good repopulation and re-agrarisation plan for the area, its implementation did not go as planned. And not only because of the “small war” on the border and invasions of the enemy units from Primorje captaincy, but also because of the conflict between earlier lessees and new immigrants. Disputes over the settlement of Lika were recorded in a document dated 1566 when Hüsrev Bey, the *sancâkbeyi* of Klis, reported to Sublime Porte that some *reaya* appeared in Bilajsko polje in Lika and became its permanent residents.¹⁰⁸ He stressed that the area had been vacant and neglected for thirty years, and the newly settled *reaya* is prevented from farming the land precisely by those who were listed in tax register under fixed amount (namely, previous lease holders). Unquestionably, the aim of the regional government and the Sublime Porte was to repopulate the vacant area with *reaya* that would actually live there and reside in Lika. Therefore, the sultan’s court ordered that the previous owners not mix with the newcomers who wish to revitalize the derelict forts. It was in the interest of the government to repopulate the area and change the legal status of the existing *mezraás* and *çiftliks* from lease holdings into tithe areas from which the *reaya* shall give tithe (*öşr*) and pay usual levies instead of low fixed amounts. However, that was no easy task for regional Ottoman governors as shall become evident from the orders preserved in Mühimme defteri outlined below.

In addition to immigration the government incentivised reconstruction of destroyed forts all over Lika and Krbava. Until mid-16th century the Ottomans have reconstructed desolate Gračac because the register of 1550 describes it as a fort (*kale*), with the settlement below it, a *varoş* whose inhabitants, immigrants from the village of Bitelić near Sinj, farmed the surrounding land (vineyards, gardens

¹⁰⁵ MD 3, fol. 338, no. 988 ; Holjevac i Moačanin, Hrvatsko-slavonska, 157.

¹⁰⁶ Mirjana Polić-Bobić, “Dva izvještaja o naseljavanju muslimana u Liku i Krbavu,” *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 24 (1991), 207-210.

¹⁰⁷ Pavičić, *Seobe i naselja*, 131.

¹⁰⁸ MD 5, fol. 666, no. 1869.

and meadows) and worked the mills.¹⁰⁹ Udbina was flooded in 1569/70.¹¹⁰ Even though an Ottoman source from 1570 states that Lika and the Novi fort belong to the “House of Islam” (*dâr ül-islâm*)¹¹¹, insecurity was still great, forts did not have enough manpower or weapons, and intrusions from enemy lines were frequent.¹¹²

NOVI, MEDAK AND BILAJ BARLETA NÂHIYES IN THE OTTOMAN TAX REGISTER OF 1574: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE, LANDHOLDING RELATIONS

The efforts of the Ottoman government to revitalise Lika and Krbava demographically and economically did give some results because the register of the *sancâk* of Klis from 1574 lists the total of 12 *nâhiyes*, 7 of which were in Lika (Gračac, forts Novi, Cvituša, Medak, Perušić, fort Zvonigrad, fort Bilaj Barlete), and five in Krbava (fort Udbina, forts Bunić Bilaj, Mazin, Lapac and Nebluh).¹¹³

The paper shall focus on the three *nâhiyes* in Lika which are the topic of this research: fort Novi, fort Bilaj Barlete and Medak.¹¹⁴

The borders of the *nâhiyes* of the Bilaj Barlete and Novi forts stretched between the *nâhiye* of Medak, the derelict Ostrovica fort in Lika, the derelict Smiljan fort, the derelict Stari Grad fort near the Adriatic sea, from the top of the mountain to the derelict Počitelj fort and again down to the border of the *nâhiye* of Medak.¹¹⁵ The borders of the *nâhiye* of Medak stretched from the Zir mountain along the border of the *nâhiye* of Cvituša to the derelict Trnovac fort, from the top of the mountain to the derelict Počitelj fort, along the border of the *nâhiye* of Novi fort to the Veliki Mogorić fort, and along the border of the derelict Podlapac fort to the border of the *nâhiye* of Cvituša.¹¹⁶

In the three *nâhiyes* the total of 37 villages (*karye*) was registered, 18 of which in the *nâhiye* of Novi, 5 in the *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete and 14 in the *nâhiye* of Medak. In the three *nâhiyes* the total of 20 *çiftliks* were listed, of which 9 in the *nâhiye* of Novi, 4 in the *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete, and 7 in the *nâhiye* of Medak. The *nâhiye* of

¹⁰⁹ TD 284, 405; Spaho et al, *Opširni popis Kliškog sandžaka iz 1550. godine*, 415 – 416.

¹¹⁰ MD 5, fol. 666, no. 1869. MD 9, fol. 53, no. 140.

¹¹¹ MD 14, fol. 553, no. 775

¹¹² It is an order to *sancâkbeyi* of Klis which describes a coordinated attack of 1.500 enemy soldiers from the direction of Bihać toward Udbina (Bilajsko polje) and about 200 toward Novi. It was that attack that the *sancâkbeyi* notified the Porte that the forts are without soldiers and weapons. MD 14, fol. 553, no. 775.

¹¹³ TD 533.

¹¹⁴ The register of 1574 also gives the name Medava in few places. Therefore we need to provide for the possibility that this name was used as well although this has not been recorded in the literature so far. TD 533, 367.

¹¹⁵ TD 533, 818.

¹¹⁶ TD 533, 790.

Novi was the most extensive, and had the greatest number of villages and *çiftlik*s, while Bilaj Barlete was the smallest with a modest number of villages and *çiftlik*s.

The *nâhiye* of the Novi fort alone according to the register from 1574 was economically and demographically revitalised area when compared to the information from the earlier register.¹¹⁷ Near the fort three water mills which have been operational for half a year and which earned the government the revenue of 45 *akçe* were registered.¹¹⁸ In addition to these, the source states that there were two additional water mills in the *nâhiye* which were derelict *ocaklar* on the river Barlete and the census taker gave an assessment of 30 *akçe* that the holding earns the government.¹¹⁹ There were quite a few mills in *çiftlik*s, but the exact number is not stated.

