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THE TIMAR SYSTEM IN THE SERBIAN LANDS FROM 1450 TO 1550: WITH A SPECIAL SURVEY ON THE TIMAR SYSTEM IN THE SANJAK OF SMEDEREVO

1450'den 1550'ye Kadar Sırp Topraklarında Tımar Sistemi: Semendire Sancağı'nda Tımar Sistemi Üzerinde Özel Bir Anket İle

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Abstract: Relying on the Ottoman census books for various Ottoman provinces, which had been part of the medieval Serbian states, this paper presents a survey of *timar* organization in the Serbian lands during the first century of Ottoman rule and argues that while Christian *sipahis* were an integral part of the *sipahi* organization during the early period of Ottoman rule, their numbers gradually declined. The article pays special attention to the issue of the Christian *sipahis*. Since a range of census books had been preserved for the *sanjak* of Smederevo, this province was chosen as the case study to explain the most important issues regarding the functioning of the *timar* system.

Key Words: Tımar system, Serbia, Ottoman Empire, sanjak of Smenderova, sipahis

Özet: Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sırbistan topraklarındaki çeşitli sancaklara ait sayım defterlerine dayanarak yapılan bu çalışma, Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sırbistan topraklarındaki hakimiyetinin ilk yüzyılında uyguladığı tımar sistemini inceleyerek, Osmanlı idaresinin ilk döneminde Hıristiyan sipahilerin, sipahi sisteminin önemli bir kısmını teşkil ettiğini ancak zamanla Hıristiyan sipahi sayısının azaldığını tespit etmektedir. Makale Semendire Sancağı'nda uygulanan tımar sistemini örnek alarak, Hıristiyan sipahileri ve Sırbistan'daki tımar sisteminin işleyişini açıklamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tımar sistemi, Sırbistan, Osmanlı Devleti, Semendire Sancağı, sipahiler

The *timar* system represented the pillar of the Ottoman society. Predating the Ottoman Empire, the *timar* system had reached its full shape and originality in the Ottoman Empire, where three phases of its development could be pointed out:

1. Phase of the establishment of the *timar* system, simultaneous to the beginning of the Ottoman state organization; 2. Classical period of the *timar* organization, which had begun with the rule of the sultan Mehmed II in 1451, and ended by the end of the sixteenth century; there are some opinions stating that this phase had been finished already with the death of sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566; 3. Decline phase until the *timar* system had been completely abrogated in 1831.¹ The originality of the *timar* system in comparison with its contemporary feudal system in the Western Europe is in the question of the land-owning. In the Ottoman Empire, the land owing system was divided into three categories: the *harach*, the *ushur* and the *miri* land; almost all land in the south-eastern Europe had belonged to this third mentioned category and that was the foundation of the *timar* system.² According to that concept, all land

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¹ Matuz, Josef, "The nature and stages of ottoman feudalism", *Asian and African studies* 16, 1982.

² *Mirri Land* – the residual owner was (the State i.e. the Sultan). The holder had to have sultan's valid permission to hold it; *Ushri land* – the land that has been conquered by the Muslims and then given to their warriors or other Muslims. As the revenue from this land only the *ushur* (one tenth of the production) has been given to the poor ones, while the state did not give it to anyone as the salary or revenue; *Harach Land* - the land in private ownership, with no state right to its expropriations. The owner of the *harach land* had been given a tax called *harach* which is

was owned by the sultan, as the personification of the state and ultimate authority; he had the right to dispose it at his own free will, which presented the complete annulment of the private ownership of the land. However, even within the *miri* land there existed the categories of *mulk* and *vaqf*,³ which were contradictory to the above mentioned principle; annulment of those categories, was, however, the essence of the land reforms undertaken by Mehmed the Conqueror.⁴ *Iqta'* (Arabic: اقطاع) fo ecitcarp cimalsI na saw (tax farming that became common in Muslim Asia during the Buyid dynasty (10-11th century), a form of administrative grant, often (wrongly) translated by the European word "fief". The nature of the *iktā'* varied according to time and place, and a translation borrowed from other systems of institutions and conceptions has served only too often to mislead Western historians, and following them, even those of the East. It had been used in the Seljuq Empire and represents the predecessor to the Ottoman *timar* system.⁵

Roughly, the estates in the Ottoman Empire were classified as *timars*, *zeamets* and *hasses*, depending on their revenue. The *hass* was linked to the positions, the *timars* and *zeamets* to individuals. The highest annual revenue from the *timar* was 19.999 *akches*,⁶ and it was given to the *sipahis* who had, in return, to fulfill their military duties, as well as to maintain the internal security and control of the population living on the *timar*. The revenue from the *zeamet* was from 20.000 to 99.999 *akches* and it was given to the functionaries of medium rank, such as *alay beg*, *timar kethude*, *timar defterdari*, *divan notars* and *çauş*. The revenue from the *hass* was over 100.000 *akches* and beside sultan himself, it was given to the highest state administrative and military functionaries, such as *vesirs*, *beglerbegs*, *sanjakebgs*, *defterdars* and *nişancis*.⁷ Due to such organization, the *sipahi* units presented well equipped territorial cavalry, which was paid with the annual revenues from the *timars*, as well as with the war loot.⁸

