



To my lovely sister, Tuğçe



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN  
IN DELIORMAN REGION (N.E. BULGARIA) IN THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences  
of  
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by

AYŞEGÜL YAĞ

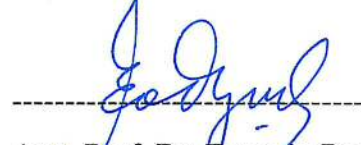
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ANKARA

May 2018

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

  
-----  
Asst. Prof. Dr. Evgeniy Radoslavov Radushev  
Supervisor


I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

  
-----  
Prof. Dr. Özer Ergenç  
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

  
-----  
Prof. Dr. Mehmet Veli Seyitdanlıoğlu  
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

  
-----  
Prof. Dr. Halime Demirkan  
Director

## **ABSTRACT**

### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS IN DELIORMAN REGION (N.E. BULGARIA) IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY**

Yağ, Ayşegül

M.A, Department of History

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Evgeniy Radoslavov Radushev

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The spreading process of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan region covers a very long period. After the successive conquest period, the ultimate goal of the institutionalization was to maintain the permanence in the region. To accomplish this, they practiced military and political methods. One of the most important of these was the establishment of new settlements representing the Ottoman presence. In the context of this study, the nature of these new settlements formed in the Deliorman region in the 16th century will be examined on the basis of the villages. Also, the role of geographical factors will be emphasized in these settlements. The demographic changes over time will be revealed via *tahrir defters* (tax registers) dated 1530, 1573 and 1580. The geographical factors will be used as the basis for the comparisons between these three *defters*. For this reason, 11 villages have been chosen to make an analysis about the process of infiltration of the nomadic groups into the sedentary life.

**Keywords:** Deliorman, Nomadism, Ottoman Empire, Physical Environment, Sedentarization.

## ÖZET

### 16.YÜZYIL DELİORMANI'NDA (KUZEYBATI BULGARİSTAN) FİZİKİ ÇEVRE VE YERLEŞİM MODELLERİ

Yağ, Ayşegül

Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Evgeniy Radoslavov Radoshev

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Osmanlı'nın Balkan coğrafyasında yayılma süreci çok uzun bir dönemi kapsamaktadır. Başarılı bir fetih sürecinden sonra gelen kurumsallaşma sonucu, Osmanlı'nın nihai hedefi bölgede kalıcılığa ulaşabilmek olmuştur. Bunu başarmak için askeri ve politik olmak üzere çeşitli yöntemler uygulamıştır. Bunların arasında en önemli olanlardan biri de Osmanlı varlığını temsil eden yeni yerleşim yerlerinin kurulması olmuştur. Bu çalışma bağlamında 16.yüzyılda Deliorman bölgesinde oluşan yeni yerleşimlerin doğasını köyleri temel alarak incelenecek ve bu yerleşimlerde coğrafi etkenlerin rolüne ağırlık verilecektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, 1530, 1573 ve 1580 tarihli tahrir defterleri kullanılarak zaman içerisindeki demografik değişimler ortaya konulacaktır. Bu üç defter arasında yapılacak karşılaştırmalarda coğrafi etkenler temel alınacaktır. Ayrıca, bu bölgeden seçilen 11 köy ile, göçebe grupların yerleşik hayata dahil olma süreci hakkında bir analiz yapmak amaçlanmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Deliorman, Fiziki Çevre, Göçebelik, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Yerleşiklik.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Since the earliest times people have had to survive in nature; foremostly, mankind has always needed to find suitable environments in which his basic needs can be met. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a helpful theory about the nature of these requirements. On the first level of his pyramid visualizing this hierarchy are the physiological needs of hunger, thirst, and other essential requirements. On the second level, the need for security becomes apparent. These two steps actually manifest themselves in the dynamics of settlement. After these two needs have been satisfied, people can begin to create the cultures that then become the basis of human civilizations. In the course of this development, groups were separated according to their socio-economic activities and two main groups emerged: nomads and settlers.

Both of these groups have an organized structure, but these different structures do not prevent them from communicating with each other. It should also be noted that neither group is able to isolate itself from the outside world. In addition, centralized

states prefer to encourage nomadic groups to live a more settled life. Empires have difficulty in controlling nomadic groups because these groups do not want to be registered to any particular location thanks to their mobile lifestyle. On this point, states have had to act very tactfully in order to not create or exacerbate tension between already settled locals and nomadic newcomers. For this reason, there were two options for states seeking to settle nomads in a region. Either they would choose to kill the local groups to refill the area with their own people or they would develop institutions providing the necessary balance among these groups.

### **1.1 Objectives**

The subject to be examined in this thesis is the motivations behind the settlement of the Ottoman Empire in Deliorman region (mod.Ludogorie) of modern-day Bulgaria. There are a number of reasons why the Deliorman area has specifically been selected. First of all, this region has been one of the main migration routes of nomadic groups since antiquity. Passes through the Carpathian Mountains served as gateways for nomadic groups seeking new lands in the Northeastern Balkans. Aside from the Carpathians, the Danube River is a geographical formation that offers groups migrating from the steppe another route to settlement in the south. It is recorded that there were some migrations to the Deliorman region via the Danube. For example, the first move to this region was under Zabergan, leader of the Bulgarians of Kuturgh in 558 AD. Since the Danube was frozen in that time, this group could easily cross it. Though dates and names can vary, the immutable nature of the geographical formations here molds and shapes the flow of history.

Throughout its settlement history, the Deliorman region has become a geographical area where various groups have passed in different periods.<sup>1</sup> Groups used it as a settlement point during migratory movements because it was rich in natural resources like water and arable lands. Hence, it is not surprising that various great states were also interested in this region. The Ottomans were one of these states and their influence in this region established an order whose repercussions are still felt today in some respects. Thanks to the balance which they established both socially and economically, their presence in the region lasted for centuries. They were able to establish permanent settlements in line with their original aims.

The geography of the Balkan peninsula has witnessed a turbulent historical past and the prominent position of the Ottomans in this dynamic past cannot be denied. Some Balkanists, however, influenced by nationalist ideologies in the Communist era, argued that the Ottoman presence created traumatic effects in the region. In this respect, the first problem to be examined in this study is the methods that the Ottoman Empire practiced during its settlement process. Academic circles with extreme views such as Gandev have preferred to examine the whole of these methods under the title of catastrophic theory. It has even been argued, with some unfounded calculations, that the Ottoman presence was strengthened by the killing of the local people in the region. However, the actual situation reflected in the chronicles is quite different from the result suggested by nationalist historiography. Here, as demonstrated in İnalcık's works, it can be understood that the key point in Ottoman settlement was diplomacy. Fighting with the local groups remained only as the last resort. So the first aim in this

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<sup>1</sup>See, Kowalski, Reychmann and Zajaczkowski, "Deliorman", EI, p.216-217.

work is to examine the political and military dimensions of the Ottoman settlement in Bulgaria and even more specifically in Deliorman region.

Secondly, it will also be very useful to examine the influence of geographical forms on human life, and thus on settlement, in the context of this work. Analyzing the Deliorman region is necessary to understand the geography where the Ottomans settled. One of the main methods carried out by the Ottomans was to enrich the newly conquered lands with manpower through migrations to appropriate places. As the Ottoman economic structure was heavily based on agriculture, determining the geographic features related to cultivation was crucial in allowing them to create a reasonable taxation system. With its similar landscape to the Anatolian plateau, the Deliorman region became one of the top preferences for groups migrating from Anatolia to the Balkans thanks to its fertile lands. This situation can be also interpreted as an advantage presented by geography for the Ottomans in terms of socio-economic issues.

Under Ottoman rule, it is possible to observe the emergence of some specific settlement patterns. As I have mentioned above, such patterns were created by both settlers and nomads. For the Ottomans, preserving the balance between these two groups was a prerequisite for strengthening their existence in the region. As a result of this, there is no strict difference between settled Muslims and settled non-Muslims in terms of socio-economical status. Yet the main problem was that the nomads, called *yürük*, had a mobile life which prevented the Ottomans from registering them as the taxpayers. To get rid of this limitation, the Ottomans chose to sedentarize these groups. Thus, while analyzing the Ottoman settlement pattern in this region, our main focus will be the *yürüks* that were a bit different from ordinary social milieu. Accordingly

the third objective of this thesis is shaped around the analysis of the process of sedentarization of these *yürük* groups in the aforementioned region.

In short, this study tries to examine the Ottoman settlement in Deliorman region after a successful conquest period. In this thesis, the impact of the geographic features on the flow of the history will emerge.

## 1.2 Sources and Methodology

The primary sources used in this thesis are composed of tax registers known as *defters*.<sup>2</sup> It is necessary to mention the content of these registers before passing to their function for this research. In the Ottoman Empire, *defters* were a type of record used to determine the number of taxable citizens by an agent of the corporate state structure.<sup>3</sup> In these registers, one can find information regarding the administrative unit in which the persons were registered, how much tax they would pay, and their socio-economic status. They were divided into two types, *mufassal* (detailed tax registers) and *icmal* (synoptic tax registers).

*Mufassal defters* contain the detailed information about the region and its residents. At first glance, the names of people or villages in the lists help to identify the religious status of groups such as Muslims and non-Muslims. For this research, the

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<sup>2</sup> In this thesis, the *defters*, TKGM TD 0042, TKGM, TT 0357 and 370 numaralı muhâsebe-i vilâyet-i rûm-ili defteri will be used.

<sup>3</sup> See Halil İnalçık, *Hicrî 835 Tarihli Sûret-i Defter-i Arvanid* (Ankara: TTK, 1987). ; Barkan “ Tarihi Demografi Araştırmaları ve Osmanlı Tarihi” *Türkiyat Mecmuası* 10 (1951-1953): 1-26; Barkan, “Research on the Otoman Fiscal Surveys “, in M.A. Cook (ed.), *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London, 1970); Heath, W. Lowry, *Ottoman Tahrir Defteri As a Source for Social and Economic History: Pitfalls and Limitations* in Heath W. Lowry, *Studies in Defterology: Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul; Isis Press 1992); Mehmet Öz, “Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Görüşler”, *Vakıflar Dergisi*, 12 (1991): 229-239; Kemal Çiçek, “Osmanlı tahrir Defterlerinin Kullanımında Görülen Bazı Problemler ve Method Arayışları”, *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları* 97 (1995).; Machiel Kiel, “Remarks on the administration of the poll tax (Cizye) in the Ottoman Balkans,” *Second International Seminar for Otto-man Palaeography*, Sofia, Sept.-Oct. 1988, in: *Etudes Bal-kaniques* No 4, Sofia, 1990, p. 70-104.



salient feature of these records is that they render an idea on the variety of production and the boundaries of the administrative units. While the number of items under production is reduced in more mountainous regions, the diversity of production in the regions with more temperate climates displays an increase. By this means, it is possible to have knowledge about the geographical structure of a given region. In addition to the geographical deductions, one is also able to express an opinion whether the people of a given area is permanently settled or nomadic. For example, in areas where nomadic groups have lived, cultivation is heavily dependent on the basic crops for them and their animals such as wheat, oats, or barley. On the other hand, places having vineyards or gardens are inhabited by permanent residents, not nomads. The reason of this is that these products are constantly in need of maintenance and do not fit with the lifestyle of nomadic groups.

In this work, these records will not be used to reach some numeric results in terms of taxation. They are not just piles of records suggesting the direction of the economic activity of the society but rather also have precious data which can allow a researcher to observe some processes related to the settlements of different groups. Within the frame of this thesis, *defters* including the *yürüks* will be utilized. For the Ottomans, it is essential to determine the number of the nomads in their borders. As much as possible, they could achieve to record these mobile people into the *defters* as nomads. Also, the state tried to regulate their life with some codifications according to their region.

In the context of this thesis, there are two different reasons for choosing these three types of *defters*. The first one is to examine the role of geographical forms in forming a certain pattern of settlement and to analyze what human behavior is in areas where geographical forms occasionally form a natural obstacle. Secondly, through

some comparisons between years, I hope to demonstrate the process of transition of the nomadic groups in Deliorman region to sedentary life.

The secondary sources that have been used in the work generally reveal the effects of geographical forms on human beings and their consequences. Therefore, this area, which has been studied under the title of human geography<sup>4</sup>, has come into the present day with various factions. The oldest of these is the viewpoint of environmental determinism<sup>5</sup>. It dates back to antiquity and argues that people are helpless in the face of geographical forms and that their behaviours are shaped by purely geographical conditions. Among the pioneers were Hippocrates and Ibn Khaldun. Another approach following environmental determinism is possibilism. In fact, possibilism argues for a traditional approach to environmental determinism as opposed to an opinion. This movement, pioneered by la Blache, asserts that geographical forms are sometimes an effective element, but that culture is actually the result of social conditions. In other words, geography is not always an obstacle that determines or restricts people's movements. On the contrary, there is an ongoing dialogue between groups and natural conditions. The advantages of nature for different groups living in different geographies at the points where this dialogue is carried out in good health have always been the subject of discussion.

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<sup>4</sup> For this term, see also William Norton, *Human Geography*, Oxford UP, 1992; Kevin Cox, *Making Human Geography*, The Guilford Press, 2014; Derek Gregory, *Horizons in Human Geography*, Macmillan, 1951; *Human geography : landscapes of human activities*, Macmillan, 1994; Mark Boyle, *Human Geography: A concise Introduction*, John Wiley&Sons, 2014; Edward Bergman, *Human geography : cultures, connections, and landscapes*, Prentice Hall, 1995; Jerome D. Fellmann, *Human geography : landscapes of human activities*, W.C. Brown, 1990; Terry G. Jordan Bychkov, *The human mosaic : a thematic introduction to cultural geography*, Longman, 1994.

<sup>5</sup> For the writers suggesting this approach see Ellen Churchill Semple, *Influences of Geographic Environment, on the Basis of Ratzel's System of Anthro-Geography*. New York: H. Holt & Co, 1911; Humboldt, *Kosmos: Entwurf Einer Physischen Weltbeschreibung*, Die Andere Bibliothek, 1845; Carl Ritter, *Einleitung zur allgemeinen vergleichenden Geographie, und Abhandlungen zur Begründung einer mehr wissenschaftlichen Behandlung der Erdkunde*, Berlin, 1852.

Yet another view is the Challenge-Response theory as presented by Toynbee. The core idea of this theory is that man is not totally helpless against nature. In fact, he argues that the difficulties that nature presents to mankind actually constitute the material for the advancement of civilization. Every difficulty that is overcome leads mankind to take a step further and to make civilization grow. Thus once again the dominion of geography on the course of human beings.

While we have sometimes overlooked these views in this study, the method that has been used when the primary sources were examined was the Annales School which emphasizes the relationship between history and geography.<sup>6</sup> Figures like Bloch, Febvre, Braudel, and Le Goff, gathered around the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*, were the pioneers of this approach. What distinguishes them from other movements was their new interpretation of history in the 19th century. According to them, history is just not an expression of continuous and sequential events but a field that requires a wider time frame they termed the *longue durée*. In order for these activities to be well understood, they argued that other branches of study -geography, sociology, and archeology- should be utilized.<sup>7</sup> In this context, Braudel's *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* has

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<sup>6</sup> For detailed information on the keypoints of the approach of historical geography, see Michael Pacione, *Historical Geography: progress and prospect*, Cambridge UP, 1994; Alan Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide*, Cambridge UP, 2003; Robin Butlin, *Historical Geography: through the gates of space and time*, London ; New York : Edward Arnold, 1993; John Morrissey, *Key concepts in Historical Geography*, Sage, 2014; On specific region analysis see also Francis Carter, *An Historical Geography of the Balkans*, Academic Pr., 1977; Henry Clifford Darby, *A New Historical Geography of England*, Cambridge UP, 1973; Sir William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, Cooper Square, 1972; Wolf-Dieter Hütteroth and Kamal Abdulfattah, *Historical geography of Palestine, Transjordan and Southern Syria in the late 16th [sixteenth] century*, Erlangen: Erlanger Geographische Arbeiten, 1977.