The government started charging various levies in the *nâhiye*: the amount was estimated to the total of 120 *akçe*. Individual items mentioned were: inland custom tax or market tax on buying and selling of large quantities of goods arriving in horse loads or cart loads (*bâc-i siyâh*), provisional tax collected to take defendants to court (*ihzârîye*), market tax collected for supervision and *mühtesibs* (*ihtisâb*), bride tax (*resm-i arûs*), penal tax for major offences (*cürm-ü cinâyet*), administrative tax (*niyâbet*), fee for agricultural damage (*polaçina*).¹²⁰ From the above we can infer the following: a) somewhere on the territory of the *nâhiye*, perhaps in the immediate vicinity of the Novi fort, weekly market activity began (weekly market or market day), b) that the fort was probably a seat of the *kadı*'s assistant (*naib*), c) that there was a court room in the fort, d) that there was market supervision in the *nâhiye* (which was a duty of muhtesib or naib) on market day, that customary fees were collected from the traders and craftsmen, that prices were supervised, as well as the accuracy of measurements, etc. e) fines were introduced for offenders, f) bride tax or a fee to be paid upon the marriage of one's daughter started to be collected, g) agriculture was becoming increasingly important and a fee for protection of crops in the fields, as well as a compensation for the damage to the crops incurred by livestock began to be collected.

As was already mentioned above, there were 9 *çiftlik*s listed in the *nâhiye* of Novi stretching all across the *nâhiye* encompassing parts of arable land in the field under the Novi fort, villages and *mezra'as* near and far, grazing land (*otlâk*), and summer pastures (*yâylâk*), water mills and meadows. Fees levied from the *çiftlik*s were part of *sipâbis' timârs*. Tithe (*öşr*), a tenth of all crops grown, was collected from two *çiftlik*s. From four *çiftlik*s an amount was given without breakdown per product, while for three *çiftlik*s there are no entries at all. Tax collected for the following ag-

¹¹⁷ TD 533, 642-646.

¹¹⁸ TD 533, 642.

¹¹⁹ TD 533, 646.

¹²⁰ TD 533, 642.

ricultural products has been recorded: wheat, mix (mix of cereals), oat, vegetables from vegetable gardens, hay, flax, beehives, onion, garlic and cabbage. In addition to these traditional crops, *çiftliks* also grew other cereals (such as buckwheat, rye, etc.), specific climate appropriate fruit and vegetables, but those were not entered in the register by the census taker since the goal was to produce a standardised defter for the *sancâk* of Klis with basic products essential for the functioning of the *sipâhî-timâr* system. The quantity of cereal a *sipâhî* was allowed to collect was expressed in *keyl* a measuring unit approved for the *sancâk* of Klis.¹²¹ In addition to the tithes of the agricultural products, the *sipâhî* had the right to collect feudal bride tax paid on the marriage of a daughter, fee for agricultural damage and half of *bâd-u havâ*.¹²² The above testifies that the *çiftliks* were inhabited, even though there is no data on the inhabitants.

The following *çiftlik* holders are listed in the *nâhiye* of Novi: 1) Mehmed, Mustafâ *kethüda* and Hüseyin, children of Zeynihân;¹²³ 2) Mehmed, Nesûh, the *mustahfizes*, the *beşlüs* and the *martoloses* of the Novi fort;¹²⁴ 3) Bekir Ağa, the *beşlüs* and the *martoloses* of the Novi fort;¹²⁵ 4) Mehmed leader of the *martolos* and other *martoloses*, the *beşlüs* and the *mustahfizes* of the Novi fort;¹²⁶ 5) Bekir Ağa, ‘Ömer, ‘Osman, ‘Ali and Hasan, children of Zeynihân;¹²⁷ 6) Bâli *kethüda* of the Novi fort and his children Mehmed, Ramazân, İbrahim and Mustafâ;¹²⁸ 7) Bekir Ağa, *beşlü* of the Novi fort¹²⁹; 8) Behlül Zaim, Mehmed Prko, Feridun Ağa and Yüsuf *boca*¹³⁰; 9) Behlül Bey Zaim, Oruç *kethüda*, *vojvoda* Sînân, Velî Blagajlo, Mehmed Prko (?),

¹²¹ *Keyl* measuring unit for cereals in the *sancâk* of Klis was 64 okkas.

¹²² *Bâd-u havâ* literally means “wind and air”. It is a fee for keeping order. Includes petty fines and penalties, the most important being blood money.

¹²³ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi, Pejačić *mezraâ* (with derelict fort), *mezraâs* Doljani, Gornja and Donja Cvrtina (?), Mahori, Straža, Dalenić with grazing land and summer pasture, water mills and a meadow.

¹²⁴ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi and *mezraâs* Poljice, Brušan, Novosel, Strćan Gornji, Bilišan, Dugošan with grazing land, summer pasture and a meadow.

¹²⁵ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi and *mezraâs* Podhumci, Dugošan, Bilišan, Barećan grazing land, summer pasture and a meadow.

¹²⁶ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi and *mezraâs* Kolić, Donji and Gornji Radučani, Bilišan, Smiljan, Novosel, *zemin* of a derelict church with grazing land, summer pasture and a meadow.

¹²⁷ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi, *mezraâs* Donji and Gornji Trnavac, Vinarina, Dolina, (?) field near the Bag fort, Konjsko with water mills, grazing land, summer pasture and a meadow.

¹²⁸ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi, *mezraâs* Donji and Gornji Zapotoćan, grazing land, summer pasture and a meadow.

¹²⁹ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field of the Novi fort.

¹³⁰ The *çiftlik* consisted of parts of *zemin* field Novi and *mezraâs* Donja Banova, *mezra* Podhumac grazing land and summer pasture and a meadow, water mills and fish pond. It yielded 940 akçe, which was the highest amount collected from farming of all *çiftliks* in the *nâhiye* of Novi.