Generally speaking, the *timar* was not given permanently, nor could it be automatically inherited. The tenure of the *timar* was conditioned with service, which could be administrative or religious, but was most often of the military type. In case that a *timar* holder had not satisfied the demands of his service or did it poorly, he would have lost his *timar*, without some other additional punishment. At the same time, the *timar* holder who managed to come into prominence would get additional revenue (*teraki*). The composition and revenue from the *timar* had been linked to its holder, depending on his personal position, authority, and activities. The *timar* could not have been automatically inherited by the person who would have succeeded the previous *sipahi* in the particular service.⁹

The Ottoman state, even at its early Anatolian stage, had been organized in so called *uç*, i.e. border regions, with highly concentrated military and administrative authority, reflected through

not the same as the *harach* that non-Muslim *reaya* population paid to the sultan. For more details see: Nadia Forni, *Land tenure policies in the Near East*, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/Y8999T/y8999t0f.htm>, uploaded on 3rd November 2014

³ *Mulk* – Land in full private ownership; *Vaquf* – Endowment, typically donating a building or plot of land or even cash for Muslim religious or charitable purposes. The donated assets are held by a charitable trust. For more details see: Dušanka Bojanić, *Turski zakoni i zakonski propisi iz XV i XVI veka za smederevsku, kruševačku i vidinsku oblast*, Istorijski institut., Beograd 1974, p. 173.

⁴ Nicoară Beldiceanu, "Recherches sur la reforme fonciere de Mehmed II", *Acta Historica* 4, Munich 1965, pp. 27-39.

⁵ Claude Cahen, "İktâ", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. 3, pp. 1088–1091.

⁶ In 1500, the *Akche* was worth approximately .78 grams of silver, and the daily wage of a skilled construction worker in Istanbul was approximately 7,7 *Akches*. Şevket Pamuk, "Prices and Wages in the Ottoman Empire, 1469-1914," http://pierre-marteau.com/wiki/index.php?title=Prices_and_Wages_in_the_Ottoman_Empire%2C_1469-1914 (accessed 19 November 2014).

⁷ Hamid Hadžibegić, "Rasprava Ali Čauša iz Sofije o timarskoj organizaciji u XVII stoljeću", *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu II*, 1947, pp. 139-206.

⁸ For more details, see: Nedim Filipović, "Pogled na osmanski feudalizam (sa posebnim osvrtom na agrarne odnose", *Godišnjak društva istoričara BIH* 4, 1952, pp. 47-50.

⁹ *Istorija Osmanskog carstva* (ed. R. Mantran), Clio, Beograd 2002, p. 236.

multi-level *timar* tenure, as well as through institutions of the feudal servants or protégées, linked to the commander of the border region. The border region of Isa-beg Ishaković (Zvečan, Jeleč, Ras, Sjenica, Tetovo, Skopje) is a typical example of such organization, where, in the case of the double level construction, Isa-beg stood at the highest tenure level, and on the second level were the members of his family; in the case of the triple level organization, Isa-beg was again on the first level, on the second were his servants of higher rank, such as *subaşı*, and on the third level were his servants of lower ranks. The largest number of *timars* with two and three level tenure was registered in 1455 in the *nahiye* of Kalkandelen (Tetovo), while the *nahiye* of Sjenica was part of Isa-beg fiefs, with no multi-level *timar* tenure.¹⁰ The example of the border region of the new type is the sanjak of Bosnia and the sanjak of Smederevo, where such relations had not been observed. The institution of *timar* in the Ottoman Empire did not presume the territorial integrity of the fief, since *timars* of certain *sipahis* were often composed of villages situated far away from each other with the settlements between them being part of *timars* of some other *sipahis*. The *timar* was composed and determined by the revenue to which every *sipahi* was due for his service.¹¹ Thus, it can be concluded that the *timar* was a fiscal and not a territorial concession. For example, in the census book for the region of Braničevo dated 1467, was registered the *timar* whose holder was certain Hamza, son of Dogan, consisting of villages called Svinje and Kruševica, situated in the district of Ždrelo, and the village of Sladince, which exists even today in the district of Pek.¹² In the Serbian lands, the Christian *sipahis*, especially in the border regions, were the important part of the *timar* organization, especially during the second half of the 15th century, which will be further elaborated in the article.