<sup>7</sup> For more information on the development of the Annales school, see Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-1989*, Stanford University Press, 1991; François Dosse, *The New History in France: The Triumph of the Annales*, University of Illinois Press, 1994; Lynn Hunt and Jacques Revel (eds), *Histories: French Constructions of the Past*, The New Press, 1994.

been quite useful for this research. In addition, Febvre's book *Geographical Introduction to History* has been used.<sup>8</sup>



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<sup>8</sup> For the works by the authors from the Annales School, see also Bloch, Marc. *Feudal Society: Vol 1: The Growth of Ties of Dependence* (1939); Bloch, Marc. *Méthodologie Historique* (1988); Bloch, Marc. *French Rural History: An Essay on Its Basic Characteristics* (1931), trans. Janet Sondheimer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966); Bloch, *The Historian's Craft: Reflections on the Nature and Uses of History and the Techniques and Methods of Those Who Write It*, Vintage, 1964; Lucien Febvre, *A Geographical Introduction to History (A History of Civilization)*, Barnet & Noble, 1966; Lucien Febvre, Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*, Verso, 1997; Lucien Febvre, *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais*, Harvard University Press, 1982; Lucien Febvre, *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Lucien Febvre*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973; Lucien Febvre, *Life in Renaissance France*, Harvard UP, 1979; Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Slan Reynolds, University of California Press, 1949; *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century, Vol. 1: The Structures of Everyday Life*, trans. Slan Reynolds, University of California Press, 1992; *Civilization and Capitalism 15th-18th Century, Vol 2: The Wheels of Commerce*, trans. Slan Reynolds, University of California Press, 1979; *A History of Civilisations*, trans. Richard Mayne, Penguin, 1995; *Memory and the Mediterranean*, Vintage, 2002; *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, trans. Patricia Ranum, John Hopkins UP, 1979; *On History*, University of California Press, 1982; *The Mediterranean in the Ancient World*, Penguin, 2002; Jacques Le Goff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goodhammer, University of California Press, 1982; *History and Memory*, California UP, 1996; *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages*, trans. Patricia Ranum, Zone Books, 1990; *The Medieval Imagination*, trans. Arthur Goodhammer, University of California Press, 1992; *The Birth of Europe*, trans. Janet Lloyd, Wiley-Blackwell, 2007; *Medieval Civilization 400-1500*, trans. Julia Barrow, Wiley-Blackwell, 1991; *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages*, Wiley-Blackwell, 1993; *The Birth of Purgatory*, University of California Press, 1986.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **CONQUEST AND AFTERMATH**

Throughout history, as states have waxed and waned, some have devastated all the social, cultural and economic elements in the land they conquered while widening their borders, while others have instead tried to protect these as their sources of revenue. At the end, those who had well-developed policies would achieve the formation of a stable state organization. In this group we can include the Ottomans, who emerged on the stage of history as a small polity in western Anatolia, and chose to pursue the preservative policy towards already existing mechanisms in the regions they subjugated.

The Ottomans did not close the door on the world around them, a world in which they had to deal with political, geographical and even climatic issues. They were conscious of these problems and used them to turn situations to their own favor. This small principality, which avoided unnecessary conflicts exceeding their power, took Tzimpe Castle in accordance with a treaty signed between Orhan Bey and the Byzantine Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus. In the course of time, the Europeans accused the Byzantines of not standing against the Ottomans. Some years later, an

earthquake in Gallipoli helped the Ottomans progress toward the Balkan peninsula as the starting point of the conquests in Europe.<sup>9</sup> Now the wind was blowing from the western part of Anatolia. This settlement would be the basic objective of the Balkan conquest, which lasted nearly 200 years. Here then, is the main question: what changed and what remained the same under the Ottoman Empire? As an answer to this question, the methods that the Ottomans applied during the conquest turn out to be an important issue waiting to be addressed step by step.

Vassalage was one of the main forms taken for the relations between the Ottomans and the other states. Making use of this type of relationship, the Ottomans established diplomacy as the basis of their way of in the region rather than strictly preferring the sword. Through the contacts between the Ottomans and their vassals, future conquests would thus become easier. For this reason successive huge battles were not seen in the region. In this way the Ottomans entered the context of the European world and they became an inseparable part of the European system.<sup>10</sup>

The Ottomans proposed a more functional vassal-suzerain relationship for the involved parties. The advantage of such an association was great for both sides. The vassal state continued to function in return for certain taxes and military support when the Ottomans required it. Besides, these contacts would give them the knowledge and perspective needed to understand the local dynamics of the region in terms of its geography and economy. Accordingly, the conquests were prolonged for many years.

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<sup>9</sup> Inalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600*, p.13; Zachariadou, "Notes on the Subaşıs and the Early Sancakbeyis of Gelibolu", *The Kapudan Pasha: His Office and His Domain*, ed. E.A.Zachariadou, Rethymnon: Crete UP,2002.; Hammer, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, p.177.; Beldiceanu, "Başlangıçlar: Osman ve Orhan, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi I, p.29; Umar, *Türkiye Halkının Ortaçağ Tarihi: Türkiye Türklerinin Ulusunun Oluşması*, İstanbul, 1998.; McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks*, p.33-62.; Kiel, "The Incorporation of the Balkans into the Ottoman Empire", *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, p.138-191.; Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge UP, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*, p.602

Some authors have suggested that the Ottoman success in the Balkans was based on the scattered situation of their rivals.<sup>11</sup> As Fine states:

“The first point to emphasize is the weakness of the Ottomans’ opponents. The Byzantine Empire was no longer an empire and after Dusan’s death neither was Serbia. And we have traced the territorial fragmentation of Serbia, Bulgaria and the Greek lands. As a result these regions became split into a number of petty principalities in the hands of nobles who fought for their own independence and expansion. Not only did they refuse to co-operate with one another, but they were also frequently at war with one another.”<sup>12</sup>

Hence, the vassals had to accept the superiority of the Ottomans as either an ally or a suzerain. The vassal state, which acknowledged the existence of a stronger state than itself, guaranteed the perpetuity of state institutions functioning properly under the Ottomans.<sup>13</sup>

Vassalage enabled the Ottomans to broaden their territory without excessive battles. In addition, this moderate policy would prevent the threat of possible alliances among the local princes against the Ottomans.<sup>14</sup> The annexation of the Kyustendil region was an example of this kind of union. This area was under the administration of the Serbian magnate Constantine. During the reign of Bayezid I, he concluded multiple alliances with the Ottoman Empire. After he lost his life in the Battle of Rovine (1395), the region automatically passed to the Ottoman Empire because he had no heir to continue its political existence.<sup>15</sup>

In Sisman’s state, by contrast, events did not unfold as they had in Kyustendil. Despite being under Ottoman vassalage for almost 17 years, he did not fulfill the

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<sup>11</sup> Vucinich, *The Ottoman Empire: Its Record and Legacy*, p.13.

<sup>12</sup> Fine, *ibid*, p.604.

<sup>13</sup> Justin, McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks*, Routledge, 1997, p.41; Roderic H., Davison, *Turkey: A Short History*, Paul & Co Pub Consortium, 1997, p.15-32.

<sup>14</sup> Halil, Inalcık, “Ottoman Methods of Conquest”, s.444., Emecen, Feridun, “Osmanlı Devleti ve Medeniyeti Tarihi”, ed.by Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, IRCICA. 1994, p. 13.

<sup>15</sup> Kostendil”, *EI*, p.534.

requirements of a vassal state. He did not send any military groups to the Battle of Kosovo Polje and even attempted to make a secret alliance with the Hungarian king Sigismund, who was preparing a huge campaign against the Ottomans. Having heard of this alliance, the Ottomans launched a huge campaign in Bulgaria.<sup>16</sup> In addition, he had assured that Silistre would be given to the Ottoman Empire without a battle, as required by the agreement between Sisman and Murad I, but he did not keep his word.<sup>17</sup>

Murad I sent the army under the leadership of Ali Pasha to Bulgaria to punish Sisman for his inappropriate behaviors. Ali Pasha moved to end the vassal status of Bulgaria and to establish full dominance in these lands. (1388) The accession of Bayezid I to the throne accelerated the pace of events.<sup>18</sup> After establishing order in Anatolia, he quickly wanted to gather the scattered states of the Balkans under the Ottoman umbrella. As a matter of fact, Ali Pasha's purpose was also to recover the region. Starting from Aydos, continuing along with the direction of Çenge, Vencan, Madara and Şumnu, the army reached Polski-Kosovo region where violent conflicts took place.<sup>19</sup> When the capital city, Tırnovo, surrendered the route of the campaign was then directed to the north.<sup>20</sup> By the year 1396, a large part of Bulgaria was under Ottoman control with the taking of Nigbolu.

One of the most important points of this campaign was the surrender of cities like Şumnu, Madara and Virbiçe.<sup>21</sup> According to Islamic law, a city should not be

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<sup>16</sup> Fine, *ibid*, 422.

<sup>17</sup> Kiel, Machiel. "Mevlana Neşri and The Towns of Medieval Bulgaria", in *Studies in Ottoman History in honour of V.L. Menagé*, ed. Colin Imber, p.175.

<sup>18</sup> Inalcık, *Haçlılar ve Osmanlılar*, p.89; Inalcık, *Kuruluş Dönemi Osmanlı Sultanları (1302-1481)*, p.114.

<sup>19</sup> In text: the map of the route of Ali Pasha's campaign.

<sup>20</sup> "Bulgaria", *EI*, s. 1303

<sup>21</sup> "*Paşa'ya Murad nâm kimseyle beşaret haberin gönderdiler. İrtesi Paşa dahi göçüp, Pırvadi'ye gelüb, kal'aya girüb, kal'anun içine er koyub, müezzinler ezan okuyub, namaz kıldılar. Ve Paşa*



devastated or plundered if it prefers to give its key upon request.<sup>22</sup> In the case of the aforementioned cities, it was very normal to simply accept Ottoman domination. In their territories, local dynasties had created an insecure environment, making the society miserable. Another point to mention is that the progress of the military operation had been spread over a period of eight years. The influence of full Ottoman domination in this geography began to be felt after the 1402 war.<sup>23</sup> This was the proof that the Ottoman progress in the Balkans could not be interpreted as a wave of savage people motivated solely by plunder. As a result, the village-urban network was not devastated by the Ottomans.

The Ottomans established their permanence on the basis of institutionalization. Since they saw this new geography as their new home, the necessary equipment for long-term settlement was very crucial. Thanks to the relations with their close neighbor, the Byzantine Empire, they had the opportunity to integrate Byzantine state order into their own formations. As the lands conquered by the Ottomans were at the same time former Byzantine lands, they oftentimes already had an idea of the elements of a functioning system. This functional system was not essentially altered that the order in the peninsula might not be unnecessarily compromised. Especially after the conquest of Edirne, institutional formation accelerated as the expanded and expanding borders created a need for a wider institutional structure.

In the process of Ottomanisation<sup>24</sup>, the state blended eastern traditions with western ones, which formed a unique character. After an initial period of vassalage,

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*hisarun esbabın görüb, andan göçüb, Vençene kondı. Kal'a halkı dahi Paşa'nın geldiğın göricek, kal'anun kilidin getürdiler. Andan irtesi Madara'nun ve Şumnı'nun dahi kilidin getürdiler.*", Neşri, Cihannüma, p.247.

<sup>22</sup> Mazower, *The Balkans*, p. 69; Inalcık, "The Ottoman Methods of Conquest", p.112.

<sup>23</sup> "Bulgaria", EI, 1304.

<sup>24</sup> It connotes the foundation of the Ottoman-Turkish institutional structure not based on ethnic divisions.

the removal of the local dynastic elements would be expected. Yet, the preservation of the working mechanisms belonging to state institutions was an Ottoman paid priority. The religious institutions, administrative divisions, customs, and military groups in the conquered territory remained as they were.<sup>25</sup>

In fact, the protection of local military staff both satisfied the need for soldiery and framed the necessary ground for the articulation of such groups to the Ottoman Empire. The continuity of the privileges given to this group, although they could be transferred from generation to generation, was completely in the hands of the Sultan. Thus, any faction which could be organized against the central authority and which would disrupt the order at the local level was disbanded. At the same time, contrary to the nationalist ideology, it also proves the existence of a pre-Ottoman military class that was not assimilated but maintained. Additionally, the role of western developments was quite large in this military integration. The positive approach of the Orthodox leaders to the Ottomans was a logical strategy to get rid of Catholic pressure and oppressive western Christian forces.<sup>26</sup> It was preferable in all respects to recognize the rule of an organized centralized state, rather than trusting a state which could be inconsistent in its decisions.<sup>27</sup>

Since the Ottoman presence in the Balkans was not shaped around constant battles, they had to develop some policies preserve their existence in newly conquered

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<sup>25</sup> İnalçık, "Stefan Duşan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna:XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri," Fuad Köprülü Armağanı/Melanges Fuad Köprülü (İstanbul:Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih ve Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları,1953, s.246.; Emecen, Feridun, Osmanlı Devleti ve Medeniyeti Tarihi, p.14.

<sup>26</sup>İnalçık, " Ottoman Methods of Conquest", p.454

<sup>27</sup>İnalçık, "Stefan Duşan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna:XV. Asırda Rumeli'de Hristiyan Sipahiler ve Menşeleri," Fuad Köprülü Armağanı/Melanges Fuad Köprülü (İstanbul:Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih ve Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları,1953), s.4; Delilbaşı, Melek, "Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Fetihlerine Karşı Ortodoks Halkın Tutumu", Türk Tarihi Kongresi, p. 38., İnbaşı, Mehmet, Balkanlar'da Osmanlı Hakimiyeti ve İskan Siyaseti, p.159; for religious interaction, see Zachariadou, Elizabeth, "Religious Dialogue Between Byzantines and Turks during the Ottoman expansion", Religionsgesprache im Mittelalter, eds. B. Lewis and F.Niewöhner, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992.

region. The diplomacy that laid the foundation of the vassal relationships also provided a more stable atmosphere in which the innovations could be established permanently. Not planning to build their new formation on shaky ground, they first tried to create affirmative conditions for themselves. Providing the instruments that constitute such conditions was the task of a centralized state. Murad I was the first sultan who consciously set to work to reach this goal. Among his most important actions were the assignments of the first beylerbeyi and the kadi. But besides these, he preserved the pre-Ottoman military structure with his *voynuk* law.<sup>28</sup>

The most important structure to give direction to the government's policy was the *ulama* class. Murad II aimed to develop a beneficial strategic pattern by raising their influence. Thus, the future of the state would be protected from destructive wars that might break out without warning. Yet, it can be seen that the number of major wars was not more than four or five during the first period of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans. While this process was being conducted, the attitude of the *ulama* class had a great influence on the course of events. Since Murad II had a peaceful personality, it has been noted that there were not constant clashes with any state in the region, and except for the battles of Varna and Kosovo there were no major conflagrations throughout the era of the Çandarlı family.<sup>29</sup> The state, which did struggle with riots from time to time, tried to avoid making an opposite move that could disrupt the balance.

One of the most dangerous events was the union of the Crusaders against the Ottomans. It was actually a very delicate issue because any defeat could have been the

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<sup>28</sup> Zinkeisen, J. Wilhelm, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, Yeditepe Yayınevi, İstanbul, c. 1, p.199.