‘Ali Bey, son of Velî, Mehmed and other Mehmed Ağa, Ferhâd *kethüda*, Mustafâ, Ahmed, ‘Ömer, ‘Ali Bey, Yûsuf *hoca*, Mehmed Ağa and Mustafâ.¹³¹

The sources reveal that the *çiftliks* were mostly assigned to esteemed individuals (their titles are *bey*, *zaim* and *hoca* which indicate persons in high positions in the *sancâk*), as well as soldiers in the Novi fort and their commanders.¹³²

In 1574 in the *nâhiye* of Novi 18 villages were recorded. For 15 villages in the defter the amounts of tithe for farm products which the government gave to the *sipâhî* are recorded. This means that *sipâhî-timâr* system has been introduced in those villages. Therefore, we could call them tithe villages. Those were the following: Gospoja – place of the church (*Gospoya –i kilisâ yerleri*)¹³³, Komarevo, Račić, Zapotočje, Podstraža, Smiljan, Trnovac, Barečani, Gornji and Donji Ribnić (?), Podhumci, Bilišani, Gornje and Donje Podoštre, Vinari, Stapan. As far as farmsteads and agricultural production is concerned numerous levies on farm products were recorded. It was also done on *çiftliks* (wheat, mix of cereals, oat, vegetables from gardens, hay, flax, beehives, onion, garlic and cabbage). In addition to the tithe, the government gave the *sipâhî* half of *bâd-u havâ*, bride tax and fee for agricultural damage collected in those villages. The largest tithe was recorded near the village of Gospoja; it was 1.000 *akçe*, while the smallest one was paid out near the villages of Gornji and Donji Ribnić (?), and it amounted to 200 *akçe*.¹³⁴ The amount from the village of Gospoja would suggest significant farm activity. No inhabitants were recorded in any of the above villages, however, the amount of tithe was broken down by items (agricultural products) which does suggest that they were inhabited after all, at least most of them such as *çiftliks*. However, the data from the register makes us unable to say anything about the density of population. In addition to tithe villages there were villages for which we do have direct evidence about population density: in those villages *baštines* are recorded with the amounts of financial counter value of agrarian production, but without breakdown per item. Thus, for example, the Nekorić

¹³¹ The *çiftlik* comprised parts of *zemin* in the field of the village near the Ribnik fort and peninsula with St. Nicholas church, with water mills, fish pond, grazing land, meadow, and part of the village Pod(?) in the village of Gornja s Gorićem. The fees collected by the Imperial Treasury from this *çiftlik* was 300 *akçe*. TD 533, 646.

¹³² *Zaim* was a *sipâhî* of higher rank with endowment valued from 20.000 to 100.000 *akçe*, while the title of the *hoca* was attributed to an educated person who might have been a religious teacher, or any eminent person performing a legal duty, or was even engaged in commerce. *Bey* referred to an influential person in the position of *sancâkbeyi*, namely the military and administrative commander of *sancâk*. The title of *ağa* was given to heads of different army troops in forts, while *kethüda* denoted deputy of different authorities and commanders in the fort. Those were individuals who performed different military duties in the Novi fort.

¹³³ For relationship between the village of Gospoja and the village of Gospić see: Močanin, “Ime Gospić,” 51-54; Šarić, “Osmanski korijeni Gospića,” 239-242.

¹³⁴ Račić 400 *akçe*, Zapotočje 600, Podstraža 524, Smiljan 370, Trnovac 420, Barečani 320, Podhumci 620, Bilišani, Gornja and Donja Podoštre 554, Vinari 420.

village was a place where there was a derelict fort with 4 Christian *baštines* with a duty in the amount of 640 *akçe*, while the Novosel village had three Christian and one Muslim *baštine* and its duty amounted to 640 *akçe*, as well. The Brusnice village did not have a single *baštine* recorded, but it yielded 300 *akçe* to the government in duties. In addition to these villages, about ten other villages marked by a sign *mevkûf* were registered, which meant that their duties were kept, stopped for some reason, most likely were not directed toward the *sipâhî timârs*. This refers to the following villages: Brušan (150 *akçe*), Novasel (200), Donja and Gornja Mahorina (300), Mahori (120), Tatačić (200), the Bag village as a place of a derelict fort (150), Jablanica (220), Ribnik (230), Doljan (200) and Dugošani (220).¹³⁵

Since the *nâhiye* was situated in the mountainous territory, near Velebit, five summer pastures were registered (Vinara, Konjsko, Rudine, Lapac, Drlesić?) which were also taxed by the government.¹³⁶ Far smaller *nâhiye* was the Bilaj Barlete fort *nâhiye*. Only four *çiftlik*s were recorded there, and their holders were: 1) Janko (?) and knez Miloš, son of Ugarko¹³⁷; 2) Mehmed, Mustafâ, Hasan, Halil and 'Abdi Murâd's sons¹³⁸; 3) Murâd Ağa *dizdâr* of the Bilaj Barlete fort, Hızır, son of Velî, the leader of the *martoloses* (*sermartolos*) of the Bilaj Barlete fort and other *martoloses* and *mustahfiz*es of the Bilaj Barlete fort¹³⁹; 4) 'Ömer, 'Ali and Osmân, sons of Ahmed.¹⁴⁰ Agrarian production per item was registered only for the *çiftlik* of Murâd Ağa, *dizdâr* of the Novi fort and other members of the fort's garrison. Just as in Novi *nâhiye*, Bilaj Barlete *çiftlik* holders were eminent men in the *nâhiye*, such as fort commander and knez, as well as members of the Bilaj Barlete fort garrison. The *mustahfiz*es and the *martoloses* of the fort were also holders of three water mills on the Barleta river which yielded 45 *akçe* paid to the government.

In the *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete five villages were recorded, four without data on inhabitants, and with low duty amounts. Those are: Dupčan (100 *akçe*), Gorica (200), Došlan (? 150), Lika (100).¹⁴¹ Only for the village of Mogorić near the village of Vrbčić it was recorded that it is inhabited, and has 4 Christian *baštines* which yield the revenue of 640 *akçe* to the government.¹⁴² Also, market day was

¹³⁵ TD 533, 646.