The *timar* holders were obliged to live in one of the villages being part of their *timar*. In the case of war, one tenth of them stayed behind and did all the work for those who went to the campaign; beside that, they were obliged to provide the warriors with food, as well as seeing to land cultivation. Those *timar* holders who were part of the fortress garrisons, due to their specific service, did not have the obligation to live on their own *timar*; they took care of their land through the popular chieftains, *knezs* and *primikurs*. Each *sipahi* had, on his *timar*, one piece of land for his own usage (so called *hassa* land), which could be given for cultivation to someone else, with a rent of one quarter of the production, or under *tapi*. The *sipahi* replacing him, had the right to reconsider the *tapi*; to give it again under the same conditions, to change the conditions, or to revoke it completely.¹³

The timar system in the Serbian lands

The *timar* system in the Serbian lands during the second half of fifteenth and the first half of sixteenth century was characterized by large numbers of Christian *sipahis* in the first period, and then their almost complete disappearance from the *sipahi* ranks. On the basis of the available sources, it can be concluded that the Christian *sipahis* were an integral part of the *sipahi* organization in all analyzed regions and provinces on the Serbian ethnic space, but there were huge variations in their number, depending on the organization of the Ottoman administration in certain provinces of the Empire. The involvement of the Christians in the *sipahi* organization of the analyzed regions has been presented in the following table:

¹⁰ Hazim Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega Ishakovića. Zbirni katastarski popis iz 1455. Godine*, Orijentalni institut, Sarajevo 1964, p. 3-116.

¹¹ BOA, *TTD 16; Istorija Osmanskog carstva* (ed. R. Mantran), p. 235-243.

¹² Stojaković, Momčilo, *Braničevski tefter*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 1987, p. 112-114.

¹³ Dušanka Bojanić, "Jadar u XVI i XVII veku. U: *Jadar u prošlosti* Radio Podrinje", SIZ Kulture. Loznica 1985, p. 139-206.

Region	Percentage of the Christian timar holders
Kruševac, Toplica, Dubočica (1444/45)	11%
Border region of Isa-bega Ishaković (1455)	24%
Region of the Branković Family (1455)	14%
Sanjak of Vidin (1466)	12.5%
Braničevo (1467)	52%
Sanjak of Bosnia (1468)	27%
Sanjak of Herzegovina (1477)	5.75%
Kaza of Niš (1498)	4.5%

According to this data, the smallest number of the Christian *sipahis* had been registered in the *kaza* of Niš in 1498, and in the *sanjak* of Herzegovina in 1476/77. On the other side, the largest number had been registered in the region of Braničevo and in the *sanjak* of Smederevo during the 1470s.

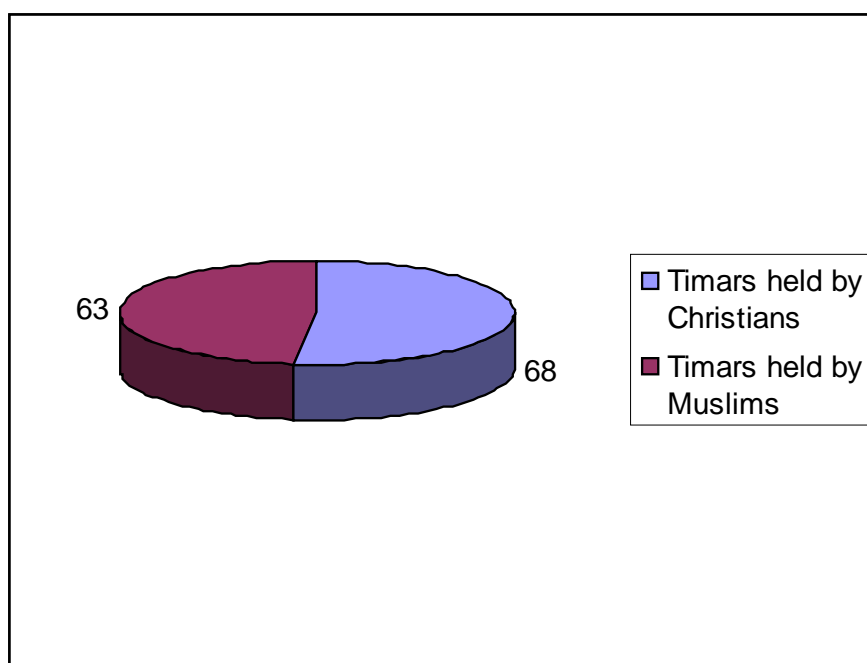


Figure 1: The number of timars held by the Muslims and by the Christians in the region of Braničevo in 1467