<sup>29</sup> For a detailed information on Murad II's policy, see Zachariadou, "Ottoman Diplomacy and the Danube Frontier", *Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Sevcenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, eds C. Mango, O.Pritsak and U.M Pasicznyk, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983.

beginning of the end. Behind the scenes, the root of the situation was the clash of the fundamental interests of the two sides. The Europeans wanted to create sea empire including Constantinople as a capital of a Latin Catholic Kingdom, while the Ottomans envisioned their empire as a continental one building a bridge between Anatolia and the Balkans<sup>30</sup>. After the Battle of Varna, negotiations between John Hunyadi, Brankovich and Murad II resulted in the Peace of Szeged. However, Hunyadi was not contented with this agreement and declared war against the Ottomans. At the Battle of Kosovo (1448) the Hungarians were defeated and the Ottoman presence was proved in the Balkan Peninsula in a certain way. About the echoes of this battle, Inalcık states<sup>31</sup>:

“Perhaps most important of all, the defeat at Varna sealed the fate of Byzantium. The union of the churches and the idea of living under an Islamic state rather than under the Catholic Venetians and Hungarians. It should be added that by this time the Ottoman state was fully transformed into a classic Islamic sultanate with all its underpinnings, and that an actual social revolution was introduced into the Balkans by a state policy efficiently protecting the peasantry against local exploitation and the dominance of feudal lords and extending an agrarian system based on state ownership of land and its utilization in small farms in the possession of peasant households.”

Within the context of institutionalization efforts, the conquered lands had to be processed within a grounded system. At this point, the tax recording system called *tahrir* and the *tahrir defters* first come to light. *Tahrir defters* were the most important instruments that can be regarded as a documental reflection of a state.<sup>32</sup> By the simplest

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<sup>30</sup> İnalçık, “Fatih Devri üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar”, p.52-53.

<sup>31</sup> İnalçık, “The Ottoman Turks and the Crusades, 1329-1451”, in Zacour, N. P.; Hazard, H. W. (ed.), *The impact of the Crusades on Europe* (1989), 275.

<sup>32</sup> See Mehmet, Öz, “Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler”, *Vakıflar Dergisi* 12 (1991): 429-439; Heath W., Lowry, “The Ottoman Tahrir Defterleri as a Source for Social and Economic History: Pitfalls and Limitations”, in Heath W., Lowry, *Studies in Defterology. Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1992), 318; Kemal Çiçek, “Osmanlı Tahrir Defterlerinin Kullanımında Görülen bazı Problemler ve Metod Arayışları”, *Türk Dünya Araştırmaları* 97 (1995): 93-111; Feridun, Emecen, *Osmanlı Devleti ve Medeniyeti Tarihi*, p.18.

definition, we can say that they were the written indication of where, how, and how much taxation the state would receive. One of the most important reasons for keeping such records was to make the state feel centralized in all its territories. As the boundaries expanded, newly annexed or conquered fields expected to be recognized and penetrated by the state. At this point, the *tahrirs* were quite functional to identify the social, economic, and geographical elements of a given region. Thus, the entire territory of the state and its concomitant property became systematically countable.

What was the main motivation of the Ottomans for the application of *tahrir*?

As a matter of fact, the main reason was to try to determine what kind of taxes would be taken from the society based on agricultural products. In addition, *tahrirs* were applied when a new Sultan came to the throne or anytime when they were needed. However, the real aim was to determine taxpayers or those having exemptions and the institutions that had the right of disposal of the collected taxes.<sup>33</sup> Since the geographical and human elements in each region of the empire were not evenly distributed, the economic output - in other words the product items and the distribution of the workforce - also differed. For this reason, *tahrirs* played a very important role in directing attention to the principle of justice in terms of taxation that generally depended on crop-based production. Such a centralized approach was inevitable because the state did not want the peasant class (their fundamental source of income) to be burdened by arbitrary taxes.

As a requirement of the institutional structure, the application of tax registration was also done within certain rules.<sup>34</sup> A committee was formed for the census, together with the officials of the region such as *kadi*, *tımar* owners, and an

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<sup>33</sup> Osman, Gümüşçü. "Mufassal Tahrir Defterlerinin Türkiye'nin Tarihi Coğrafyası Bakımından Önemi", *Türk Tarih Kongresi*, (1999): 1321-1337.

<sup>34</sup> Inalcık, Halil, *Hicri 835 Tarihli Suret-i Defter-i Sancak-i Arvanid*, TTK Yayınları, Ankara

officer called *emin* who fulfilled the process. This board would include people who knew the language and the culture of the region to be registered. Importantly, the offices of *kadı* and *emin* stand out as institutions that supervised each other in order to prevent any injustice. This is evidence of the existence of an inter-institutional inspection and balance mechanism. After the establishment of the committee, everyone who earned income from the soil had to submit all the documents that would prove their permission to receive that income (*berat*, *temessuk* etc). Surely the task of the *emin* was to compare the data contained in the previous book with the current one. If there were any changes, he was required to send it to the center to be recalculated. It was very important to conduct this procedure carefully since the numbers of population and of their income sources were the main elements of these calculations.

The *sipahi* was responsible for the order of the *reaya*, and during the census he had the task of gathering all the ranks in front of the *emin*. Adult men, who were the only taxpayers along the gathered *reaya*, were recorded as married (*müzevvec*) or bachelor (*mücerred*). Sometimes the *sipahi* could change the number of *reaya* in order to collect more tax revenue. As soon as this situation was noticed, the *tımar* that he had in his possession was taken back and its income was recorded in a separate book. It is possible to find some other documents about taxation collected from the non-Muslim part of society; separate *harac* books were kept for such taxes. In addition, the taxes collected under the heading of *avariz* were conveyed to the central authority to calculate the number of households, both taxed and exempted, carefully.

After the recording of the demographic structure came the calculation of the income from the production items in the region, geography being one of the fundamental determinants. While applying *tahrir*, geographical elements such as the climate or aridity of the soil would be taken into account. Thus, the unit prices of items

were always determined in relative terms. In addition, the amount of tax to be taken for which item was determined precisely.

*Tahrir* registers are not merely documents consisting of a few numbers, they also give us some ideas about the flow of life within a society. For example, they contain important information about settlement centers and place names. They can even give clues to the variations over time of names of places having the "*nam-ı diğer*" idiom.<sup>35</sup> Most importantly, they help us to make inferences about the socio-economic structure of a particular region thanks to the data they preserve. If we look at past empires in the regions where the Ottoman Empire was established, we see that the basis of these states depended on "small peasant businesses based on double ox-plow technology."<sup>36</sup>This system operated under different names during the Late Roman Empire through the Byzantine period. During the Ottoman period, it was as an institution which needed conservation by the state.<sup>37</sup>

The aforementioned system in the Ottoman Empire, based on a centralist approach, was named the "*çift-hane*" system<sup>38</sup> by İnalcık. Under this system, the peasant was entrusted with land that he was obliged to cultivate. The regime of *tapu* was a signifier of state control and of the intention to keep the system in a stable order. Thanks to this practice, the centralized structure of the state was able to penetrate the entire empire. Fields where cereal was farmed were known as *miri* land. Since the provisional economy was based on a foundation of grain, especially the cultivation of

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<sup>35</sup> Öz, Mehmet, "Tahrir Defterlerinin Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmalarında Kullanılması Hakkında Bazı Düşünceler", p.438; Gümüşçü, Osman. "Mufassal Tahrir Defterlerinin Türkiye'nin Tarihi Coğrafyası Bakımından Önemi", Türk Tarih Kongresi, p. 1325.

<sup>36</sup> İnalcık, Halil, Ottoman Civilization , p.173

<sup>37</sup> İnalcık, Halil, ibid, p.175

<sup>38</sup> See, İnalcık, An Economic and Social History, p.145. Also see İnalcık, "Çift-hane Sistemi ve Köylünün Vergilendirilmesi", Makaleler II, Doğu Batı (2008); "The Provincial Administration and the Tımar System", The Classical Age, p.104-118.

wheat and barley, the control of the farmland was necessarily very strict. At the same time, however, not every area where peasants could cultivate, was designated as *miri*. Areas like vineyards and gardens were in fact outside the boundaries of *miri* land. If such a rule had not been laid down, control over the working of the fields would have been jeopardized. In order to prevent this situation, laws and regulations were laid out regarding this issue.<sup>39</sup>

*Mezraa* was another part of the system of villages. Lexically speaking, the word, *mezraa* means an arable place where cultivation is possible<sup>40</sup>. In the Ottoman village structure, it signifies the terrain where people previously lived but have now abandoned for various reasons. Yet, it does not mean that the control of the state reached to those places because of their abandoned situation. Also, if we want to regard a place as *mezraa*, it should have some elements such as a water supply, a mosque and a cemetery.

There were various reasons why a village might become a *mezraa*: epidemic diseases, inefficiency of the soil, and the collective abandonment of the cultivation of the soil so as to escape from taxation. Since the peasant knew that there were other areas available for agriculture, he could leave the land and go elsewhere. At this point we can separate the Ottoman soil system from strict European feudalism because the Ottoman state mechanism allowed mobility as long as the conditions between the peasant and the land were convenient. Explanations such as "*haymane, preseleç*", which we can see in the tax registers, reflect the existence of such mobility.

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<sup>39</sup> Inalcık, *Ottoman Civilization*, p. 170-171; Inalcık, "Village, Peasant, and Empire", *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*, p. 142.

<sup>40</sup> Inalcık, *An Economic and Social History*, p.162-167.



The *mezraas*, which were generally recorded as part of the village around them, provided various advantages to the villagers. They could get additional income through the economic activities they carried out in these abandoned lands. Yet when taxation came into play, peasants generally tended to use these lands secretly. Therefore, there were laws that prevented the use of the places without the permission of the Sultan. *Mezraa* were also used as places where a population surplus could be transferred. Alternatively, villagers settled on hillsides, because of safety concerns or engaged in animal husbandry, were able to plant some kind of grains or cereal in the *mezraas*. Hence, they created “satellite villages” over the course of time. As these empty satellites filled up, new villages named with prefixes such as up and down or *dolne-gorne*, but attached to the same village, emerged.<sup>41</sup>

Academic circles are divided into two groups about the motivations of this conquest movement, which lasted nearly two centuries. For the group sharing İnalcık's ideas, the Ottoman progression took its final shape through certain stages. Thanks to a vassalage period followed by the application of *tahrir*, the formation of the institutional structure and the policy of settlement, the struggle of permanent existence led to a process of the Ottomanization, introducing a neat policy to the society.

On the other hand, according to Balkan historiographers often motivated by nationalist ideologies, the Ottoman settlement in the peninsula was similar to the invasion movement of Timur in which the local culture was consciously destroyed. The main reason for this is that they were, like the Mongols, nomadic communities from Western Anatolia. The notion of conquest connoted a devastating battle wave for

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<sup>41</sup> İnalcık, Halil, “Village, Peasant, and Empire”, *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays on Economy and Society*, p. 148.

these nomadic groups. Those who took a new step to geography wiped out local values with constant battles. In this context, Hristo Gandev's article on the situation of Bulgaria in the 15th century offers a good example of the dimensions of this ideological approach.

Before passing on to a criticism of the context of the work, it is useful to pay attention to the tone of the language used by Gandev. His constant reference to “feudal settlement” when speaking of the *timar* system or the emphasis on the word “destruction” are just two examples. The article pursues a discourse that depicts the process of conquest as a destructive movement that did not bring any innovation to the region. Furthermore, conquest was intended to deliberately remove the indigenous population and to replace them with colonists drawn from Anatolia. In the image of pre-Ottoman Bulgaria he seeks to draw, a populous and developed community lives and thrives in a condition of prosperity. The gradual conquest of the Ottomans actually served to destroy this native society. At the very beginning, he argues that the Ottomans could not easily advance in the Balkans because they had difficulty in settling their own people and also faced to the Tatar danger from the east. Hence, the indigenous people could show resistance to the new invaders, which explained why the conquests carried on for such a long time.

Gandev also makes some provocative interpretations of the Ottoman settlement policy in the post-conquest period. First of all, he misunderstands the meaning of *mezraa*. According to him, *mezraas* are the places which had a certain population in advance but have been depopulated by deliberate destruction during Ottoman territorial expansion. According to this definition, *mezraas* became the essential core of the rural settlement instead of villages. However, as we have explained above, the *mezraas* were used only as a field of agricultural activity or as an

area where a population *surplus* could be transferred. Gandev then goes one step further by proposing various mathematical calculations and possible figures in which 280,360 Bulgarians were killed in the sequence of conquest and afterwards, an inherently destructive process he terms "de-Bulgarianization". However, Gandev's picture does not coincide with the politics of the Ottomans because it would have created socio-economic chaos which would have compromised the basic aim of constituting a permanent system in the region.

The process of "de-Bulgarianization" involved the destruction of the local element in the territory by a *sipahi* trying to replace them with people of his own nation religion.<sup>42</sup> But here are two questions. The village formation in the Ottoman lands refers to a complex system in which the Ottoman State a particular population of its nucleus was inhabited and surrounded by a net in which the core stratum could carry out its economic activities. How would it make sense for the state to take the risk that any human power coming from outside into such a working network would reduce the income from the land? Furthermore, newly planted agriculture will require at least three years in order to yield an income. For a *sipahi*, this refers to lost time in which income could have been obtained. Does it seem likely that a *sipahi* would sacrifice years of income simply to effect settlement change in his territory?

Secondly, per capita taxes must be considered<sup>43</sup>. While a *sipahi* collected 22 *akçe* from a Muslim household in that period, the non-Muslim household was supposed to pay 25 *akçe*. According to Gandev's calculation, 56,072 households were the financial equivalent of 1,400,800 *akçe*. When these people are destroyed and

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<sup>42</sup> Hristo, Gandev, *The Bulgarian people during the 15th century : a demographic and ethnographic study*, Sofia: Sofia Press, 1987, p.47.

<sup>43</sup> Machiel, Kiel. "Remarks on the administration of the poll tax (Cizye in the Ottoman Balkans)", *Turco-Bulgarica: Studies On The History, Settlement and Historical Demography of Ottoman Bulgaria*, The Isis Press, 2013, p. 34.

replaced by Muslims, the income is reduced to 1,233,584 *akçe*. In this case, the state would lose 167,216 *akçe*. For a state where rationality and pragmatism were the main motivations, such a loss cannot be explained as a rational policy. Also, the amount of unit tax was not a certain issue because it showed differences from the region to region. As a result, this situation presented by Gandev is an example of an historical impossibility.

In addition to statistical calculations, some archaeological work also proves the impossibility of his groundless claims. Gandev regarded the Ottoman Empire as a demolition machine as the ideological conditions of his time and place required. According to him, the Ottomans aimed at depopulating the settlement in a particular locality. Razgrad, Eski İstanbulluk and Hacıoğlu-Pazardik were such regions losing their signs of life. But what he has missed is that history is, at the same time, progressing with contributions from other sciences. The facts that have emerged in archaeological excavations have helped to reveal the truth.

Gandev's representation of the Razgrad region does not overlap with the actual situation<sup>44</sup>. According to him, the Razgrad region of the Ottoman Empire had been a highly developed center of craft. But the prosperity of the city collapsed with the destruction by the Ottoman Empire. In archaeological excavations, the area that Gandev identified as the ruin of Razgrad was actually a settlement called Arbittus<sup>45</sup>, where life had already ended in the 11th century with the coming of the Pechenegs. The situation in this case shows us that Gandev has distorted events both temporally

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<sup>44</sup> Kiel, Machiel. "Mevlana Neşri and The Towns of Medieval Bulgaria", in *Studies in Ottoman History in honour of V.L. Menagé*, ed. Colin Imber, p.170; "H'razgrad – Hezargrad – Razgrad: The vicissitudes of a Turkish town in Bulgaria" and "Turco-Bulgarica: Studies On The History, Settlement and Historical Demography of Ottoman Bulgaria, The Isis Press, 2013.

<sup>45</sup> In text: the city, Arbittus.

and spatially by making a deliberate shift of 200 years to further his agenda of portraying the Ottoman conquest as destructive.