¹³⁶ TD 533, 646.

¹³⁷ The *çiftlik* consisted of a part of the villages Donje and Gornje Barlete with water mills, grazing land, summer pasture and meadow. TD 533, 818.

¹³⁸ The *çiftlik* comprised parts of zamin field of the Bilaj Barlete fort, Gorica mezra, part of Srednja Gora mezra, a part of Sveti Petar zemin with grazing land and summer pasture. TD 533, 818.

¹³⁹ The *çiftlik* comprised parts of zemin field of the Bilaj Barlete fort, Dubčani mezra, zemin of St. Peter's church, parts of Srednja Gora *mezra* with grazing land, summer pasture and meadow. Income from *çiftlik* amounted to 445 *akçe*. TD 533, 818.

¹⁴⁰ The *çiftlik* consisted of a part of Podrebac (?) *mezra* with grazing land, summer pasture, meadow and water mill. TD 533, 818.

¹⁴¹ TD 533, 818.

¹⁴² TD 533, 818.

held in the *nâhiye*, so the government collected customs duties or *bac*, as well as other taxes and fees from the people, just as it did in the *nâhiye* of Novi in the total amount of 130 *akçe*.

In the *nâhiye* of Medak 7 *çifliks* were recorded, 14 villages and two *mezra'as* as one independent tax units. The following individuals are registered as *çiflik* holders: 1) *kethüda* Sinân, Mehmed and Ahmed;¹⁴³ 2) Knez Nikola son of Damjana and knez Radko, son of Vladošav;¹⁴⁴ 3) Kurd Ağa;¹⁴⁵ 4) Abdullâh;¹⁴⁶ 5) Hüseyin, son of *Hacci* Uveys and Yusûf, son of Kurd;¹⁴⁷ 6) Mustafâ, Mehmed, Mehmed Ağa, Velî and Mehmed, son of Hüseyin;¹⁴⁸ 7) 'Ali, *kethüda* Ca'fer, Ahmed and Musa.¹⁴⁹ The government collected the traditional tithe from three *çifliks*, while for four other *çifliks* only a fixed amount was entered without breakdown per product. *Mezra'as* Došlan with water mills, Velika and Mala Ribnica (?) were recorded as independent tax units. Velika and Mala Ribnica were held by notary (*katib*) Hüseyin.

Fourteen localities were registered as villages (*karye*). No entries for inhabitants were made for three villages: Poljana – place and church of St. Johns, Kupusar and Dubavica. Only the amount of tax debt is recorded for them without any additional explanations. In Počitelj 2 Christian *baštines* are recorded, two of which are indicated as newcomers (*došlak*), Gornja (?) – 4 Christian *baštines*, Ribnić (?) – place and church of St. Lovrinac – 5 Christian *baštines* and 1 Muslim *baštines*, Zavrina (?) near Mout Zir - 4 Christian *baštines*; Namlina (?) Donja – 2 Christian *baštines*, Ogorani – 2 Christian *baštines*, Petrinić – 3 Christian *baštines*, Lapac – 3 Christian *baštines*, Veliki Novak – 2 Christian *baštines*, Mali Novak – one Muslim and one Christian *baštines*, Novak Selište – 2 Christian *baštines*. The total of 30 *baštines* were recorded in the *nâhiye*, 2 of which were Muslim, while 28 were Christian. Even though we do not have information on inhabitants of the remaining villages and *çifliks* we can establish that population was scarce. No village had a large number of taxpayers; villages had but a few *baštines*. Information that the government collected only half of *bâd-u havâ* and “product” or “crop” from the

¹⁴³ The *çiflik* consisted of parts of the village below Medak fort and part of Podrebac (?) *mezra'a* with grazing land and summer pasture. TD 533, 790.

¹⁴⁴ The *çiflik* consisted of the village of Dobro and Račevnić *mezra'a* with grazing ground, summer pasture and meadow. TD 533, 790.

¹⁴⁵ The *çiflik* comprised part of the village of Počitelj with summer pasture, grazing land and meadow. TD 533, 791.

¹⁴⁶ The *çiflik* comprised part of the village of Srijani Gornji with grazing land, pasture and meadow. TD 533, 791.

¹⁴⁷ The *çiflik* comprised the village of Srijani Donji between the villages of Medava and Kukelj, with grazing land, meadow and water mills. TD 533, 791.

¹⁴⁸ The *çiflik* comprised part of the village of Žagar with meadow, grazing land and summer pasture. TD 533, 791.

¹⁴⁹ The *çiflik* comprised Komilić *mezra'a* with summer pasture, meadow, grazing land and water mills. TD 533, 792.

so-called nomads (*mahsûl-i hâymane*) expressed in a fixed amount testifies to the fact that those were recent immigrants.

As it has been sparsely populated, planned settlement of Lika continued even after 1574. The order of the Sublime Porte sent to the Bosnian *beylerbeyi* in November 1581 reveals that the fields – of Lika and of Krbava, have long been vacant and uninhabited, infrastructure destroyed (*hâlî ve harâb*), for, supposedly, eighty years. However, as a result of the *istimâlet*¹⁵⁰ policy and under strictly defined conditions (*şart ile*) *reaya* has settled in those areas and has started farming them.¹⁵¹ These are the years when the Ribnik fort in the *nâhiye* of Novi was reconstructed and garrisoned so that the soldiers could protect the new immigrants as we have learned from the document dated 16 May 1585 (the source gives names of *fârises*, while there is no information about other branches of the military).¹⁵² New immigrants were supposed to, under the conditions of settlement, remain outside the tax *defter*, namely, they were not supposed to be registered in it. Also, new immigrants were free from paying *cizye* for three years.¹⁵³ Tax exemption from the main sharia tax was supposed to be an incentive for colonisation to that population which lived in patriarchal family structures with a larger number of adult males (Vlachs), as well as for landless population used to farming. Even if this meant living on an extremely insecure *serhad*, exemption from payment of *cizye* did stimulate colonisation of Lika and incentivise the colonisers to settle on the vacant and abandoned *mezraâs*. Ottoman sources state that the immigrants arrived from enemy territory, namely from the Habsburg side.¹⁵⁴ However, many of the new immigrants did not stay in Lika and the *sancâk* of Krka for a long time, because the Ottoman census taker did distribute the revenue from the population into *timârs* of the *sipâhî* and impose the payment of *cizye* upon colonisation of Lika and as soon as the colonisers began farming which was contrary to the agreement reached with the regional authorities, namely the *sancâkbeyi* of Krka.¹⁵⁵ The communication between the

¹⁵⁰ The policy of *istimalet* implied a political strategy of agreement with the Ottomans and their guarantee of certain conditions with non-Muslim population with the aim of establishing, strengthening and stabilising Ottoman rule.