The share of the Christian *sipahis* is much higher within the group of the *eşkınci timars*,¹⁴ than within the group of the *timars* held by the fortress garrison soldiers. As the *timars* held by the fortress garrison soldiers were the most numerous in the *sanjak* of Bosnia and the *sanjak* of Herzegovina, the share of the Christian *sipahis* in the total number of the *timar* holders in those two provinces dramatically change when we analyze those two groups together or separately. Thus, within the group of the *eşkınci timars*, the share of the Christian *sipahis* in the total number of *sipahis* in the *sanjak* of Bosnia was 46%, while that number in the *sanjak* of Herzegovina was 25%. The reason for those variations is the method of establishment and functioning of Ottoman authority, not being the same in the all provinces in the vast Empire; they changed in accordance with the state and military goals in certain regions. Thus, the differences in the number of the Christian *sipahis* depended mainly on the organization of the Ottoman administration in the *vilayet* or *sanjak*, but also they could be observed chronologically, in the periods before and after the reform of landholding relations and of the *timar* system, accomplished during the second reign of Mehmed II (1451-1481).

Thus, the largest number of the Christian *sipahis* were registered in those regions that had been, at certain periods of time, being organized as the border regions (Braničevo, the *sanjak* of Bosnia, the *sanjak* of Smederevo), while their number was considerably lesser in the regions situated deeper inside the Ottoman state territory (*kaza* of Niš). However, within such distribution of the Ottoman territories had been some exceptions, since certain provinces, such as the *sanjak* of Herzegovina, for example, had been border region of the Empire, but had not been organized accordingly. The reason should be looked upon the fact that the main front against Venetia in the second half of the 15th century was on the sea; the operations on the land were aimed, in the first place, toward northern Albania, thus the Ottomans did not need the special border region organization in Herzegovina.

As already mentioned, after retaking the Ottoman throne in 1451, Mehmed II had started the huge landholding relations reform. One of the changes was within the organization of the Ottoman border regions, i.e. he created the so-called new type of border regions. Differently from the regions of Kruševac, Toplica and Dubočica, for example, where we observed the low number of Christian *sipahis* registered in 1444/45, their number started to increase in the border region of Isa-beg Ishaković, reaching one fourth of all the *sipahis* in the province. However, according to its main characteristics, i.e. since the *timars* were organized on double and triple-levels of holding, and the organization of the region was based on the vassals and servants of the commander, this region should be considered as the old type of border region. The first example of the new type of border region was the *sanjak* of Bosnia (Miljković, *Timarski sistem u nahiji Sjenica u drugoj polovini 15. veka.*, 2009, 97-99); that type of administrative organization had reached its full level in the *sanjak* of Smederevo during the 1470s. With the organization of the new type of border regions, the number of Christians involved in the Ottoman *timar* system had drastically increased, and the defense system had been organized in a way to involve larger masses of the local population into the Ottoman military forces, both regular and auxiliary.¹⁵

¹⁴ Eşkınci was the holder of the smaller *timar* who had the obligation to take part in the military campaigns, riding a horse without any special equipment. The *eşkıncis* were the lower rank among the *sipahi* cavalry. H. Šabanović, *Krajište Isa-bega Ishakovića*, p. 126.

¹⁵ Ema Miljković, "Osmanska populaciona politika na krajštu: Braničevo u drugoj polovini 15 Veka", *Braničevo u istoriji Srbije*, Istorijski arhiv Požarevac, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Požarevac - Beograd 2008, p. 209-218.

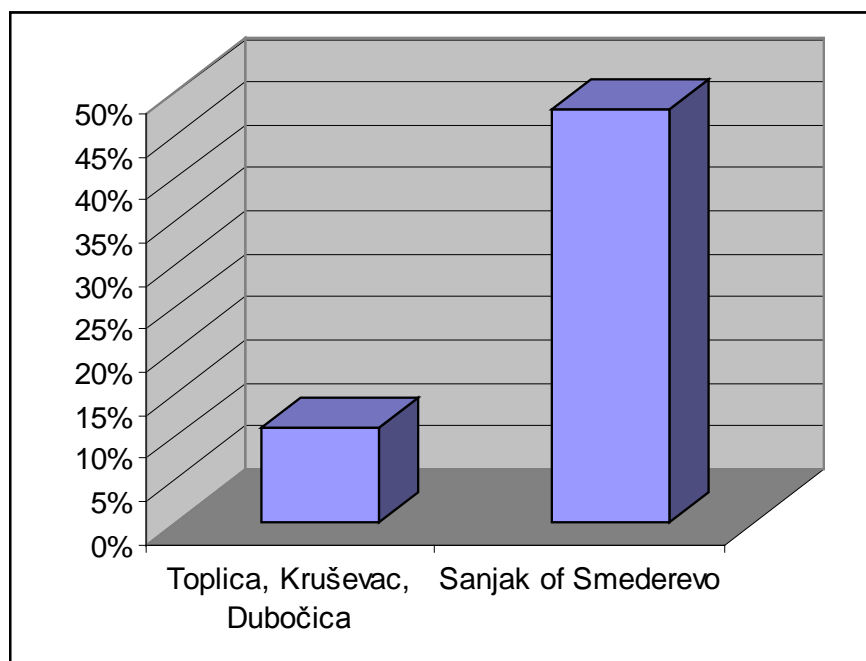


Figure 2: The relations between the number of the Christian sipahis in the regions of Kruševac, Toplica and Dubočica in 1444/45 and the sanjak of Smederevo 1476/77.