As a result, when we look at the whole picture, we see a state trying to constitute a unique environment. The Ottoman state-building process was not predicated on the destruction of existing structures, but rather on the continuation of systems that were observed to function properly. The conquest of the lands to in which to settle was marked the first stage. Then, centralization became the emphasis in order to maintain their permanent existence. For this reason, it was a basic aim to provide order within society with new and constructive applications.

The next step was the provision of human power to handle the land owned. But we should not disregard the fact that the local elements were never given short shrift because they became one of the most important elements in a dynamic state building process. In this context, the Ottomans were also looking for ways to use manpower in the most effective way. Crucially, they did not deliberately kill or exile local populations without a satisfactory reason. Bulgaria's fertile lands were a financial resource for the state and as far as the agricultural field capacity allowed, build new settlements was possible. Since each newly-established government structure has its own atmosphere, the slightest imbalance at the front could create chaos. Being aware of all these possibilities, the Ottomans succeeded in turning the scattered structure of the Balkans into a mosaic decorated with cultural colors.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SPACE IN DELIORMAN REGION**

In previous chapter, Ottoman settlement was presented from the perspective of politics, campaigns, and their aftermath which aimed at maintaining their safety and existence in the given region. But, when it comes to a settlement process in already conquered land, many other factors must also be involved. Above all, the human factor along with the distinctive geographic features of a region direct the settlement process to obtain a beneficial output. Hence, human choices were the determining factor about where a group of people would settle. The decision-making process of people is closely associated with finding the proper geography in which to continue their lifestyle. From this perspective, I will try to highlight the most important features related to human settlement after the Ottoman conquest.

### 3.1 People, history and geography

All human societies have been, and still are, dependent on complex, interrelated physical, chemical and bio-chemical processes. These include the energy produced by the sun, the circulation of the elements crucial for life, and the geographical processes that created the factors regulating climatic conditions.

Firstly, the *biosphere* encompasses all of the earth's living organisms and the physical environment with which they interact. In the environment represented by the biosphere, *populations* that comprise groups of individuals of one species emerge. Populations occupying a given area are called a *community*. These three aforementioned notions create an ecosystem and affect each other through processes that comprise a *functional relationship*. As these complex relations require, "every human population, at all times, has needed to evaluate the economic potential of its inhabited area, to organize its life about its natural environment in terms of the skills available to it and the values which it accepts."<sup>46</sup> As a result, human-natural interactions called *succession*, a co-evolutionary process of the physical environment, local climate, flora, fauna and human communities as mutually interacting components, can be observed in the "Mediterranean agro system" as an example of co-evolution spanning millennia.<sup>47</sup>

Because of its living features, the earth, within the frame of functional relationships, provides some elements from which people can benefit at an optimal level for their survival, such as water, sun, and soil. If the nature does not present any of them, the lifestyles of the population groups are shaped accordingly; moreover, this

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<sup>46</sup> Sauer, Carl O. The Agency of Man on the Earth. In Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth, Vol. 1, edited by William L. Thomas Jr., pp.49-69.

<sup>47</sup> Ponting, Clive. A Green History of the World p.21; Redman, Charles. Human Impact on Ancient Environments. p.35-37.; see also Lawrence, Angel J. "Ecology and Population in the Eastern Mediterranean." World Archeology 4 (1972): 88-105.

situation can change the flow of history. For Baker, “geography was not a simply stage, a physical environmental space upon which historical dramas were enacted, and it was also more than a framework of administrative boundaries.”<sup>48</sup> Hence, it can be deduced that this effect can be influential in determining people’s nutrition, modes of dress, settlement patterns, and even, to some extent, their very characteristics.

If we consider the intertwined structure of the relationship between people, history, and geography, it is not surprising that the tendency to link the impact of the geographical element with the people’s attitude towards nature is a very old practice. According to the doctrine of the Hippocratic School of Medicine,<sup>49</sup> human nature and varying physiognomies could be associated with geographical formations like mountains. It supposed that the inhabitants of mountainous, rocky, and well-watered country at a high altitude, where the margin of seasonal climatic variation was wide, would tend to have large and well-built bodies constitutionally adapted for courage and endurance. The idea here is that “climate determines what men’s food shall be, at any rate before extensive commerce has been developed, and whether or not they need work hard for a living.”<sup>50</sup>

### **3.1.1 Water**

Water is the first element required to maintain human life; proximity to water resources and accessibility of water resources have always been the main concerns of mankind and the adventure of accessing sufficient water has also shaped the flow of

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<sup>48</sup>Baker, *Geography and History: bridging the divide*, p.21. For detailed information on the relationship between history and geography, also see Pacione, *Historical Geography: progress and prospect*, London, 1987; Morrissey, *Key Concepts in Historical Geography*, 2014.; Butlin, *Historical Geography: through the gates of space and time*, London, 1993.

<sup>49</sup> Toynbee, Arnold J. *A Study of History*, Vol. 1: Abridgements Volumes I-VI, p.55

<sup>50</sup> Baker, *ibid*, p.17.



history, especially in terms of settlement. Societies can be divided into two groups: settled and nomadic people. Those who could find a place around clean water constitute the first group. Thanks to having an available water supply, sedentary people could meet their basic needs and the needs of their plants and animals. In the course of time, they began to standardize their access to water through canals, dams, and wells.<sup>51</sup> The other group seeking adequate and clean water for their herds of animals represents nomadic life. These groups prefer to wander around the places where their animals could reach efficient water resources. Even so, this wandering was not always done in a uniform way. For example, the nomadic movements of Turks and of Arabs were very distinct from each other. The Turkic groups chose to raise sheep and sometimes camels with two humps managing to climb higher altitudes, but Arabs preferred hooped camels with one hump, much more suitable for desert life.

In Bulgaria, the most important body of water is the Danube River, which flows along the northern border with Romania. In addition to the Danube, there are over five hundred rivers in Bulgaria, most of which flow down from the high mountain peaks. Specifically, in Deliorman region, the rivers, like Lom, flow into the Danube apart from Kamçı River and Provadi River flowing into the Black Sea.<sup>52</sup> In addition to these major ones, the rivers in the region have not large riverbanks because the mountains do not allow such formations.

From the very beginning of human settlement, the Deliorman region was open to people who wanted to settle in a proper place. Archaeological excavations in the past showed that the oldest prehistoric town in Europe was in the Provadia region. The discovery is also the most up-to-date evidence of how appropriate the region is for

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<sup>51</sup> Redman,63.

<sup>52</sup> In text: the rivers of the region

human settlement.<sup>53</sup> Besides the evidence presented by archaeological studies, there were some other civilizations using the area for establishing vibrant societies. Around the Danube, small settlements were established during Greek and Roman times.

Another indication of Deliorman region's capacity in terms of water resource is the flora of the region. The forests in the region are dominated by oak and beech trees.<sup>54</sup> Such trees can only be found in the place where there is a plentiful water supply. They can reach water sources with their roots that have managed to land at the very deepest layers of the underground. By conserving water underground, these trees keep the biospheric order based on water supply alive. Their root systems also prevents fertile soils on the slopes from eroding.

The position of people against natural conditions can be observed in the region of Dobrudzha, which is located to the north-east of Deliorman. In this area, clean water sources are buried deep below the soil, and people have always looked for ways to reach that water. Water wells are the only way to reach this water, which is an obstacle for agriculture. Hence, if we look at the density of settlement we can see that this area has less density than Deliorman region. It is possible to find an example of adaptation to the natural conditions in the region in the characteristics of bridges built. Unlike Dobrudzha, where water was abundant, the bridge was built high in the form of a donkey-back to resist sudden floods.<sup>55</sup>

Although the region we have referred to is geographically named Deliorman, it belongs to the place known as Danubian Bulgaria. That the Danube also refers to this northern part of Bulgaria shows the parallels between the flow of water and the

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<sup>53</sup>“Europe's 'oldest prehistoric town' unearthed in Bulgaria”. *BBC*. October 31, 2012. Accessed November 20,2017. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-2015668>

<sup>54</sup>In text: the flora of the region.

<sup>55</sup> Braudel, *ibid*, p.25.

flow of history. Before the Bulgars migrated to the Danube region, they lived around the Volga river. Even after the Bulgars were divided into two, the other branch was called the Volga Bulgars, again referencing a water source. If one concentrates on the Danube region, one can conclude that the Danube river is a key for the Bulgarians to reach new areas. The most remarkable anecdote for this is that the Bulgars took advantage of the freezing of the Danube to cross into modern Bulgaria, i.e. the lower region of the Danube. In AD 559, their chief, Zabergan, crossed the frozen Danube and attacked Constantinople.<sup>56</sup> After this date other groups with Turkic origin, the Qipchaks, would settle in this area with heavy migration.

### **3.1.2. Soil**

Water and soil work together to determine human settlement. Water, perhaps, was evidence of the movement of the human being with its fluidity. Yet, earth symbolized how man attached himself to a land as an agent of the history-making process. He would use land first as a safety sanction and then as a remedy for his hunger. In that way, he would in fact become a part of the *longue-durée* concept because it would take a long time for a person who was in the process of domestication and adaptation to decide what to eat before passing on to mass production.

As with water, the style of land usage also divides people into two groups, agriculturists as opposed to groups interested in animal husbandry. People who succeeded in obtaining crops from a certain piece of land continued their life on as farmers. On the other hand, for the group whose main interest is livestock, there is no

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<sup>56</sup> John Moorhead, *Justinian*, Routledge, 1994, p. 150; John H., Rosser, *Historical Dictionary of Byzantium*, Scarecrow Press, 2001, p.507; Holmes F., Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His place in History and Thought*, Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1905, p.36.

meaning in processing the land, choosing the appropriate seed, or waiting for certain seasons to cultivate. The only important thing for this group was to find grazing areas for their animals. Also, the topographical relief of a given area is decisive for groups whose lifestyle was based on walking through long distances. All of this means that when there was no efficient area to graze, they would simply move again to find new places.

The process of production, as carried out by an settled and agrarian society, was characterized by the interaction between the seed and the soil. In ancient times, people struggled to realize which seeds were suitable for the soil, and they noticed that seeds would not achieve the same efficiency in different kinds of soils.<sup>57</sup> The deduction of ancient people has been supported by current studies on the formation and distribution of different kinds of soil on the activities of the people. As demonstrated by these studies<sup>58</sup>, the parent material<sup>59</sup> of soil and a suitable climate are the two crucial requirements.

When the conditions, mentioned above, are satisfied, a systematic mechanism of soil processing occurs. This mechanism brings about a process involving human beings. The archaeological literature presents the food system approach. LaBianca describes this system as follows, "A food system is a dynamic and complex unity consisting of all the purposive, patterned and interdependent symbolic and instrumental activities carried out by people in order to procure, process, distribute, store, prepare, consume, metabolize and dispose of food."<sup>60</sup> If we take all these steps

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<sup>57</sup> Semple, *ibid*, p. 355

<sup>58</sup> Bergman, *ibid*, p. 34-35.

<sup>59</sup> Basic component of soil.

<sup>60</sup> Øystein S, LaBianca, "Daily Life in the Shadow of Empire", in *A Historical Archaeology of the Ottoman Empire*, Kluwer Academic, 2010, p. 205.

in turn, we can understand this approach automatically shows how people use rural areas to get food.

Soil does not only meet the nutritional needs of humans, it also has an important place in the culture-building process. Since the products taken from the same type of soil are not necessarily the same in each region, there are distinctions in the food culture of the people from the beginning. For instance, in regions where wheat production is abundant, the diet of people includes bread and its derivations. As a person goes towards more northern regions, he can easily observe the differences in the quality of wheat and also the substitutions for wheat such as rye<sup>61</sup>, which can be regarded as an effect of geography on people's life in terms of diet.

The Deliorman region is located in the Ludogorie-Dobrudza uplift subzone.<sup>62</sup> In this region, the major soil type is chernozem which is the most suitable and finest agricultural soil.<sup>63</sup> Chernozem soil has thick dark mineral horizons with high rates of accumulation of organic substances, characterized by high base saturation (> 85%) and a remarkable structure consisting entirely of valuable stable aggregates.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, the soil formation in this region includes Sarmatian limestone as well as lower Cretaceous and Maastrichtian limestone, all of which show the karstic composition of the soil.<sup>65</sup> In this soil type -calcerous chernozem- rich in terms of humus, a farmer can grow the products such as wheat, peach, almond, walnut and tobacco.

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<sup>61</sup> Bergman, *ibid*, p. 20.

<sup>62</sup> In text: the geological zone of the region

<sup>63</sup> In text: the agro-climatic resources

<sup>64</sup> Shishkov T., Kolev N, "Major Soil Types in Bulgaria", *The Soils of Bulgaria*. World Soils Book Series, Springer, 2004

<sup>65</sup> In text: the soil composition of the region.

The characteristics of the soil has made the region a grain store from ancient times to the present. During the period of the Second Bulgarian State, the region was an important wheat exporter to the Byzantine Empire.<sup>66</sup> In fact, agricultural activities in this region arranged the flow of historical events. The brothers Peter and Asen planned to attack Isaac and Alexios Angelos. They wanted to establish an alliance with the Kumanites to stand against the Byzantines, but they had to wait until August. August was quite symbolic here because it was the month when the corn harvest was done.<sup>67</sup> Since the importance of corn for Byzantium was so great, these two groups thought of looting Byzantium corn.

### **3.1.3 Climate**

Climate is the most important factor for people who have found sufficient amount of water and adequate soil to benefit from agricultural activity. They can only produce meaningful yields from the soil when the climate cooperates. Also, the yield is becoming a part of the process of creating a culture in the long term, even though it is the agent that sustains the people. In addition to the yield from the soil, the climate is an element that can easily penetrate other areas of human life. From clothing to housing type to dietary habits, the effects of the climate are inseparable from the daily routines of life.

In moist climates, a plant will maximize the surface area of its leaves to favor sunlight absorption, while plants in arid areas may instead minimize surface area to

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<sup>66</sup> Fine, J, *The Late Medieval Balkans, A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*, p. 230; "Imago Mundi by Honorius Augustodunensis" in LIBI, vol. III, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia, p. 66

<sup>67</sup> Zlatarski, V.N., *Istorija na bulgarskata drzava prez srednšte vekove, I-III qtd* in Vasary, Istvan, *Cuman and Tatars*, p. 42.

conserve water.<sup>68</sup> In the Mediterranean climate, both winter rains and summer droughts are prominent features. Because of the uncertain duration and intensity of the long summer drought, Mediterranean farmers have to be prepared for inadequate rainfalls from time to time.<sup>69</sup> Climatic characteristics also affect the size of settlements. The longer the summer drought and the dryer the land, as found in the semi-arid east and south of the basin, the sparser settlements were seen in the villages in general.<sup>70</sup> When it comes to the biome, the trees are primarily broadleaf evergreens whose small and waxy leaves retain water during the dry season along with their deep roots. This plant cover is exposed to the late summer heat waves and then to winter floods.<sup>71</sup>

In the light of this general knowledge of the Mediterranean climate, it is quite possible to make inferences about the impact of this climate on agricultural activity. Above all, the diversity of the four seasons seen in the Mediterranean climate is reflected in the variety of production. In the four seasonal climatic scheme, there is a proper time for each crops to be planted in the soil because early or late planting can cause crop losses. There is an expression in the time of Theophrastus, a Greek plant biologist which says, “The season produces the crop, not the soil”.<sup>72</sup> For instance, wheat must be sown in late September and not harvested until the summer season because it needs to aspirate the melting snow water during winter and then to be exposed to summer heat to be ripen. If farmers disregard the cycle, the crop will become unripe and they have to face some intestinal problems if they try to consume it.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Redman, 87.

<sup>69</sup> Semple, 377.

<sup>70</sup> Semple, 539-40.