¹⁵¹ MD 46, fol. 232, no. 511; MD 46, fol. 287, no. 657.

¹⁵² The order issued by the Sublime Porte to the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia based on a letter the *sancâkbeyi* of Krka sent to the sultan's court informs us that "some time ago" (*bundan akdem*) *reaya* settled in Ličko polje, and that for defense and protection of this *reaya* it would be absolutely necessary to reconstruct the Ribnik fort as it is situated in the important position (*mühimm yer*). MD 58, fol. 148, 388.

¹⁵³ *Cizye* was a tax paid by all adult non-Muslim population fit for work in an Islamic state, it was a "guarantee" of a protected status. *Cizye* did not have to be paid by priests who lived off collections, the old, the sick, women and children, and those performing some special duty for the state. The amount of *cizye* changed throughout history.

¹⁵⁴ MD 48, fol. 270, no. 769.

¹⁵⁵ MD 46, fol. 287, no. 657.; MD 48, fol. 75, no. 210.

Sublime Porte and the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia and the *sancâkbeyi* of Krka until late 1581 reveal concern that the new immigrants (*reaya*), which have preserved the area and started farming the field of Lika and other fields in the *sancâk* of Krka, will spread out and move away again. The *sancâkbeyi* of Krka notified the Sublime Porte that, should they leave the immigrants out of the register and not collect *cizye* from them for two to three years, more *reaya* will arrive, even from the enemy side.¹⁵⁶ If, however, they do get registered, and their tithe is directed into *timârs* of the *sipâhî*, Lika shall become vacant again.¹⁵⁷ Ottoman sources from the 1580s suggest that some places in Lika became prosperous and densely populated as a result of the Ottoman policy of repopulation and the above mentioned guarantees. In order to keep the population and secure preconditions for colonisation, in January 1582 the Sublime Porte ordered the notary of the *sancâk* of Klis not to collect *cizye* from the new immigrants.¹⁵⁸ Soon the decision on the separation of the Klis and Krka territory was made, and the *beylerbeyi* of Bosnia was ordered to take a separate census for the *sancâk* of Krka, namely, to re-register those villages, *mezráas* and places in the *sancâk* that now fell in the Imperial has.¹⁵⁹ It should definitely be stressed that the policy of guarantees and tax exemption was not uncommon practice in the Ottoman repopulation policy in border territory. For example, in 1568 the Ottomans have settled two hundred households of “infidels from Istria” or Istrian Vlachs from *dâr ül-harb* near Knin under the provision that each household give the Imperial Treasury 2 *filuris* per annum, and about thirty *akçe* to the beys in taxes. They planned to move additional 700 households from the territory around Bihać which then fell under the Kingdom of Croatia and settle them around Obrovac, in the *nâhiyes* of Podgorje, Karin and Bukovica, and in Lika around Gračac.¹⁶⁰ This was undoubtedly realised, as the tax register from 1574 testifies. Regional Ottoman authorities invested a lot of effort to recolonise Lika, namely Ličko polje, by the beginning of the 17th century. New immigrants were mostly Vlachs and usually arrived from the *sancâks* of Klis and Herzegovina and from the neighbouring Bosnian territory across the river Una. Some immigration, however, was also seen from the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia which belonged to the Habsburg Monarchy.

¹⁵⁶ MD 48, fol. 82, no. 230.

¹⁵⁷ MD 48, fol. 75, no. 210.

¹⁵⁸ MD 46, fol. 287, no. 657.

¹⁵⁹ MD 48, fol. 163, no. 454.; MD 48, fol. 270, no. 769.

¹⁶⁰ MD 7, fol. 901, no. 2468.

NOVI, MEDAK AND BILAJ BARLETE NÂHIYES IN THE OTTOMAN TAX REGISTER OF 1585: DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE, LAND HOLDING

In 1585 new register was completed.¹⁶¹ There were still 7 *nâhiyes* registered in Lika (Gračac, Zvonigrad, Cvituša, Novi, Medak, Perušić, Bilaj Barlete), while Krbava had 5 *nâhiyes* (Nebluh, Lapac, Mazin, Udbina, Bilaj Bunić). We shall focus on the changes in the three *nâhiyes* which are the topic of our study.

In 1585 in the Novi *nâhiye* there were 7 *çiftliks* and 18 localities recorded as villages.¹⁶² The following persons were recorded as *çiftlik* holders: 1) brother Mehmed Ağa, Hüseyin Ağa and Mustafa kethüda, sons of Zeynihân Ağa;¹⁶³ 2) Keyvan – kethüda of the *mustahfizân* at the Novi fort, Nesûh – leader of the artillerymen of the Novi fort, Bâli kethüda, Memi *dede*,¹⁶⁴ Ramadân – leader of a *bölük* (*serbölük*), Ferhad ‘Ali – *serbölük*, Bali – *mustahfiz* of the Novi fort and other *mustahfizân* of the Novi fort;¹⁶⁵ 3) Bekir Ağa and Ali Ağa children of Zeynihân Ağa and Feridun Ağa, son of Durak Ağa, Gâzî – leader of the *harâmîs*, odabaşı Veli, seroda Hasan, seroda Osmân, Ömer Ağa, son of Ali, *fârisân* and the *martoloses* of the Novi fort;¹⁶⁶ 4) Bekir Ağa, Osman and Ali Ağa, children of Zeynihân Ağa;¹⁶⁷ 5) Sefer, son of Behlül, Feridun Ağa zaim, Nuh and Mehmed, sons of Mustafa Ağa zaim;¹⁶⁸ 6)

¹⁶¹ TD 622.