During the second half of 15th and the first half of the 16th century, in the *sanjak* of Smederevo was registered as the hass of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg*, while a part of this province revenue was included in the hass of the sultan.¹⁶ The income of sultan coming from the *sanjak* of Smederevo consisted primarily of the mines, then from the Wallach taxes (*filuri*) and *haraj* which was paid by *reaya*, then from the customs of the Smederevo port, as well as of taxes for captured and freed slaves; also his income consisted of two *akches* for fish caught in the Danube river, one *akche*¹⁷ for each sack of grain that came to be stored in Smederevo, one *akche* from each piece of salt, and three *akches* from horses of the “faith warriors”, which by the sultan’s order, attacked the enemy lands. Beside all that, the sultan had income for those villages in the province of Smederevo being part of his domain.¹⁸

The first pages of the census book of the *sanjak* of Smederevo dated 1476 are missing; those are the pages where the sultan’s hass was enlisted. On the basis of preserved parts of the document, it can be concluded that the income from the mines and marketplaces of Rudnik and Železnik were granted to the ruler. The total income of Rudnik was 58.245 *akches* and of Železnik, together with the belonging village of Rudište, was 6.330 *akches*.¹⁹

¹⁶ For more details, see: Ema Miljković, *Smederevski sandžak 1476-1560. Zemlja. Naselja. Stanovništvo*, Istorijski institut, Beograd 2004.

¹⁷ According to the sources that we have at the disposal the value of *akche* was stable during the second half of the 15th century, when one Venice gold coin valued 45 *akches*. At the same time, the salary of the member of the janissary corp was 2 to 8 *akches* per week, while their agas had the salary of 400 *akches* per week. Just to put the amount into real valorization, it is needed to be said that one sheep with a lamb costed 20 *akches* in the sanjak of Smederevo during the 1470s. For more details see: *Istorija Osmanskog carstva*, ed. Robert Mantrand, p. 232.

¹⁸ Bojanić, *Turski zakoni i zakonski propisi iz XV i XVI veka za smederevsku, kruševačku i vidinsku oblast*, 1974, p.17, 35, 39, 49; BOA, *TTD*, 16 (1476), 1007 (1516), 978 (1528), 316 (1560).

¹⁹ Ahmed, Aličić, *Turski katastarski popisi nekih područja zapadne Srbije*, Istorijski arhiv Čačak, Čačak 1985, p. 23-26; Hazim Šabanović, *Turski izvori za istoriju Beograda, knj. I, sv. I. Katastarski popisi Beograda i okoline 1476-1566*, Istorijski arhiv Beograda, Beograd 1964, p. 5-7.

Beside the incomes prescribed by *qanun*, law, which had not been changed during the second half of the 15th and the first half of the 16th century (the total income collected on this base was 78.162 *akches*), during the 1520s, the total income belonging to the *hass* of the sultan in the *sanjak* of Smederevo, consisted of the rent of magazines, taverns, and public baths in the fortress and suburbia of Smederevo, then of the rent of the land on which those magazines had been built, rent of the mills in the fortresses of Kulič and Golubac, as well as the rent of the Golubac ferry. The income from those rents was 47.162 *akches* per year. The *hass* of the sultan in 1516 included also income from the market place of Rudnik, with the income of 21.265 *akches*, the silver mine and market place of Železnik, with the income of 13.000 *akches*, and the village of Varvarino in the district of Levač (income of 10.000 *akches*), then the village of Podgradište which was a suburb of the Ostrovica fortress, whose inhabitants were exempted from paying *haraj*, *ispence* and irregular taxes, since they were making repairs on the fortress. The important part of the sultan's income in this province came for the tax called *filuri* paid by the population with Wallach status.²⁰

During the whole first half of the 16th century the revenue from the mines had been a very important segment of the sultan's income in the *sanjak* of Smederevo. When in 1521 Belgrade had become a center for taken fortresses in Srem, the important part of the sultan's income had come from the customs and income of buildings in the fortresses of Belgrade, Slankamen and Titel, surpassing during the 1530s 210.000 *akches*. (Istorija naroda Jugoslavije II, 1960. 68; (Šabanović, *Turski izvori za istoriju Beograda*, knj. I, sv. I. Katastarski popisi Beograda i okoline 1476-1566, 1964, 137.) However, in the next decades this sort of income had decreased; according to the 1560 census book, the *hass* of the sultan in the *nahiye* of Belgrade had consisted of an income of only 5 villages, one *mezraa*, and one monastery, while the other types of income had not been registered.²¹