<sup>71</sup> Bergman, 30

<sup>72</sup> Semple, 92.

<sup>73</sup> Machiel Kiel, Kiel, Machiel. “IZLADI / Zlatitsa. Population Changes. Colonisation and Islamisation in a Bulgarian Mountain Canton. 15th – 19th Centuries”. The Isis Press. 2013, p. 210.

The Deliorman-Dobrudza region is located in a zone where the transitional continental climatic condition is dominant.<sup>74</sup> In this district, moderately cold winters, warm summers, two precipitation maximums (fall and spring) and two precipitation minimums (summer and winter) can be observed.<sup>75</sup> Thanks to the aforementioned pattern, the length of rivers in the Dobrudzha region are smaller due to their irregular regime. This situation affects the density of settlement. Most settlements have been clustered in Deliorman region due to this disorder caused by the climate. In addition, irregular precipitation has formed large grasslands in the region. This has been highly influential in the formation of nomadic life in the region.

Besides the effect of the regional climate on the soil structure, there is a very important effect on the human body as well. This can be scientifically explained with the term human thermal comfort.<sup>76</sup> “The condition when under certain weather and climatic circumstances the thermo-regulatory mechanism of the human body is either idle or under minimum tension is defined as thermal comfort.” Any deficiency in this thermo-regulatory mechanism can cause the discrepancy a person cannot bear. However, there is always a chance to occur any unbalanced situation because of variability of environmental phenomenon. At this point, though, what is important is the equation between human thermal content and environmental issues; people can not always have the optimum level of comfort.

Due to the delicate situation of climate, in terms of thermal comfort, in the summer, margins can be categorized as cool, moderately warm, warm, and very warm; in the winter, as very cold, cold, cool, and very cool. In Deliorman-Dobrudzha region, the margin of thermal comfort, for the summer is between moderately warm and warm

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<sup>74</sup> In text: the climatic zone of the region

<sup>75</sup> In text: the annual precipitation in the region

<sup>76</sup> In text: the temperature of human thermal comfort in January and July.



and, for the winter months, between cold and cool. These margins demonstrate that along with the water and soil, the area is very suitable for human settlement in terms of climatic conditions.

In historical anecdotes, the climatic impact on body strength is a recurring detail. During the Byzantine times, the Bulgarian state could not manage to establish any alliance with the Cumans. The reason was the unwillingness of the Cumans to participate in a battle in the summer. In my opinion, being used to living in harsh conditions created by cold weather, the Cumans did not choose to join a battle when the heat was excessive for their accustomed body temperature. Another anecdote further supports my claim. In 1205, after the holiday of Pentecost,<sup>77</sup> Kaloyan could not prevent the Cumans from going back to their pasture, in the north of Danube, because they could not tolerate the summer heat in the Balkans.

### **3.1.4 Mountains**

Along with water sources, soil, and climate, mountains are also one of the determinants in terms of the preference of settlement place. Trying to survive against natural conditions, people have to base their decisions on the chances of survival. Because mountains can offer greater security people often prefer to live near to them.

Since their cover consists of forests that attract more precipitation than that of plains, mountains can be regarded as a kind of water source. Moreover, precipitation in the mountains can be so heavy that excess rainfall must be conveyed to plains, extensions of mountains, where there is thus an urgent need to build architectural

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<sup>77</sup> Vasary, 64.

elements such as dams or bridges to reach a balanced water level between the two geographical regions.<sup>78</sup> Having dense plant cover and a biological complex based on heavy precipitation attraction, mountains enable people to maintain some economical activities.<sup>79</sup> For instance, they satisfy the needs of nomadic life through vast grazing areas. Or, people can keep bees because of the fertile flora of the mountains.

Throughout history, a general decline in the density of forests can be observed. The practice of deforestation can be linked to various causes. In the initial settlements, the reason is associated with obtaining firewood. In the following periods, economic concerns come into play and forests are cut down to open new areas for grazing animals. The main reason why people cut down the trees is that taller trees absorb the sunlight before it reaches the ground and so the layer of grass remains smaller due to the continuous lack of sunlight. As this situation becomes a problem for the people dealing with animal husbandry, some trees must be cut to enhance the layer of grass. However, the existence of deforested areas is not always related to the economic activities. People sometimes cut trees to use them in fabrication of ceramics or as firewood for domestic work.<sup>80</sup>

Like other geographical formations like the sea or the desert, mountains constitute a natural boundary. While on the one hand they determine the upper level of settlement range via their height, they also turn into an environmental boundary which can keep foreign influence out. This boundary at the same time affects the cultural behavior of societies. Since settlements are expected to have scattered features

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<sup>78</sup> Braudel, 25.

<sup>79</sup> Febvre, 192.

<sup>80</sup> Baker, 87-88; Redman 85; Braudel, 18. Also see Evrendilek, et al. "Changes in Soil Organic Carbon and Other Physical Soil Properties Along Adjacent Mediterranean Forest, Grassland, and Cropland Ecosystems in Turkey." *Journal of Arid Environments* 59 (2004): 743-52.; Munaut, "the Mediterranean Area." in *Climate from Tree Rings*, edited by M. Hughes. Cambridge, 1982.

thanks to the natural conditions in mountainous areas, the existence of locally organized societies is a prevalent phenomenon in the mountains instead of the larger masses made possible in the plains. In linguistic cases, people living in mountainous areas often keep their languages isolated. The languages spoken in the mountainous areas where people cannot spread widely have a lot of dialects which change over relatively short distances. In addition to their effects on linguistic variation, mountains have influence over the formation of political environments of societies. In mountainous areas, a political system gaining wide acceptance can not be seen because of scattered settlements preventing people from developing a collective conscious over a large area. For this reason, in this societies that have to continue more isolated lives, the characteristics like being resistant and enduring harsh climatic conditions can be seen.<sup>81</sup>

It is obvious that mountains are also sometimes the bridges which support the interaction between nature and people. Affecting the settlement behavior of people physically and culturally, mountains are one of the geographical elements that usually set the boundaries. However, people have not remained in a desperate situation against the natural conditions. They create new adaptations by modifying the features of the landscape according to their needs. The conclusion deduced from this bilateral relation between nature and people is that people do not keep silent against the requirements of the space, and that people try to exceed the limits of the place where they want to survive.

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<sup>81</sup> For Greek example see Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey From the Sixth to the late Twelfth Century*; for political organizations in scattered areas, see Hupchick, *the Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism*, New York; Braudel, 18, for Armenian example.

Mountains, as geographical limiters, have a direct influence on people in the selection of the settlement place.<sup>82</sup> In Deliorman and its surroundings, which we have studied, and in Northeastern Bulgaria in general, people had to follow the roads of the mountain ranges, and settlements in these region could be established only where these ranges enabled them to settle.<sup>83</sup> The groups coming from the Caucasus entered Bulgaria only from the places where the Carpathians allowed them to pass. The first settlements in northern Bulgaria were founded between the two mountain ranges, the eastern Carpathian and the Balkan ranges.

In Deliorman region, the fact that the plant cover in the mountains is covered with oak and beech trees<sup>84</sup> in general is due to the favorable condition of the water resources as previously mentioned. If we consider this as a cycle, the fact that the forests have large leaves in the region is proof that the forests are heavily exposed to rainfall. In areas not having full sunlight due to tall trees, grasslands are also quite large. Because of the large grasslands, it is natural that people have been more interested in animal husbandry in this area.

In the mountainous region of Deliorman, dense forests dominate the plant cover. Although this cover provides a favorable environment for nomadic life, it can not fully meet the requirements of settled life. In this region, the transition to sedentary life was only possible by opening new lands. As seen in the altitudes of the Mediterranean basin, people in Deliorman region also applied to deforestation to settle here. Cases of this necessity for the Balkan geography of the Ottoman world are seen in the revival of the environment in which the dervishes were exposed to the land.

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<sup>82</sup> Semple, 265-266.

<sup>83</sup> In text: the hypsometric structure of the region

<sup>84</sup> For detailed information on the importance of oak-growing range, see Faruk Tabak, *The Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550-1870: A Geohistorical Approach*, The John Hopkins University Press, 2008.; I.G.Simmons, *Environmental History: A Concise Introduction*, Blackwell, 1993.

Since it is very difficult to establish a residential life around here, dervishes who built an order in these lands were allowed to establish various institutions.<sup>85</sup> Thus, the Ottomans could later penetrate these regions and create institutional and cultural integration.

In the course of settlement history, human groups have tried to find a suitable place to maintain their survival in a secure way. It is possible that this quest trained them about how to face with the difficulties brought about by the natural conditions. Actually, the reason for this search was that living conditions did not overlap in certain places with the existing natural conditions. There were two options on the table: nomadic or settled. Yet, it is essential for each group to find the environment that will appeal to their own lifestyle. Since the basic needs of mankind did not change, no matter which group they were in, the problems of people in a given area would be more or less similar. What kind of solution would they produce if these groups mentioned had difficulty in finding the appropriate environment for themselves? How functional the solution would they find? On this point, some theories have offered some options about the motivations behind the decision-making processes that made life easier for both groups.

### **3.2 The Natural Challenge and the Response of the Societies**

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<sup>85</sup> Barkan, Ömer Lütfi. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bir İskân ve Kolonizasyon Metodu Olarak Vakıflar ve Temlikler I: İstilâ Devirlerinin Kolonizatör Türk Dervişleri ve Zâviyeler." *Vakıflar Dergisi*, 2 (1942): 279-386; Braudel, *ibid*, p. 18.

Unlike other thinkers<sup>86</sup>, Toynbee's Challenge-Response theory<sup>87</sup>, rejected the idea that environmental factors were the only thing that shaped human life. According to him, human beings did not live in a deterministic struggle against environmental factors. On the contrary, the relationship between the environment and human beings included a mutual mechanism carried out around the axis of difficulty-resistance. Indeed, this resistance created the accumulation of the culture throughout the history of civilization. Therefore, in this section, I will try to explain the events around the frame of challenge and response theory because, in my opinion, a determinist approach is not efficient to satisfy our need to answer some concerns like the motivation behind human actions to create a suitable world.

### **3.2.1 The impact of environmental conditions on human development**

In terms of environmental relations, environmental history is very beneficial for the comprehension of human progress interwoven with natural conditions. Methodologically, its main interest is the interpretation of ecological analysis as a means of understanding human history. It examines “the mutual effects that other species, natural forces, and cycles have on humans, and the actions of humans that affect the web of connections with non-human organisms and entities”<sup>88</sup> If we take into account this bilateral relation between human and environment, it is very wrong to say that they are two separate elements existing on the earth.

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<sup>86</sup> During the years between 1750-1900, the dominant idea was based on environmental determinism put forward by Kant, Ratzel, Rittel and Humboldt. In this deterministic approach, human groups were in a desparate condition against natural challenges. After 1920s, environmental determinism was replaced by possibilism advocating that natural conditions are not the only factor affecting the human psychology.

<sup>87</sup> Toynbee, A Study of History, p.350.

<sup>88</sup> Hughes, *ibid*, p.4.

During the period of the ancient Greeks, people believed that physical environment has a huge role on determining their way of living, or of culture-making process. The variation of different kind of lifestyles was identified with the level at which people exploited nature for their own interests. In this context, it is very acceptable that people living close to seas were interested in fishery and that the lifestyle of these people was different from the cowboys in the grazing areas of the plains.<sup>89</sup> Likewise, the practice of stock-raising came to exist when people started to use grassy places to feed their animals.<sup>90</sup> In the places not having the necessary elements to settle, people could manage the natural formations for their benefit rather than bowing to their fate.

In the human-environment relationship, adaptation is a key concept because it is a kind of response to nature. During the adaptation process, some factors, like climate or the structure of landscape, have a principal role. Bearing in mind this fact, we can interpret Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* as a guide to how people adapted themselves to the natural conditions, from anatomical features<sup>91</sup> to psychological states, in different parts of the world. He divided the earth into seven sections according to geographical structure in different regions. Each section has its own unique characteristics describing the native people of the area. In this categorization, Turks and Slavs (*Saqalibe*) belong to the sixth and seventh section in which he describes the characteristics of a society that has to show some endeavor to maintain

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<sup>89</sup> Bergman, *ibid*, p.47.

<sup>90</sup> Semple, *ibid*, p.297.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn Khaldun narrated from Avicenna's statement suggesting the thickness of the epidermis is affected by climatic conditions.

their life.<sup>92</sup> Also, Febvre saw the characteristic of the Turks as a formation shaped by geographical ups and downs or “a kind of hot and cold shower of fate”<sup>93</sup>.

In addition to the climatic conditions, the relief structure of the regions is an influence that has an influence on settlements. In mountainous areas, the settlement pattern is shaped by the characteristics of "fragmented human settlement among the scattered lowlands and highland plateaus".<sup>94</sup> This situation created groups with some unique characteristics. It is evident that mountainous areas have always been culturally conservative areas that are not very exposed to external influences. Such conservative structures are not limited to the cultural perception alone. Rugged regions, often geographically difficult to overcome, have also served as a shelter for people who have managed to survive within them.<sup>95</sup> The mountain acts as a protective wall between people and the outside world. However, the groups do not comply with the difficult conditions of geography or climate, but they manage to create cultures that persisted in such areas.

From the very beginning, the motivation of obtaining food to survive has been the main driving force for human groups. They were either going to collect or harvest. This basic distinction also influenced the settlement pattern. For the group dealing with livestock, the importance of mobility was the preliminary for establishing that the seasonal cycle can be followed easily for those who are engaged in the land. But this distinction has also created a mechanism that will complement each other rather than a form of life in which people will live in isolated life.

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<sup>92</sup> Khaldun, *ibid*, p.261.

<sup>93</sup> Febvre, *ibid*, p. 276-285.

<sup>94</sup> Hupchick, p.8.

<sup>95</sup> See Albanian case in Braudel' s work, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, p.23.



### 3.2.2. Settlement Patterns

#### i. Nomadism

A nomadic lifestyle is composed of three key concepts: people, animals, and their movement. Whether compelled or ravaged, peoples have been forced to change their places and sometimes even their settlement patterns. For instance, some of the Transcaspian oasis-cultivators preferred to change their habitat rather than abandon their habits because of a climatic challenge causing the increase in severity through desiccation.<sup>96</sup> The nomadic society including the human shepherds, their animal auxiliaries, and their cattle<sup>97</sup>, had to find the necessary supplies to feed themselves and their animals. Because men did not create artificial meadows or establish reserves of forage, they were bound to move their flocks, and themselves with them, in search of provision. Nomadism was thus the natural result of cattle-raising.<sup>98</sup>

The seeking for pasturages for the animals constitutes the main purpose of the nomadic life. The movement of the nomad, based on meeting the need of his cattle, lacks a deliberate intention owing to the fact that he responds mechanically to forces beyond his control<sup>99</sup> as the response mechanism requires. In addition, the nomad must decide which animal fits within which climate and geographical structure. In Mediterranean case, the nomadic people usually prefer to sheep and goats. This preference has two reasons. Firstly, these are the most suitable animals for the available pasturage. Secondly, their small size can be an advantage in iceless homes

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<sup>96</sup> Toynbee, *ibid*, p.168

<sup>97</sup> Toynbee, *ibid*, p.181, Jordan-Bychkov, *ibid*, p.99.