¹⁶² Data of the Novi *nâhiye* can be found on pages 479 A, 479B, 481A, 481B, 482 A. In the scanned document pages 480 A and 480 B are missing.

¹⁶³ The *çiftlik* comprised of parts of zemin in the field of the Novi fort, of Pejačić *mezraâ* (place with a derelict fort), *mezraâs* Doljani, Gornja and Donja Mahorina, Mahori, Straža, Dalenić with grazing land, summer pasture Rujina (Rudina?) and water mills Doljan. It yielded the income of 500 *akçe*.

Zeynihân Ağa is most likely the progenitor of the Zenkovići or Senkovići, an eminent Muslim family mentioned by Western sources and the folklore. TD 622, 479 A.

¹⁶⁴ Nickname *dede* suggests that this was an elder of a Dervishi Order.

¹⁶⁵ The *çiftlik* comprised of parts of zemin of the field Novi and parts of *mezraâs* Ledenice, Novosel, Podoštre, Bilišan, Dugošan, Gospić (place of derelict church), Zapotočan, Smiljan, Gaćan, Podhumci, Papračan, Šibljan, Dubnić with grazing land, summer pasture, meadow and forest. Mezra Račić possessed by the inhabitants of the Novi fort also belonged to the *çiftlik*. Income from the *çiftlik* amounted to impressive 3.320 *akçe* which means that farming was well developed.

¹⁶⁶ The *çiftlik* comprised parts of zemin in the field of the Novi fort and parts of *mezraâs* Ledenice, Novosel, Podoštre, Bilišan, Dugošan, Gospić (place of derelict church), Račić, Podhumci, Papračan, Šibljan, Dubnić with grazing land, summer pasture, meadow and forest and yielded 300 *akçe*.

¹⁶⁷ The *çiftlik* comprised of zemin field of the Novi fort and *mezraâs* Gornja and Donja Trnava, Oštarije, field near Novi fort, Konjsko, Slanište with water mills, summer pasture, grazing land and meadow. It yielded 300 *akçe*.

¹⁶⁸ The *çiftlik* comprised zemin filed of the Novi fort, *mezraâs* Donja Trnava and Podhumci with summer pasture, grazing land, meadow and it yielded 940 *akçe*.

Mehmed zaim and Ahmed zaim;¹⁶⁹ 7) Behlül Bey zaim, Oruç kethüda, voyvoda Sinân, Veli Ağa Blagajlu, Mehmed Prko (?), 'Ali Bey, son of Veli, Mehmed Ağa and Mustafa.¹⁷⁰

As the sources reveal, there were no major changes in the landownership and land possession relations in comparison to 1574. Eminent Muslims in the *nâhiye* and members of the Novi fort garrison still remained *çiflik* holders. There are registered tax amounts per item produced for two *çifliks* which means that there indeed were farming activities in those areas, while for five *çifliks* only a fixed amount was registered.

Villages of the *nâhiye* of Novi could now – according to their economic and administrative status and their liabilities to the state, be divided as follows: a) tithe villages – giving a tithe of their farm production to the *sipâhî* which means that those were farming villages. To those we could add villages which gave a fixed amount from their agricultural production which was not given per item produced in the defter, b) *filuri* villages – villages which realised their obligation to the government through *filuri* (*resm-i filori*)¹⁷¹ and taxes collected from the so called “nomads” (*resm-i hâymane*), and c) villages without clear indication of their status. *Filuri* villages in Lika were immigrant villages which have a specific agreement with the government on the exemption from *cizye* for a number of years and which were supposed to be left out of the *sipâhî-timâr* system. As *filuri* villages we would like to single out the following: Brušane (*filuri* amount 534 *akçe*), Novosel (534 *akçe*) and Lovine (1.500 *akçe*). As tithe villages we selected the following: Račić (belonged to the mustahfiz of the Novi fort, tithe amount was 400 *akçe*), Mahori (1.460), Tatačić (2.136), Komarevo (600), Donje and Gornje Podoštre (554), Vinari (430), Donji Ribnić ? (200), Zapotočje (600). Other villages had no indication registered; examples of those are: Donja and Gornja Mahorina (revenue 300 *akçe*), Bag (150), Jablanica (220), Doljan (200), Dugošani (220) and Ribnik (230). For no village was a number of taxpayers recorded, and thus we cannot assess demographic situation in the *nâhiye* or an approximate number of inhabitants. However, amounts of taxes collected definitely tell us something about the level of development of farming and thus also of the importance (perhaps even size) of the villages. Thus we can say that Lovine stand out among the *filuri* villages, while Tatačić and Mahori stand out among the tithe villages. As far as other duties are concerned, *bac* was still being

¹⁶⁹ The *çiflik* comprised the village of Lovine and *mezraâ* Lovinac. TD 622, 482 /A.

¹⁷⁰ The *çiflik* comprised parts of zemin field of the Ribnik fort, peninsula of St. Nicholas church with water mills, fish pond, grazing land, meadow and part of the village of Lika, as well as winter pasture in the village of Doljan with Gorić. The census taker assessed the income from this *çiflik* to be 300 *akçe* as was put down in the previous register. TD 622, 482 /A.

¹⁷¹ *Filuri* – so called “ducat tax,” or “florin tax” (Lat. Florenus). Basic tax for the Vlach population, and population of similar status. Each Vlach household (as a tax unit) paid a florin.

collected in the *nâhiye* which means that market day was being held where trading was done. The government also collected all of the above referenced petty fines, bride tax, *tâpu-i zemîn* and fee for agricultural damage.