The permanent income of the *sanjak-beg* of Smederevo during the second half of the 15th and the first half of the 16th century consisted of the *baj-i bazar* of Smederevo, Golubac, Hram, Kulič, 2% of total value as customs on the goods that came from Hungary by boat, half of the gold coin of every merchant ship coming from the "hostile territory", four *akches* from each empty barrel going to Hungary, one *akche* per 20 *akches* of value of fish caught in the Danube, one *akche* from every sack of grain coming to Smederevo by the Jezava river to be stored, as well as loads of grain coming from the internal parts of the Empire. Beside, *sanjak-beg* had the right to 12 *akches* from every barrel of wine produced from the vineyards located in the Smederevo itself, as well as the natural rent of salt, where out of every 100 parts of salt, one was for the *sanjak-beg*.²² The *sanjak-beg* was also a beneficiary of the penalties paid by the Wallach population, as well as a fifth part of the booty brought by the *martolos* units by water or by land.²³ During the 1470s the *hass* of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg* consisted of 127 villages with 2.500 houses and income of approx. 400.000 *akches*.²⁴ During the first half of the 16th century the income of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg* was around 500.000 *akches*; however, the *hass* of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg* consisted of the lesser number of villages in comparison to the 1470s: only three villages and one *mezraa*, with the income of 30.000 *akches*, as well as of income of the Christians of Niš, being 95.233 *akches* per year.²⁵ During the 1530s the *hass* of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg* consisted of income from Smederevo itself, of Smederevo port, storage space, as well as of income from fish caught in Morava (183.225 *akches*), from booty and *filuri* paid by the *martolos* units of Smederevo and Belgrade (40.000 *akches*), of Wallach penalties (283.950 *akches*), of tax paid by the Christians of Niš (50.000 *akches*), and tax paid by the *voynuq* units (3.665 *akches*).²⁶ After the abolition of the

²⁰ BOA, TTD 1007 (1516).

²¹ Šabanović, *Turski izvori za istoriju Beograda*, p. 432-436.

²² Bojanić, Dušanka, *Turski zakoni i zakonski propisi iz XV i XVI veka za smederevsku, kruševačku i vidinsku oblast*, Istorijski institut., Beograd 1974, p. 17-27.

²³ *Ibid.*, 13; BOA, TTD 16 (1476).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ BOA, TTD 1007 (1516).

²⁶ *Istorija naroda Jugoslavije II*, Prosveta, Beograd 1960, p. 70.

Wallach status in the *sanjak* of Smederevo in 1530, the *hass* of the Smederevo *sanjak-beg* consisted of 218 villages.²⁷ In the census book for the *sanjak* of Smederevo dated 1476, 10 *zeamets* were registered. The highest revenue was registered from the *zeamet* of Ljubostinja (60.798 *akches*), which was held by Ibrahim-beg, son of Malkoç; *zeamet* Lepenica consisted of the *subaşılık* of Trstenik and was held by Mustafa-beg, *çeşnegir*, with the revenue of 46.466 *akches*. The *zeamet* of Levač was held by certain Hamza-beg, head of the Isa-beg *bevabs* (guardsmen), with the annual revenue of 41.625 *akches*, while the *zeamet* of Šubin brought to its holder, Iskender-beg, the annual revenue of 37.270 *akches*. *Zeamet* Užice was held by Ibrahim-beg, head of the Mahmud-pasha's guardsmen, with the annual revenue of 34.539 *akches*. A similar revenue was brought by *zeamet* Maglič to its holder Sejdi, son of Firuz, the Wallach, who is the only one of all the *zaims* registered in the *sanjak* of Smederevo in 1476 for whom we are certain had converted to Islam. The other four *zeamets*: Kušlat, Lugomir, Ostrovica, as well as the *zeamet* held by a certain Hamza-beg in Braničevo, brought to their holders revenues lower than 20.000 *akches*, which is supposed to be the lowest level for the *zeamet* revenue. However, the Turkish census book registered the *zeamets* with revenues lower than 20.000 *akches*, which cannot be easily explained on the basis of the relevant sources. It is possible that those fiefs were registered as *zeamets* with revenue higher than 20.000 *akches* in the first census book of the *sanjak* of Smederevo, which was made immediately after the Ottoman conquest of Smederevo in June 1459, but was not preserved in the archives; then the population living on them fled under the Hungarian attacks, so the revenue had decreased, but nevertheless, the above mentioned fiefs preserved their *zeamet* status. At the same time, the commander of the region of Braničevo, Ali-beg Mihaloğlu held a *timar* with a revenue of 22.448 *akches*, which was higher than the limit provided for the *timars* in the Ottoman state.²⁸ It is obvious that the Ottoman authorities, twenty years after the introduction of the *timar* system in the *sanjak* of Smederevo, did not strictly obey the rules regarding the revenue level from the *timar* or *zeamet*, but it was subject to change. The cause of those changes was not possible to determine exactly; also it was not possible to establish some new rule.