<sup>98</sup> Febvre, *ibid*, p.265

<sup>99</sup> Toynbee, *ibid*, p.169.

and in a region where the winter cold rarely sufficed to freeze meat.<sup>100</sup> The response of the nomad was not limited with their preference about the animals. The conditions of the nomadic life also caused him to form a military force to protect themselves from attacks or robbery of their neighbors.<sup>101</sup>

The nomadic lifestyle could be one of several ways of transhumant movement such as normal, inverse and mixed ones. In the normal way, shepherds from the lowlands begin to leave there for stock raising, which provides only the space for grazing. In the inverse type, shepherds come down from the highlands in winter to find market for themselves. In the mixed type, winter and summer transhumance can be observed at the same time. The transhumance seen in Mediterranean region is a vertical movement from the winter pastures to the summer pastures.<sup>102</sup>

One of the things that can be evaluated in response attitude is how to find the areas where transhumance movement can be done. In this process, modification is very significant to explain how people get new areas for them and their animals. As the number of the sheep in the flock increased, groups interested in husbandry started to move towards high altitudes, which gave them access to new areas for their flocks. Already the mountain geography, and its concomitant effect on the life of its inhabitants, has become a part of the economic system. The transhumance movement was a high plain with mountainous regions only pastures before they acquired an established identity.<sup>103</sup>

The Deliorman region, which is rich in terms of mountains, is an area where the needs of nomadic life can be met. For this purpose, the Turkic groups, coming from

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<sup>100</sup> Semple, *ibid*, p.303.

<sup>101</sup> Febvre, *ibid*, p.275.

<sup>102</sup> Braudel, *ibid*, p.85-86.

<sup>103</sup> Tabak, *ibid*, p.274.

the east, introduced the two humped Bactrian camel to the region during their journey to the west. This species was very suitable for the harsh conditions and rough geographical formations and adopted the practice of transhumance easily. In the yearly movements of summer and winter, even the path followed by shepherds was predetermined in order not to cause any harm to the farm, a part of settled society. In fact, thanks to this movement, which was accomplished twice a year, there were even some social and cultural exchanges between the nomads and the settlers. In this sense, nomadic life was a complementary element to the settled life. Whereas nomads get their food, based on crops, from the peasants, the farmers in turn took fertilizer from the animals of the nomadic groups. Similarly, some crops were carried by mobile groups to the uplifts of the plains. This is why olive trees were seen even at an elevation of 1100 m.<sup>104</sup>

## **ii. Sedentarization**

With the transition to agricultural society, the nomadic population was sometimes transferred to the settled societies. Agriculturalists used this practice to transform their environment with their needs. Within this context, the transformation and, accordingly, modification was another dimension of the response theory. While living in harsh conditions, in the sedentary life, the settlers of sedentary, learned to use land and created a lighter and more orderly life.<sup>105</sup> The change in the life of this nomadic population has actually been shaped by the circumstances in which these natural conditions are presented to these societies. The first settlers on the Danube had to clean up the area and abandoned to use it later. They cut down oak trees for this

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<sup>104</sup> Tabak, *ibid*, p.269.

<sup>105</sup> Redman, *ibid*, p. 56-57.

cleaning process, and as the trees were cut, the grass, formerly deprived of sunlight,<sup>106</sup> became a prominent element in the geographical landscape. It was thus easier for the people of the region to distinguish edible grains among the weeds.<sup>107</sup>

As in the case of the Deliorman region, one of the most important significant practices was the domestication of the plants. For communities which had control over their food resources, it was not a difficult job to increase in number or expand geographically. In this respect, rather than the transitional settlements of the nomads, the village networks developed their own unique identities. Again, in the villages, the interaction between peasants and nomads became a necessity for cultivation. In order to maximize agricultural production, it was necessary to utilize animal wastes as fertilizers. Therefore, the needs of the zoo-botanical construction in the primarily settled area, like village, must have been a satisfactory basis. However, the sufficiency of this structure was not enough to solve all the problems, because at the same time accessibility was also important.<sup>108</sup> As long as these two factors could be obtained, settled people can cope with the natural challenges in a reasonable way.

Since in the Balkan geography vital resources are accessible, people in these regions have to open new agricultural areas with a responsive approach to nature. Otherwise, they could jeopardize their permanence in the region. On this point, Toynbee refers to the Avars, who ruled the Slavs for only 50 years. According to him, their greatest fault was that they did not intend to find a lasting place to settle in. He also described the Avars as the shepherds who came to the cultivated areas from the steppe, and they disappeared because they could not provide the necessary adaptation

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<sup>106</sup> in "Mountains" part, it has been mentioned how dense forests influence pastures when they deprive of sunlight.

<sup>107</sup> Russell, *ibid*, p.40.

<sup>108</sup> Febvre, *ibid*, p.188.

to the region.<sup>109</sup> Although his idea of the Avars as shepherds is open to debate, it is true that the Avars preferred to establish only loose relations to settled life.

Continual agricultural activity is mainly concentrated on specific plants. Braudel describes these plants as "civilization plants". According to him, wheat, rice and corn are the three most important. These plants are effective in the formation of a unique culture in the areas where they are extensively cultivated. For this reason, in the absence of bread production in the Far East countries, rice became the main grain. On the other hand, in the Balkan geography, one of the wheat storehouses of the world, various breads can be found. As such, this situation can illuminate how agriculture shapes the culture of eating and drinking.

In the Balkan geography, wheat is the dominant crop. Its cultivation requires a process that the zoo-botanical necessities of settled life, drawn by Febvre, to be satisfied. For wheat agriculture, in addition to seeds and geographical availability, animal power and fertilizer were utilized. Wheat, with a high nutritional value, was mainly used for making bread. However, other grains such as barley and oats, were planted as alternatives to wheat. Barley was a particularly important grain during the war periods, especially since horses were fed by barley.<sup>110</sup> Besides barley and oats, rye was brought to the region after the fifth century invasions. Then, rye also became an alternative in the three-field system when wheat was not cultivated.

The introduction of rice to the region was much different than that of the wheat. The Turks who settled in the Balkans by migrating from Central Asia, carried along rice with them. What the Turks did at this point was not only to introduce rice to the Balkans, but also to convey a unique culture by transporting an agricultural plant. At

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<sup>109</sup> Toynbee, *ibid*, p.173.

<sup>110</sup> Braudel, *ibid*, p.238.

this point it can be observed that "civilization plants" may be part of the culture-building process in another geography, not just in the geography where they are grown. The Turks living in the Balkans made rice an important crop in agriculture along with the wheat. It is also possible to find groups cultivating rice under the heading of rice-growers (çeltükçüler) in tax surveys.

As a result, it can be deduced that physical environment has an impact on many aspects of the life and on the flow of history. Mankind, affected by geographical phenomenon, has make their decisions in terms of settlement by taking into account the natural conditions. Therefore, it is possible to see certain communities having different functional relationships with their own habitat. Accordingly, in the next chapter, these relationships will be tried to analyse within the context of Ottoman settlement in the Balkans, specifically in Deliorman region.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### OTTOMAN SETTLEMENT IN DELIORMAN REGION

#### 4.1 Settlement in the Rural Regions of Deliorman: Continuity and Change

The village structure constitutes the lowest layer of the hierarchical order of settlement. The main function of villages is of course to shelter to their inhabitants and to provide an appropriate area for economic activities. At first sight, it is not wrong to think that a structure, having these functions, is shaped around simple relations. However, village life includes a unique network among the groups, closed to any oversimplification.<sup>111</sup> This is why, over time, villages have become the centers where different groups engage in different socio-economic activities.

It is unlikely that villages, which have complex and peculiar features, follow a uniform line of settlement patterns. The population they possess and the ecological

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<sup>111</sup>Grossman, *Rural Process-Pattern Relationships*, Praeger, 1992, p.1-2. On the issue of village formations, see also Geertz, Clifford. "Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective", pp. 167–234 in Geertz *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*, NY: Basic Books. 1983.; Callmer, Johan. "The Process of Village Formation." *Ecological Bulletins*, no. 41 (1991): 337-49.; Cameron, Catherine M., and Andrew I. Duff. "History and Process in Village Formation: Context and Contrasts from the Northern Southwest." *American Antiquity* 73, no. 1 (2008): 29-57.; In the Ottoman context, comp., Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Tarihi Demografi Araştırmaları ve Osmanlı Tarihi". *Türkiyat Mecmuası* X, 1953, p. 1-26; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Osmanlı Şehirleri ve Kırsal Hayatı*, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2006.

characteristics of the area are important determinants of settlement type and distribution. Without creating a strict and specific classification, the main headings of settlement patterns are generally: scattered ones, hamlets and villages in rural settlements.<sup>112</sup> The hamlets and villages affected by geographical features were the main actors creating special patterns in the Ottoman settlement by presenting advantages or disadvantages. It is important here is to understand the paths followed by the yürük groups to reach the areas where they established yürük villages.

In rural settlements, especially villages, there are different models on the process of the formation of a certain pattern. Hudson has introduced a three-stage process model<sup>113</sup>. In the first step colonization is done and no certain pattern formation is observed. As settlement accelerates in the second phase with developing density, some clusters start to be seen. In the last stage, due to the increased intensity of settlement, a lack of place to settle and of resources arises. Hence, the boundaries of the clusters of the second stage are narrowed. As a result, the density in the settlement area is reduced so that a constant structure can be formed which will form the actual pattern. As such, this pattern overlaps with the beehive metaphor that Braudel used to refer to mountain life.<sup>114</sup>

We can also refer to the diffusion model as presented in Grossman's work. According to this model, the colonization of a settlement depends not on developments but on long-term conquests and subsequent adaptations. Even the places that are settled are not completely empty spaces, but are rather places that have been remained from earlier times. The mission of the colonizing power is to cluster rural settlements that

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<sup>112</sup> See, Bedriye Tolun-Denker. Yerleşme Coğrafyası. İ.Ü. Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları,1977.

<sup>113</sup> Hudson's village model, coined in 1970s, is a geographical *model* of United Kingdom villages which shows the development of *rural settlement* patterns in villages over time.

<sup>114</sup> Braudel, *ibid*, p.44.



initially formed in a scattered structure. This model, outlined in general terms, stands out in relation to the other models, as it suggests that settlements occur as a result of gradual conquests and only in proper places not touched upon by the previous settlement.<sup>115</sup>

In the Ottoman context, these two models of village formation are very helpful in understanding the events in the region. After a long conquest period, different groups migrated to the Balkans as agriculturalists or nomads. They established villages as the nuclei of their settlement. Demographic variations could be observed because within a village groups had different professions to earn their livelihood. Hence, in some villages, both nomadic *yağcıs* (butter-producers) or *ellicis* and agriculturalists lived in the same environmental space. The newcomers had to find a place that did not affect the previous settlement network and socio-economic structure. However, the main problem is that sufficient cadastral sources do not exist and so it is hard to reach any concrete conclusion about the real population numbers during the fifteenth century. Therefore, sixteenth century sources must be used in this research if the settlement process is to be examined.

In Deliorman region with its diversity of both religion and profession, the Ottomans preferred not to force any settlement in order to continue the working mechanisms of the local economy. Hence, the pre-Ottoman settlement areas remained as they were. According to a register dated 1579, 51 of 122 names of the villages in the Çernovi district are found as their original form. Among them were non-Muslim names like Maruten, Pirgoz, Batin, and Boziçene. One of the most interesting of these non-Muslim villages is the Taban village, which was located along the bank of the

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<sup>115</sup> Grossman, *ibid*, p.3

Danube. The traces of settlement in this village extend all the way back to prehistoric times, and Thracian and Gothic layers can also be seen.<sup>116</sup> If the time interval from the ancient times to 1579 is taken into account, the deliberate effort of the Ottomans not to destroy the old settlement patterns in the region is apparent.

This situation was no different in Hezargrad province, south of Çernovi. In fact, this is a region where the controversial ideas about the Ottoman the settlement of Rumelia as mentioned in the second chapter took place. The Ottomans are occasionally accused by nationalist historians of purposefully changing the local population in the establishment of the Hezargrad region.<sup>117</sup> However, according to our evidence, this region had 197 villages as a result of the numerical figures presented by the last tax-register. Among these 197 villages, 40 villages had non-Muslim names reflecting their existence before the Ottomans like Palamarice, Virbofka, Krivine, Istrajice.

We can achieve similar results by following the same method in the Şumnu district. However, apart from the other two districts, we see that the effect of the geographical relief structure on the number of villages as well as the distance between the villages are affected accordingly. It was important in preserving the previous settlement in this mountainous region before the coming of the Ottoman Empire. The original structure was still untouched, and as in the other two regions, the pre-Ottoman rural setting was also preserved in Şumnu. The villages like Novosel, Osmar, Gradişte, were proof of this fact. For new settlements, areas around and outside of the older settlements were chosen so that they would not disturb the working mechanism in terms of socio-economic life. On the map of that time, it can be seen that Turkish

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<sup>116</sup> Atanasov, *Sacred Valley of Zalmocsis, Cave Sanctuaries at 'Badjaliata' and 'Kirindjika'*, RITT-BG Print, Silistra, 2006, p.5-10.

<sup>117</sup> For detailed information, see Chapter Three.

villagers proliferated around the old settlements. In addition to geographical reasons, the conservative aspect of Ottoman politics was also quite influential. While setting up new settlements, they did not opt to remove the traces of the past and force new communities to be integrated there.

In addition to the villages at the disposal of settled agriculturalist, some other sub-village units were open to be cultivated by different groups. As in the assessment of the villages, the aforementioned three districts also had such units as *hamlets* or *mezraas*. The *mezraas*, abandoned for some reason, became an additional economic source for their administrative leaders. They were also the places where the nomadic groups could obtain their basic nutritional needs. In any case, the agriculturalists, coming from adjacent villages, used them for cultivation. In Deliorman region, it is possible to locate 27 *mezraas*. Analysing one case from each district sheds light on the transformation of these areas. In Çernovi, the *mezraa* named Koçak<sup>118</sup> was registered as a place that was previously a village but then became an uncultivated piece of land. In Hezargrad, the *mezraa*, Eski Hrazgrad<sup>119</sup> was in the same condition but there was a detail stating that the place had not been in use for 15 years. In Şumnu, the *mezraa* Küçük Kozluca was also abandoned for unknown reason and remained as a waste land.<sup>120</sup>

The existence of the *mezraas* also had another function to determine the different groups in a given area. The explanation stating, “this land was cultivated by the outsiders” has made researchers reach a conclusion based on the characteristics of

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<sup>118</sup> “der nezd-i Arslanköy. Sabıkan karye olub hala mezraadır hariçten ziraat olunur.”, TKGM, TD 0042, fol.48

<sup>119</sup> “Sabıkan karye olub 15 seneden beru perakende olmağın mezraa kaydolunub. Hariçten ve nefsi-i Hezargrad’dan bazı müslümanlar ziraat idüb öşrün virirler.”, TKGM, TD 0042, fol.134.

<sup>120</sup> “der kurb-ı karye-i Çalık Kavak. Sabıkan karye olub reayası perakende olmağın mezraa kayd olunub. Hariçten ziraat ederler sahib-i arza öşrün vireler”, TKGM, TD 0042, fol. 246

these outsiders. Most probably, they were nomadic groups interested in transhumance which tried to use the *mezraas* as their temporary settlement before their next journey to find another grazing area. Their activity of cultivation can at the same time be interpreted as the first step to sedentarization. Since their economic life was based on husbandry, they saw agricultural activities as only an auxiliary element. In the *mezraas* they started to cultivate, however, some of them continued to work the soil and these areas became villages even without giving up husbandry. Therefore, they began to live as semi-nomads. In the long run, they completely settled and broke the habit of nomadic life.