In 1585 in the *nâhiye* of Medak the total of 19 villages were registered, as well as 7 *çiftliks* and 7 *mezra'as* as independent tax units. Some villages were entered twice, depending on the regulation of tax collection from their inhabitants. The following villages were *filuri*: Srijani (800 *akçe*), Lapac (800), Veliki and Mali Novak, Novak Selište (800), Mali Srčani (1.250), Došlak (404), Kolčić (500), Zavrna (? 1.200), Ogorane (1.000), Ogorani (405), Kupusar (450), Pod (? 2.000), Poljana – place of St. John's church (1.600), Dubavica (600), Mala and Velika Ribnica (? 450). In addition to the *filuri* there were also villages whose duties were so regulated that they were giving "product of nomads" (*mahsûl-i hâymane*) and *bâd-u havâ*, instead of *filuri*. For such villages a number of *baştines* is entered which tells us the movements of the taxpayers. Here we could argue were those villages or parts of villages which were inhabited for a longer time period. Such villages were the following: Počitelj (3 Christian *baştines*), Ribnić (?) place of St. Lovrinac church (5 Christian and 1 Muslim *baştines*), Zavrna (4 Christian *baştines*)¹⁷², Namlina (?) Donja (2 Christian *baştines*), Hrelić (3 Christian *baştines*). This is a rather small number of *baştines* – only 17 Christian and 1 Muslim *baştines*. A few *mezra'as* were recorded in the *nâhiye* which were also populated by new immigrants because the government collected *filuri* there as well as *resm-i hâymane*: *mezra'as* Dobro (600 *akçe*), Počrnice (540), Radunić (620), Dragavić (700), Vinak (560) and Bunić (620), while *mezra'as* Velika and Mala Ribnica (?) were possessed by notary Hüseyin.

As *çiftlik* holders in the Medak *nâhiye* the following individuals were recorded: 1) Nuh son of Murâd Ağa and Süleyman son of Hasan Ağa;¹⁷³ 2) sipâhî Hüseyin serharâmi;¹⁷⁴ 3) Kurd Ağa;¹⁷⁵ 4) Hüseyin, son of *Hacci* Uveys and Yusûf son of Murâd;¹⁷⁶ 5) Mustafâ, Mehmed, Mehmed Ağa Velî and Mehmed, son of Hüseyin;¹⁷⁷ 6) Ali Ağa, Ca'fer *kethüda*, Ahmed and Musa.¹⁷⁸ The revenue from farming in the above *çiftliks* was not entered per item produced, which means that farming in them was

¹⁷² Part of the village was registered under *filuri* as well which would mean that the new immigrants inhabited the previously vacant part of the village.

¹⁷³ The *çiftlik* was in the village of Miholić. TD 622, 485B.

¹⁷⁴ The *çiftlik* was in the village of Gornji Srčani. TD 622, 485B.

¹⁷⁵ The *çiftlik* comprised a part of the village of Počitelj, with a meadow, summer pasture and grazing land. TD 622, 486A

¹⁷⁶ The *çiftlik* comprised part of the village of Srijani Donji with grazing land, meadow, summer pasture and water mills. TD 622, 486A.

¹⁷⁷ The *çiftlik* comprised of a part of the village of Žagar with grazing land, summer pasture and meadow. TD 622, 486A.

¹⁷⁸ The *çiftlik* comprised of the Komnić *mezra'a* with grazing land, summer pasture, meadow and water mills. TD 622, 486B.

at low levels. *Çiftlik/mezra'a* Komlić with meadow and water mills was registered in the defter without assigned user, but it can be assumed that the *çiftlik/mezra'a* was inhabited by immigrants because the government collected only *filuri* and *resm-i haymâne* from it, and the amount was quite high – 2.550 *akçe*.¹⁷⁹

The *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete had five villages registered in 1585, as well as two *mezra'as* as one tax unit and 8 *çiftliks*. There were three functioning mills in the *nâhiye* kept by inhabitants of the Barlet Bilaj fort, and the state collected 45 *akçe* from them.

Number of inhabitants is not entered for any village, and tax burden for those villages was regulated with a *filuri* as was the case with the other two *nâhiyes*, which supports a thesis that they were recently colonised, and that they were oriented toward stock breeding and semi-military duty. The village of Vrbčić gave 5.000 *akçe* as *filuri* and *resm-i hâymane*; such a high amount tells us that there were many inhabitants in the village. The village of Gorica was registered twice with the same amount of *filuri* (400 *akçe*). It is not known whether those are two separate localities or two parts of the same village.¹⁸⁰ The village of Dupčan was according to the amount of *filuri* (700 *akçe*) a small village. Toponym which we could deduce from *karye-i Lička* most likely denotes Ličko selo which was paying only 100 *akçe* as *filuri*.¹⁸¹ The village of Lika was registered in the *nâhiye* of Novi in a *çiftlik* on the Ribnik area and is therefore most likely the same village whose taxes collected were forwarded to different places. *Mezra'as* Dubovac and Miovci had the *martoloses* as inhabitants who also paid *filuri* and *resm-i hâymane* (304 *akçe*).¹⁸²

As far as *çiftliks* are concerned, there were eight. Tax on revenue from farming on *çiftliks* was registered without breakdown per item of farm product, namely, only the total amount in *akçe* is given. The amounts vary between 300 and 1.300 *akçe*.¹⁸³ The following persons are registered as *çiftlik* holders: 1) Keepers (*mustahfizân*) of the Barlet Bilaj fort;¹⁸⁴ 2) İbrahim, son of Mustafâ, ağa of *azaps* of the Barlet Bilaj fort and Mustafa, *kethüda* of *azaps* of the Barlet Bilaj fort;¹⁸⁵ 3) Mehmed Ağa, İbrahim Ağa and 'Ali *serharâmi*;¹⁸⁶ 4) the *mustahfizân* of the Barlet Bilaj fort;¹⁸⁷ 5) 'Ali Ağa of the *martoloses* of the Barlet Bilaj fort, Hürrem son of Abdullâh, Yusûf son of

¹⁷⁹ TD 622, 485A

¹⁸⁰ See TD 622, 490A i 490B.