There were a total of 178 *timars* in the *sanjak* of Smederevo during the 1470s; out of that number 98 *timars* were registered in the region of Braničevo, which was enlisted as a unit for itself in the 1476 census book. Therefore, those *timars* would be considered separately.²⁹ The revenue from the *timars* in this province was from 200 to 20.000 *akches*. Out of 80 *timars* registered in the *sanjak* of Smederevo, without the Braničevo region in 1476, 8 or 10% brought a revenue higher than 10.000 *akches*. The highest revenue was registered from the *timar* of a certain Mehmed from Trebizond, consisting of 16 villages (14 populated and 2 deserted ones) with 218 houses and 6 widows in the regions of Levač, Nekudim, and Lepenica, with the annual revenue of 19.542 *akches*. The only Christian *sipahi* in this group was Maluga, Walach *knez*, with the annual revenue of 10.246 *akches*. This *timar* was situated in the region of Ostrovica and consisted of village of Čačak, along with five more villages and two *mezraas* in the regions of Kučevo, Levač and Ostrovica. On his *timar* lived 157 complete families and 4 families of widows.³⁰ The distribution of the *timars* regarding the revenue was given in the following table:

²⁷ BOA, TTD 187 (1536).

²⁸ BOA, TTD 16 (1476).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Revenue of the <i>timar</i>	Number of <i>timar</i> holders
10.000 <i>akches</i> and more	8
7.000-10.000 <i>akches</i>	2
5.000-7.000 <i>akches</i>	5
4.000-5.000 <i>akches</i>	6
3.000-4.000 <i>akches</i>	14
2.000-3.000 <i>akches</i>	12
1.000-2.000 <i>akches</i>	24
Less than 1.000 <i>akches</i>	9

It is obvious from the table that the largest number of *timar* holders, 59 of them (more than 70%) had annual revenues of lower than 4.000 *akches*. The most numerous were group of the *timar* holders with revenues of between 1.000 and 2.000 *akches* (24 of them or 30%).³¹ As mentioned before, in the region of Braničevo in 1476, 98 *timars* were registered; thus, their revenue was lower in comparison to the *timars* in the other regions of the *sanjak* of Smederevo.³² The biggest *timar* in this region was the already mentioned *timar* held by Ali-beg *serasker* of Braničevo, consisting of two villages and two *mezraas* with 333 complete families and 8 families of widows. The revenues from the taxes paid by the *voynuqs* reserve (145 of them), was also included in this *timar*.

Beside Ali-beg, seven more *sipahis* (one of them was Christian) held *timars* with the annual revenue between 10.000 and 20.000 *akches*. The distribution of the *timars* in the region of Braničevo in 1476 with the revenue lower than 10.000 *akches* is shown in the following table:

Revenue of the <i>timar</i>	Number of <i>timar</i> holders
7.000-10.000 <i>akches</i>	8
5.000-7.000 <i>akches</i>	7
4.000-5.000 <i>akches</i>	7
3.000-4.000 <i>akches</i>	11
2.000-3.000 <i>akches</i>	17
1.000-2.000 <i>akches</i>	20
Less than 1.000 <i>akches</i>	28

Thus, almost 50% of all *timars* registered in this region had revenues lower than 2.000 *akches*, and 28 *timar* holders (approximately 30%) had annual revenues lower than 1.000 *akches*. A large number of *timars* had been shared by two or more *sipahis*. We evaluate the example of the *timar* held by brothers Rade, Radonja, and Dobrivoj, sons of Stojko, whose joint annual revenue was 370 *akches* only.³³ The tendency to grant *timars* with low revenues had been closely related to the high strategic importance of the Braničevo region regarding Hungary, as well as with the

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

Ottoman's urgent need to have strong and permanently ready *sipahi* cavalry, as the whole second half of the 15th century in this area was marked with permanent Ottoman-Hungarian conflicts.

The described tendency could be observed in the whole *sanjak* of Smederevo in the following decades; according to the 1516 census book, in this province were registered 13 *zeamets*³⁴ and 219 *timars*. The highest number of *timars* had been registered in the *nahiye* of Niš (75), and the lowest in the *nahiye* of Maglič, only 11. It is interesting that, according to this census book, there were only 26 *timars* registered in the region of Braničevo, which is a very big difference compared to their number in the 1476 census book for the same region.³⁵

The survey of the *zeamets* registered in the *sanjak* in Smederevo in 1516 is given in the following table:

Zeamet holder	Villages	Mezraas	Houses	Bachelor	Widows	Muslims	Revenue
Suleiman, son of Hasan-beg	2	1	73	21	7	1	20.023
Bali-beg	7+2 man.	1	440	141	17	1	45.712
Rustem-beg	6	1	169	37	8	6	31.255
Ali-çauş, son of Mustafa	3	4	87	42	3	2	12.504
Hajji-Musa	2		48	12	1	4	15.237
Kayıç Iliyas	3		108	26	12		16.101
Mirza, son of Bali-beg	5		110	5	1	1	20.229
Mustafa vojvoda	1		101	22		13	19.512
? (Braničevo)	3		96	17	15		15.017
Hasan	6+1 man.		170	37			13.152
Hoşkadem	5		214	30	23		45.052
Rustem-beg	1		112	37	1		12.947
Halil-beg	4	2	262	55	21		28.130

According to the 1516 census book, the *timar* with the highest revenue was held by Isa Bali, *voyvoda* (duke) of Smederevo. His *timar* was situated in the *nahiye* of Levač and it consisted of the village Gornji Dragutin with 101 houses, 17 bachelors, and 1 widow. The annual revenue from this *timar* was 18.312 *akches*, thanks to high revenue obtained from grains. Beside this one, another 21 *timars* brought in annual revenues from 10.000 to 20.000 *akches*. The majority of *timars* with relatively high annual revenues were situated in the *nahiye* of Niš; out of 22 *timars* with the highest revenues (10.000 to 20.000 *akches*) 10 were situated in the region of Niš. The reason for such distribution of revenue lay, most probably, in fact that the region of Niš, not being the border region at the time, was more secure and in no need for large number of *sipahis*; thus, the *timars* in this region could have been with higher revenues. The distribution of the *timar* revenues and the number of the *timar* holders is given in the following table:

³⁴ It could be observed that some of the *zeamets* had less than 20.000 *akches* income. The census book of *sanjak* of Smederevo from 1516 registered seven *zeamets* with income between 10.000 and 20.000 *akches*.

³⁵ The considerable decrease of the number of *timars* in the region of Braničevo could have been caused by large number of villages with the special status, being consequence of the fact that their population was engaged in the Ottoman military service.

Revenue of the <i>timar</i>	Number of <i>timar</i> holders
7.000-10.000 <i>akches</i>	14
5.000-7.000 <i>akches</i>	36
4.000-5.000 <i>akches</i>	24
3.000-4.000 <i>akches</i>	28
2.000-3.000 <i>akches</i>	47
1.000-2.000 <i>akches</i>	40
Less than 1.000 <i>akches</i>	7

Although the number of the *timar* holders with annual revenues between 5.000 and 7.000 *akches* was quite high (36 of them or 15%), more than 50% of all *timar* holders in the *sanjak* of Smederevo had annual revenues lower than 4.000 *akches*. The situation differed only in the *nahiye* of Niš where 50 *timar* holders (more than 60%) had annual revenues higher than 4.000 *akches*.

It can be concluded that during the twenties of the 20th century in the *sanjak* of Smederevo the majority of the *timar* holders had the annual revenue between 1.000 and 4.000 *akches*, which was the result of the intentions of the Ottoman central government to stabilize the *timar* organization in this province, as one of the preconditions for the further Ottoman penetration toward the northern parts, mainly toward Belgrade and Buda.

The big changes in organization of the *timar* system in the *sanjak* of Smederevo could be observed in the period between 1516 and 1530. The large number of villages that were previously part of the *hass* of sultan or *sanjak-beg* were given to the *timars*; at the same time, the waste group of the cattle-breeding population transferred to the settled way of living, and thus were made part of the *timars*. Therefore, during the 1530s there were, in the *sanjak* of Smederevo, 29 *zaims*, 232 *sipahis* with the imperial *berat*, 356 *sipahis* with the *berat* issued by the begler-beg and 30 *knezs-sipahis*.³⁶ At the end it could be concluded that the *timar* system was established in the Serbian lands immediate after the Ottoman conquest of those provinces. The special attention of the Ottoman authorities had been paid to the functioning of this system in the border regions, as it was the *sanjak* of Smederevo (central Serbia of today) for example. The *sanjak* of Smederevo is the typical example of the border region of the new type, established in the Ottoman Empire during the 1470s. The special characteristic of those border regions, the *sanjak* of Smederevo included, is the participation of the local population in the Ottoman regular and auxiliary forces. It is very important is to notice the high number of the Christian *sipahis* in this province, especially during the second half of the 15th century. They were an integral part of the *sipahi* organization, although the income from their *timars* was not particularly high. With time, their number diminished, so in the 1560s they could not be observed in the census book for the *sanjak* of Smederevo. The main reason for that should be found in the fact the the *sanjak* of Smederevo since 1520s was not the border region anymore, thus the role of the Christian *sipahis* ceased to be of great importance for the Empire.

³⁶ *Istorija naroda Jugoslavije* II, p. 72.

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