#### **4.2 The Nomads of the Empire: The Yürük Community and Their Organization**

In the course of history, Deliorman was open to the movement of the groups from the eastern steppes.<sup>121</sup> Slavic tribes in particular expanded into the region from the Balkan Peninsula to the Baltic, including the Carpathians, the Elbe and the coast of the Black Sea. Because of greater climatic convenience and the advantages of trade routes, these groups began to settle towards the south. Later on, they reached the northern bank of Danube by the third century. In this region they met with two other groups, the Ants and the Huns. After the disappearance of these two groups, Slavic tribes managed to find places for themselves in the middle reaches of the Danube when the Goths left the region. In later periods, Turkic groups including the Pechenegs, Cumans and Uzes reached the region after the collapse of the Khazars. In the period

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<sup>121</sup> İnalçık, “Türkler ve Balkanlar”, *Balkanlar*, OBİV, 1993, p.9.; Barkan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Sürgünler*, p.531.

from the end of the 8th century until the 12th century, these communities established confederations with loose bonds among themselves from time to time.<sup>122</sup>

In the region, Turkish settlements whose traces are still obvious in today's Bulgaria emerged with the Ottomans. After the annexation of new lands, they had to find a solution for supplying efficient human power as settlement policy forced them to create a concrete ground for future permanent settlement. In accordance with this purpose, these groups were deported to strategic locations in order to ensure the security of the borders and to provide regional peace in the Balkan territory.<sup>123</sup>

Migrations to Northeastern Bulgaria were not only by force but also on the demand of the nomadic communities. Nomadic groups understood that this region was capable of meeting their fundamental requirements, most importantly wide grazing areas.<sup>124</sup>

One of the communities utilized by the Ottomans during the settlement movement to the Rumeli region was the *yürüks*. This nomadic group, originally located in Western Anatolia, played an important role in the western expansion of the Ottoman Empire. In the post-conquest period, these groups were not left unconfined by the state. Instead, they were gradually incorporated into the centralized structure of the empire. These nomadic groups were placed in the environments where they could continue their usual way of life as they had in Anatolia.<sup>125</sup> Over time, they acquired a separate

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<sup>122</sup> Norris, *Islam In The Balkans*, Hurst & Company, London, p.14-15; In *Türk Kavimleri ve Devletleri*, Kurat states that Pechenegs and Cumans established an alliance around 1090 (p. 35); Şahin İ, Emecen F., Halaçoğlu Y, *Turkish Settlements in Rumelia (Bulgaria) in the 15h and 16th Centuries: Town and Village Population*, p. 23.

<sup>123</sup> Inalcık, *Türkler ve Balkanlar*, Bal-Tam, p. 32; Inalcık, "The Yürüks: Their Origins, Expansion and Economic Role", *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire-Essays on Economy and Society*, Bloomington 1993, p. 98.

<sup>124</sup>In his book, *Rumeli'de Yürükler*, Tatarlar ve Evlad-ı Fatihan, Gökbilgin underlines that some of the noble families of Anatolia were also settled in these rich lands allocated to them by the state and given some privileges. (p.27); Mevlana, Neşri, *Cihannüma*, p.112.

<sup>125</sup> Inalcık, "The yürüks..." p. 98, Şahin, İ, Halaçoğlu Y., Emecen F., *Turkish Settlements in Rumelia (Bulgaria) in the 15h and 16th Centuries: Town and Village Population*, p.25.

legal status either as settlers in different administrative units or workers involved in various labour branches like *küreci*, *yağcı* and *tuzcu*.<sup>126</sup>

In the post-conquest era, those groups which had a significant number would have to be organized. The first traces of these organizations in the codification of Mehmet II can be followed. During his period, the *yürüks* were divided into groups of twenty-four people and each group was given a name, *ocak*. In the first stage, one of these 24 people was registered as *eşküncü* (the one joining the campaign), 3 of them were categorized as *çatal* (not having the obligation to join the campaign in that year), and 20 of them were registered as *yamak*. The notion of the *çatal* can be seen in the 15th century legislation. Yet, in the 16th century it became a subsidiary class, fighting together with *eşküncüs* during the campaigns, located between *eşküncü* and *yamaks*. Later on, the number of soldiers (*nefer*) was increased to 25 in an *ocak*. Ultimately, according to the requirements of the political system, this number reached 30 as a result of extended campaigns during the period of Murad III.<sup>127</sup>

The internal dynamic of the *yürük* organization was largely preserved by the state, and great efforts were made to prevent them from abandoning their duties or sustaining any decrease in their numbers. In general, it is possible to list the duties of the *yürüks* under the following headings: opening of empty land, providing municipal services, repairing of mosques, guarding castles, mining operations, horse breeding, rice cultivation, construction, road safety, and arrow and spring manufacturing. The

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<sup>126</sup> Gökbilgin, *ibid*, p.29.; for the cases stating their duties, see 7 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (975-976/1567-1569) Özet-Transkripsiyon-I, p. 529, 531.; 12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (978-979/1570-1572) Özet-Transkripsiyon-I, p. 92, 203. Also comp. 5 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (973/1565-1566) Özet ve İndeks.-Ankara 1994; 6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972/1564-1565) Özet-transkripsiyon ve indeks. Ankara 1995.

<sup>127</sup> Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, c. 1, FEY Vakfı Yayınları, İstanbul 1990, s. 354-355; İnbaşı, Mehmet İnbaşı, "Rumeli Yörükleri", *Anadolu'da ve Rumeli'de Yörükler ve Türkmenler*, Yör-Türk Vakfı, Tarsus 2000, p.147, 150-151; Orhonlu, *ibid*, p. 26-27.

codifications related to the *yürüks* explicitly state that their duties as *eşküncü* and *yamak* was fixed, even if they were assigned to other areas of the army, such as *yağcılık*, *taycılık* (little horse breeder), or *tuzculuk*.<sup>128</sup>

The difference between settled and nomadic life reflected itself in the amount and type of the taxes paid by them. It was stated, within the boundaries of the codification, how the tax was to be collected and who would collect it. As *eşküncüs* alternately participated in the voyages, the remaining members of the tribes paid a sum of 50 *akçe* once a year under the heading of *avarız-ı divaniye*. If one did not participate in a military operation, he had to pay one *akçe* for three sheep. The taxes were collected every March, from the married ones as fifty *akçe* and from the bachelors as twenty-five *akçes* by the officer called the *subaşı*.<sup>129</sup> Apart from these, official taxes like *seyyibe*, *arusiyye* and *yava ve kaçgun* were also required from the *yürüks*.<sup>130</sup>

In the following periods, the *yürüks* were actively involved in important back-up services such as working in the mines, repairing roads and fortifications, and serving the navy rather than participating in campaigns. But other *yamaks* were charged, instead of the ones who were unable to fulfill the required duties. At times the state even accepted some converts and liberated slaves to the organization by ignoring the degeneration of the ethnically homogenous structure.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> “Eşküncüden, yamaktan ve evladından birisi bir suretle doğancılığa, taycılığa veya gayri hususa yazılıp ehl-i berat olsa yine de eşküncülüğü mukarrerdir. Ehl-i berat olmağla halas olmazlar. Nihayet beratlarında her ne hizmet emr olunduyca anı dahi eyleyeler. Berat bahanesiyle cinsinden ihraç olunmak memnudur.” BOA TD 354.

<sup>129</sup> *Sefer-i hümayun ve hizmet-i padişahi vaki oldukta nevbetlü eşküncü yamaklarından avarız-ı divaniye mukabelesinde kanun-ı kadim-i sultaniye muktezasınca ellişer akçe haraç alup sefer ederler. Hizmet ve sefer olmayacak eşküncü yamaklarından nesne almazlar. Amma subaşılar ve çeribaşılar her yıl Mart ibtidasında alırlar zira bunlar sipahi kısmından subaşılar ve çeribaşılar her yıl aldıkları baiseden müzevvelerinden ellişer ve mücerredlerinden yirmi beşer akçe resm-i yamak alırlar.* BOA TD 354.

<sup>130</sup> Inalcık, “Impact of the Annales School on Ottoman Studies and New Findings”, p. 70.; İnbaşı, ibid, 149.

<sup>131</sup> Gökbilgin, ibid, p.52.

### 4.3 The existence of *yürük* groups in the villages of the Deliorman Region

Investigating the relations of the nomadic groups with the state, both economically and socially, will allow to understand how they penetrated some areas of the state. They were not the groups that merely paid certain taxes or were obliged to fulfill the tasks assigned to them. On the contrary, they represented large groups of people whose intra-group relations were based on certain dynamics. Therefore, these groups were mostly evaluated within a tribal (*aşiret*) structure. They had mostly been deported as tribes to new places. On this point, the tendency of the *yürük* groups to give the same name as their old places in Anatolia was significant; it means that they were willing not to lose the traditions related to their nomadic lifestyle.

Although the *yürük* groups formed themselves around certain in-group relations, they did not have a closed lifestyle regarding the outside world.<sup>132</sup> In the context of the Rumeli region, it became clear that the geographical structure of the area was the greatest obstacle to maintaining their way of life in an isolated manner. Due to the mountainous geography, the proximity of settlement areas to each other was one of the most important factors that restricted the movement of the *yürüks* together with their animals. For this reason, it is not wrong to suggest that the places where the contacts with the outside world were most intensively seen were the villages. In this context, it is appropriate to examine the function of the villages in the socio-economic life of the *yürüks*.

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<sup>132</sup> Lancaster W, Lancaster F, "Who are these Nomads? What do they do? Continuous Change or Changing Continuities?", p.25



#### **4.4 The Sedentarization of the *Yürüks***

The two aforementioned models of rural settlements show how the Ottomans created a unique pattern reflecting them while inhabiting the Balkan geography in the post-conquest stage. In particular, it is possible to overlap the diffusion model of Grossman with the practices applied in the period when the Balkan geography was first settled. In the picture they drew after a long conquest period, the Ottomans evaluated the possible places for habitation without touching the old settlements. We find some evidence in the latest tax-registers of the Niğbolu region in 1579-80<sup>133</sup>. It indicates that the Ottomans preserved the original non-Muslim names of villages and they did not touch the villagers that had existed previously.

##### **4.4.1 The interactions of the *yürük* groups with the surrounding world**

*Yürük* groups did not lead nomadic life continuously in the land to which they migrated. As the state policy required, the migration process of these wandering groups was actually the story of their transition from a nomadic life to a sedentary one. They were often sent to vacant or ruined places to create new areas for living. Due to the new circumstances brought about by the environmental or socio-economic conditions over time, they firstly adopted a semi-nomadic life and then eventually left their usual lifestyle for permanent settlement.

As a nomadic group, the *yürük* were uniquely disposed to enter or exit different environments because their lifestyle already required constant movement simply to maintain their life. These environments were often the places where they could easily benefit from the natural resources. In addition, nomadic groups could also be involved in other occupations in addition to animal husbandry, if it was necessary or if they

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<sup>133</sup> TKGM, TD 0042.

changed their preferences. As mentioned above, it is possible that the *yürük* groups could engage in some occupations such as *derbencilik*, *yağcılık*, *tuzculuk*, *çeltükçülük*. All of these factors were indeed indications that nomadic groups lived in a flexible structure that could respond to what the environmental conditions brought into them rather than exist in a completely enclosed structure.<sup>134</sup>

Nomadism and settled life were two main elements which complemented rather than opposed each other in terms of socio-economic status. Often, mutual attachment played an important role between these two groups. A product that was in the hands of one group could often be the raw material of the other group that would be used in production. Therefore, the trade between these two groups was usually in the form of exchange.<sup>135</sup> Similar conditions could be seen in the Ottoman climate. The *yürüks* interested in animal husbandry participated in the production of the settlers indirectly by providing fertilizer to the farmers who were engaged in agriculture. This is in fact an indication that the flexible nature of nomadic groups did not allow them to have any kind of segregation. Even though they seemed to form a structure in which they met their own needs, they also become intertwined with the residents in the places where they lived together.

The commercial relations between the nomads and the settlers were not really new phenomena. Since ancient times, nomads and established societies have been in conflict from time to time to be able to maintain their lives, but they have also been influenced by one another. Besides, the nomadic economy was mainly a one-way

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<sup>134</sup> Lancaster W, Lancaster F., "Who Are These Nomads? What Do They Do? Continuous Change or Changing Communities?" p.25.

<sup>135</sup> Inalcık, "The Yürüks...", p.99; Khazanov, "Nomads in the History of the Sedentary World", Nomads in the Sedentary World ed by Khazanov and Wink, London, p.7-8.; McCarthy, The Ottoman Turks, Routledge, 1997, p.224-225.; "The Nomads" in History of the Ottoman State, and Civilization ed by Ihsanoğlu, IRCICA, p. 530.; For detailed information, see Khanazov, Nomads and the Outside World, p-198-227.

economy, not based on commercial activities. Since the main purpose was to meet the needs of the group, they had to share the production surplus with the outside world. Among the products they offered were butter, cheese, other dairy products, and leather. This production constituted another way that the *yürüks* in the Ottoman state earned their livelihood.

During the transition, the situation was not only related to the relations established with settled life. In other words, the process is not based only on external relations with settlers. Even from within the group itself, the request for permanent settlement could be demanded.<sup>136</sup> Even though Rumeli's geography was suitable for animal grazing with abundant forests, it was difficult for animals to move through these pastures due to their rugged terrain. Although settled life was attractive to these groups, the actual reason was that the nomadic life had an infertile structure in terms of economic issues.<sup>137</sup>

#### **4.4.2 The reflection of sedentarization in the tax registers**

Struggling with such difficulties, the *yürüks* over time set up their own villages, and in many cases these villages bore the names indicating their way of life with reference to their previous settlement places in Anatolia.<sup>138</sup> This pattern can be seen both in Anatolia as well as in the Balkan geography. Especially in the region of Deliorman, villages bear the names of their leader of nomadic group (Sarı Nasuh, Divane Şakir, Divane Hasan), of their professions (Mumcular, Doğancılar, Kovancılar). Even though the *yürük* groups established their own villages, the nomadic life was not exactly abandoned. Climatic conditions and geographical landscape were

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<sup>136</sup> Salzman, *Adaptation and Response*, p. 16.

<sup>137</sup> Orhonlu, *ibid*, p.35

<sup>138</sup> Inalcık, "The Yürüks...", p.100.; Halaçoğlu, Emecen, Şahin, " Turkish Settlements in Rumelia...", p. 33.

significant factors in this phenomenon. The areas where they settled were mostly places which had arable lands for agriculture. Nevertheless, they paid attention to the fact that whether they continued their transhumant movements or not. Therefore, the lands that they chose to settle were generally ruined or deserted.<sup>139</sup> As such, these villages actually had the function of assisting in the transition of semi-nomadic groups to the settled life.

The reasons for the deportation of the *yürüks* were not based on coincidental occurrences. Above all, conditions similar to Anatolian plateau also existed in Deliorman region. The first nomadic groups coming from Anatolia and to this region were the Naldöken *yürüks*. According to the information above, given by Gökbilgin, the registers belonging to this group date back to the first quarter of the fifteenth century. The spread of these *yürük* groups in Deliorman region showed that they probably chose to settle in Şumnu following their initial movement. It was likely that the groups preferred to settle there because of the similarity of its mountainous terrain to that of Anatolia. (Table 1).

Ocak	1543	1566	1585	1597	1602	1609
Şumnu	6	8	14	14	14	4
Çernovi	1	3	3	4	4	-

**Table 1. The Population of Naldöken Yürüks in Şumnu and Çernovi<sup>140</sup>**

The Tanrıdağı *yürüks* were the second group to arrive after the Naldökens. Yet, the number of their population was double that of the Naldöken *yürüks*. Due to a lack of cadastral documents, there is not sufficient information on the spread of this group.

<sup>139</sup> Orhonlu, *ibid*, p.35-36.

<sup>140</sup> The data was obtained from Gökbilgin's book, *Rumeli'de Yörükler ve Evlad-ı Fatihan*, p.56-57

If later data is analyzed, however, it becomes obvious that they settled in further northern areas of Şumnu. Hence, the density of the population was greatest in Çernovi although Şumnu still had a significant group. (Table 2).