¹⁸¹ TD 622, 490B

¹⁸² TD 622, 490A

¹⁸³ TD 622, 490 A-490B.

¹⁸⁴ The source does not give details on the position of *çiftlik*, most likely it was under the Barlet Bilaj fort.

¹⁸⁵ The *çiftlik* comprised part of zemin field of Barlet Bilaj. TD 622, 490A.

¹⁸⁶ The *çiftlik* comprised Dupčan *mezra'a*. TD 622, 490A.

¹⁸⁷ The source does not give details on the position of *çiftlik*, most likely it was under the Barlet Bilaj fort.

Abdullâh, Hasan son of 'Ali and Recep Abdullah;¹⁸⁸ 6) Janko (?) and knez Miloš, son of Ugarak;¹⁸⁹ 7) Mehmed, Mustafâ, Hasan and Hüseyin, sons of Murâd;¹⁹⁰ 7) Murâd Ağa, dizdar of the Bilaj Barlete fort, Ca'âfer son of Velî *sermartolos*, the martoloses and the mustahfizân of the fort;¹⁹¹ 8) 'Ömer and Osmân, sons of Ahmed and Ferhâd, son of Abdullâh.¹⁹²

In all three of the above *nâhiyes* in 1585 42 villages, 22 *çiftliks* and 8 *mezra'as* as separate tax units were recorded what is an considerable increase in comparison to 1574 when 37 villages, 20 *çiftliks* and 2 *mezra'as* as separate tax units were recorded.

CONCLUSION

Ottoman rule in Lika in the course of the 16th century was established with difficulties. This vast area was controlled from three forts – Novi, Bilaj and Udbina. The territory was extremely sparsely populated, and depopulation was great. In 1530 in the *nâhiyes* of Lika there were about 40 *mezra'as* registered. No settlement was at that point registered as a village (*karye*). However, it seems that Lika had more inhabitants at the beginning of the Ottoman rule around 1528-30 than in 1550. As a result of great insecurity and inability to farm the land the remaining population moved deeper into the Ottoman inland or fled to the Habsburg side, thus leaving the land in the border area vacant and unfarmed. Large parts of the vacant land were turned into tenant farm land or *çiftliks* assigned to interested individuals for low fixed amounts.

From mid-16th century Ottomans have been taking concrete measures for repopulation of Lika and reconstruction of fort infrastructure. Gračac is reconstructed, and in our researched area – the Ribnik and Barlete forts as well. Settlement of Lika, namely of Ličko polje, was an extremely slow process. Regional Ottoman authorities have invested efforts throughout twenty years to repopulate the terri-

¹⁸⁸ The *çiftlik* comprised of part of zemin field of Barlet Bilaj, part of Ribnica (?), part of zemin of St. Peter's church and part of Srednja Gora. TD 622, 490B.

¹⁸⁹ The *çiftlik* comprised of the villages of Gornji and Donji Barlet with water mills, summer pasture, grazing land and meadow. TD 622, 490B. We should stress here that the term Vlach (*Eflâkân*) in reference to the inhabitants of certain villages is here used only in the first register of 1528-30, while the later registers do not employ the term anymore. However, the title of the *knez* in reference to certain Vlach elders is still in use.

¹⁹⁰ The *çiftlik* comprised of a part of zemin field of the Bilaj Barleta fort, *mezra'a* Gorica, part of *mezra'as* Slana, Srednja Gora, part of St. Peter's zemin with grazing land and summer pasture. TD 622, 490B.

¹⁹¹ The *çiftlik* comprised of parts of zemin field of the Bilaj Barleta fort, *mezra'as* Dupčani, Ribnica (?), part of St. Peter's church zemin, part of Srednja Gora *mezra'a* with grazing land, summer pasture and meadow. TD 622, 490B.

¹⁹² The *çiftlik* comprised part of Podvrebac *mezra'a* with grazing land, summer pasture, meadow and water mills. TD 622, 490B.

tory employing the policy of *istimâlet* and of giving guarantees and tax exemptions. New inhabitants arrived from all directions (*her canibinden*); they were mostly transhumance cattle breeders from the *sancâks* of Klis or Herzegovina but there were also immigrants from the border area with the Habsburg Monarchy. With an increase in the number of inhabitants *nâhiyes* were defined and borders between them outlined. The results of the Ottoman repopulation policy were visible in the census of 1574 when for the said three *nâhiyes* the total of 37 villages was recorded, 18 of which were in the *nâhiye* of Novi, 5 in the *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete and 14 in the *nâhiye* of Medak. Also, in the three researched administrative units the total of 20 *çiftlik*s was registered, 9 of which in Novi, 4 in Bilaj Barlete and 7 in Medak. The *nâhiye* of Novi was the most extensive and had the greatest number of villages and *çiftlik*s, while the *nâhiye* of Bilaj Barlete was the smallest administrative units in area and had a modest number of villages and *çiftlik*s. According to their tax and administrative status the villages can be divided into tithe and *filuri* villages. *Çiftlik*s encompassed parts of fine land with meadows, grazing land, water mills, summer pastures, even fish ponds which are registered for two places in the *nâhiye* of Novi. *Çiftlik* holders in the *nâhiyes* of interest were mostly members of the fort garrison, military commanders, and their descendants whose families grew in importance to the extent that they became the main landowners in Lika. However, *çiftlik* holders were not members of fort garrisons exclusively; they were held by Ottoman notables from the military and administrative apparatus, such as *sancâkbeyis* and voyodas as well as Vlach *knezes* who were thus incentivised to settle the vacant areas with their communities or *cemâ'ats*. Settlement of Lika continued after 1574, and the next register from 1585 for the three researched *nâhiyes* registered the total of 42 villages, 22 *çiftlik*s and 8 *mezra'as* as separate tax units, of which the *nâhiye* of Novi had 18 villages and 7 *çiftlik*s, Medak had 19 villages, 7 *çiftlik*s and 7 *mezra'as*, while Bilaj Barlete had 5 villages, 8 *çiftlik*s and 1 *mezra'a*.

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