Ocak	1543	1584	1586	1591	1642
Şumnu	12	16	12	13	-
Çernovi	11	21	21	21	-

**Table 2. The Population of Tanrıdağı Yürüks in Şumnu and Çernovi<sup>141</sup>**

From this data, it is possible to say that Şumnu, with the arrival of Naldökens, reached full physical capacity and could not accept any new settlement. Hence the movement of nomads, after this time, headed towards northern places like Çernovi, Silistre or Rusçuk. This situation is very compatible with the beehive metaphor mentioned above because Şumnu, like an overpopulated hive, transferred surplus population to appropriate places open to new demographic waves. The comparison between the map of 1530 and the map of 1579-80 shows the density of the villages when comparing Şumnu with Çernovi.<sup>142</sup>

In Deliorman region, the infiltration of *yürük* groups as peasants into the socio-economic life in the villages can be followed in the registers. The tax registers are quite valuable as they give the chance to observe how the socio-economic identity of these *yürük* groups changed. The registers related to the Naldöken *yürüks*, who were the second major group in the region, give some clues about the process of the transition

<sup>141</sup> The data was obtained from Gökbilgin's book, Rumeli'de Yörükler ve Evlad-ı Fatihan, p.70-71.

<sup>142</sup> In text: the demographical change in Deliorman region between 1530 and 1579.

and infiltration into the village life. For this reason, we will use two registers dated 1573<sup>143</sup> and 1579-80 from the Niğbolu Sancak.

Based on the demographical information, it is possible to conclude that the northern part of the Deliorman region is less suitable for grazing animals than that of the south. Though the area had flat areas for animal grazing, it was inadequate for pasture due to its aridity. Therefore, it was probably necessary to give up nomadic life and to be a farmer with the land that could sustain agricultural activity.

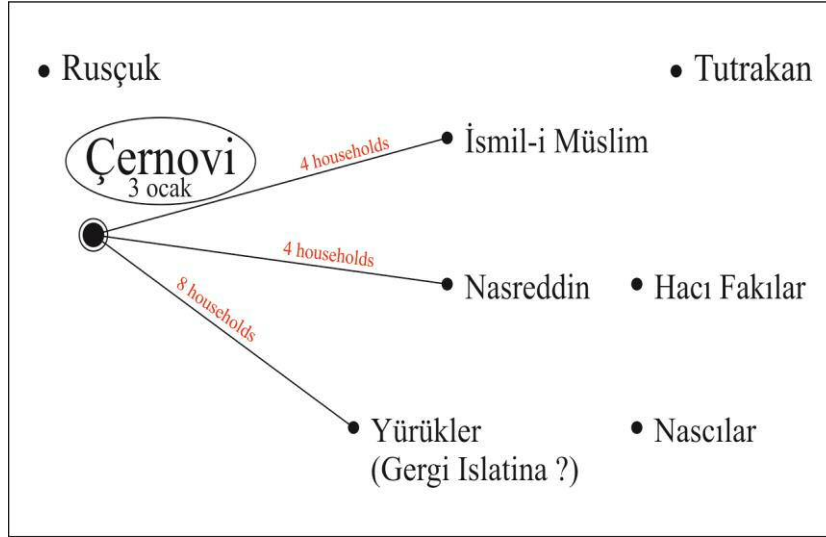
We can examine three villages connected to the Çernovi district in this context. First, take the village of Gergi Islatina. In the tax register dated 1573<sup>144</sup>, Bayramlı veled-i Seydi, Budak veled-i Seydi, Kurdbali veled-i Seydi, Talib veled-i Seydi, Nusret veled-i Kabil, Ali veled-i Veli, Isabali veled-i Hadji Ali and Adilhan veled-i Hacı Ali were the people having a fixed farming area, *çift*, in the 980 dated book. The situation was not also different in Ismil-i Muslim, another village in the same region. Pir Nazır veled-i Osman, Bazarlı veled-i Pir Nazır, Oruç veled-i Arzuman, Bahşayış veled-i Arzuman named as 4 people in the 1573 notebook, 7 years later, they were accounted within the established agricultural society.<sup>145</sup> In the village named Nasreddinler which is the south of Ismil-i Muslim, four people named Şehriman birader-i o, Mürüvvet veled-i Kulaguz, Evhad birader-i Mürüvvet and Selamet birader-i Evhad were also *çift* owners and subject to taxation from agricultural society. (Figure 1)

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<sup>143</sup> BOA TD 357.

<sup>144</sup> In text: the register of the yürüks in Çernovi from 1573.

<sup>145</sup> In text: the villages in Çernovi in the registers from 1580.



**Figure 1. The Sedentarization of the Yürüks in Çernovi**

This situation was different in the Şumnu district. The people from the *yürük* groups recorded in the tax register dated in 973 became members of agricultural life with their *çift* under the title of *ellici* or *eşküncü*<sup>146</sup>. These two phrases in the registers are very significant to estimating the settling process of these groups over years.

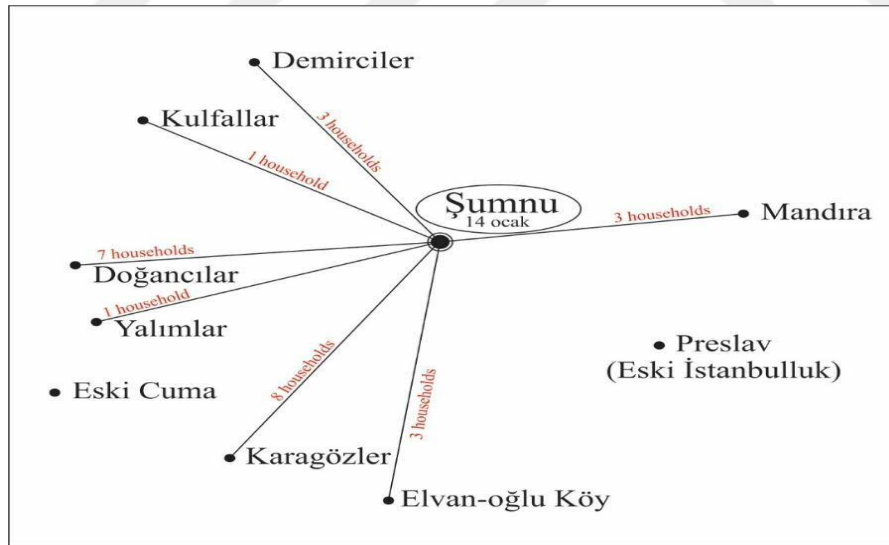
In Şumnu and Eski Cuma<sup>147</sup>, mentioning the distribution of people who probably chose a semi-nomadic lifestyle gives an idea of the physical characteristics of these villages. As Orhonlu states, the first nomadic groups, like the Naldökens, used to choose places that would not force them to completely give up their old habits. The high geographical landscape of Şumnu was very conducive for *yürük* groups because the mountainous regions provided extensive pastureland for animals. In the village named Karagözler, Burhan veled-i Eynesi, Mustafa veled-i Saru, Seydi veled-i Saru, Umur veled-i Umurhan, Evhad veled-i Hızır, Kalgal veled-i Hızır, Seydi veled-i Hızır,

<sup>146</sup> In his work, Halaçoğlu states that those joining to campaingns are paid fifty akçe as a pocket money and so they were called ellici. (Osmanlı Kimliği ve Aşiretler, p.32) Yet, we make inferences on the relation between semi-nomadism and ellicis by taking the base from İnalçık's definition on ellicis as share-croppers in his article, "Rice Cultivation and the Celtukci-re'aya System in the Ottoman Empire". For the same issue, see Barkan, Osmanlı Devleti'nin Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi, p.73-79.

<sup>147</sup> In text: the villages of Şumnu and Eski Cuma in the registers from 1579

Eynehan veled-i Aydın are named as *yürüks* serving as *ellici* or *eşküncü*, and they also have a *çift*.

In the same way, in the village of Doğancı there is listed the Sultanşah veled-i Nasuh, Şahin veled-i Canpaşa, Timurhan veled-i Mustafa, Saruhan veled-i Sadık, Durmuş veled-i Evhad, Seferşah veled-i ...?, seven people having *çift* in the status of *ellici*. Also in the village of Mandıra, Durak veled-i Kölemen, Süleyman veled-i Kölemen, Mustafa veled-i ...?; In the Timurcular village, Hüseyin veled-i ...?, Turgud veled-i ...?, Ramazan veled-i Bayram; In the village of Yalımlar, Kurdali veled-i Satı; Yunus veled-i Ali and Hamza veled-i Habib in the Anatolian Hussein village; In the village of Kalgallar Eynehan veled-i Ali; In the village of Elvan-son, Ömer veled-i Şahin, Halil veled-i Osman and Aydın veled-i Ömer as *yağcı*.<sup>148</sup> ( Figure 2)



**Figure 2. The Sedentarization of the Yürüks in Şumnu and Eski Cuma**

<sup>148</sup> In text: the register of the yürüks in Çernovi from 1573 .



## 4.5 The condition accelerating the process of the sedentarization among the *yürük* groups

### 4.5.1 The incentives provided by the state

During the process of the sedentarization of the *yürük* groups, the sole reason was not just their own will or the appeal of settled life. The state's policy was also quite instrumental to the method applied to the *yürük* groups for their sedentarization. The state was able to control these independent groups by giving them assignments. In fact, given the general picture, the journey of the *yürüks* was a process whose destination was determined by the empire. In other words, this process is a game whose rules are established by settlers and the plow prevails over the shepherd.<sup>149</sup>

If we look at the result that this region shows, if there was a conflict, the state was able to stabilize it and to integrate these nomadic groups into established life. In this integration, the incentives presented by the government played an important role in many cases, and as we will talk about later, some tax deductions or exemptions was extended in order to have a more established order. Yet, the state pressure was not always noticeable, and sometimes it manifested itself indirectly.<sup>150</sup>

It is possible that the members of the *yürük* groups adhered to established life not only by taking positions in the villages founded by dervishes but also by the tax reductions applied directly on them by the state. As seen in the codifications, if groups opened new settlements like dervishes, they were entitled to a significant tax reduction. By doing so, under normal conditions, the 50 *akçe* normally collected from nomadic

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<sup>149</sup> In his work, Orhonlu suggests that the distinction between nomad and settled is a matter of clash (Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskanı. In addition, Khazanov put forwards that the winner of this clash is the settlers engaged in agriculture. (Nomads and the Outside World).

<sup>150</sup> Khazanov, *ibid.*, p.93.

groups could decrease to 12 *akçe*. The state did not force these groups, however, and they could return to the lifestyle they were accustomed to.<sup>151</sup> When the concepts of residence or nomadism contained in themselves some return and flexible structures<sup>152</sup> the state did not show any particular difficulty in guiding these groups to lead a more settled life.

The incentives for migrant groups stood there for them as long as they were interested in agriculture or helping the functioning of settled life. The most important incentive was given when land was opened in new places to settle. Already in the Balkan geography, mobile agriculturalism was achieved by burning forests to gain land or by using fallow crop rotation, including the three-field system for agriculture. In fact, the second type of tillage method was practiced widely among the Eastern Slavs until the 19th century.<sup>153</sup>

#### 4.5.2 The role of the Dervishes

In the Ottoman period, the opening of new lands was mostly carried out by dervishes who migrated to Rumeli from Anatolia. The *yürük* groups then increased the populations of these villages founded by dervishes. They were assigned to some duties in these villages like *derbendcilik*, which contributed to the permanent settlement of the newly established villages. In this respect, the dervish migrations from Anatolia to the Balkans were as important as the immigration of the *yürüks* in terms of the Ottoman settlement in the Balkans.

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<sup>151</sup> *ve şol yürük ki konar göçer olmayub bir yerde mütemekkin idüb çift ve çubuğa malik olsalar tımar-ı çiftlik yer tutan 12 akçe ve nısf-ı çiftlik yer tutan 6 akçe resm-i çift sahib-i tımara vireler.(...) Zikr olan taife bir tımar sınırında bazı müddet tavattun idüb ziraat eyledikten sonra göçüb gayrı yere vardıkta sahib-i tımar sair reaya cebrî yine götürmeyeler veya çiftbozan resmi deyu nesnesin almayalar. Zira yürük la-mekan olmağın bunların gibi teklifattan beridirler”, BOA TD 616, fol.8.*

<sup>152</sup> For detailed informaion on the flexible nature of nomadic groups, see Salzman, *When Nomads Settle: Processes of Sedentarization as Adaptation and Response*, Praeger, 1980.

<sup>153</sup> Khazanov, *ibid*, p.98.

The task of the dervishes was not an easy one. The areas in which they were interested in establishing settlements were often empty or vulnerable areas that no one would have preferred at first glance. The biggest disadvantage was the rugged and somewhat barren land. In this desolate geographical region, these dervishes had great responsibility. It was also only a matter of time before the discovery of the zone, that is to say that it was enforced, enshrined and secured.<sup>154</sup>

In the Lower Danube region, some *tekke* occurrences were quite striking. For example, Barkan's article shows the difficulties of the Balkan geography. Yahya Bey, the son of Bali Bey, who was in the Hezargrad district, established a lodge in Tutrakan, struggling in the toughest geographic conditions. In fact, Barkan refers to it as a place of brigandage. He states a rude saying among the people, "I do not come from Tutrakan". Over time, however, it became a prosperous center, supported by new population movement to the area.<sup>155</sup>

In another case we encounter a story of another lodge in the village of Mirahor from Şumnu district. A dervish named Hüseyin Dede was granted it with a tax exemption on condition that he opened a lodge in the region. When we look at the detailed tax register of 980, we see that there were *ellicis* and *kürecis* (miners) in the same village. These two data might be assessed as a demonstration of the gradual integration of the wandering groups into the established life. As Khazanov's argument states, semi-nomadic groups should also have a community engaged in agricultural activities for their subsistence.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Barkan, *ibid*, p.360.

<sup>155</sup> Barkan, *ibid*, p.300.

<sup>156</sup> On semi-nomadic life, he presents in his book, *Nomads and the Outside World*, two variants as follows: (1) when the same groups in a given society (or sub-society) are occupied with both agriculture and pastoralism; (2) when within the framework of a given society (sub-society) there are groups which devote themselves primarily, or even exclusively, to pastoralism, alongside groups which are primarily occupied with agriculture. (p.20)

When discussing the concept of semi-nomadism, some mistakes should not be overlooked. While we are dealing with livestock, we can not look at a representative of semi-settled life for each group that is engaged in agriculture. Of course, the existence of agricultural societies engaged in rearing livestock as an auxiliary economic activity can not be ignored.<sup>157</sup> But the subtle distinction here is related to the division of labor in semi-nomadic societies. In the registers, we frequently encounter the specialist groups in certain occupations. In agricultural societies dealing with husbandry, this is not the case, as it remains only a part of subsidiary economic activity supporting agricultural life.

#### **4.6 The final move: The Abolition of the Yürük Organization**

The sedentarization of the *yürüks* within the body of the state continued until 1691. The Ottomans abolished the *yürük* organization for several reasons, the main one being the sedentarization of the *yürük* groups by the seventeenth century. Concerning the relation of these groups with the state, sedentarization would mean that the positions previously filled by these groups became empty. Hence, the state mechanism was interrupted and the Ottomans could not use the power of the nomads in services when it was necessary. During military roll-calls, the *yürüks* could no longer be seen in their old places as *eşküncüs* or *yamaks* as they had chosen to continue their life as settled peasants. The final event which forced the Ottomans to abolish this organization was the wars with Austria. Because of their undisciplined behaviours in this period, the *yürüks* were re-registered under the different title, Evlad-ı Fatihan, on the three main roads in Rumeli. After this date, the numbers of the *yürük* were registered as *nefers* instead of *ocaks*. (Table 3)

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<sup>157</sup> Khazanov, *ibid*, p.96.

Nefer	1691	1697
	Şumnu	222
Çernovi (Ruşçuk)	533	195
Silistre	427	121
Hezargrad	351	54
Eski Cuma	116	-

**Table 3. The number of the yürüks under the title, *evlad-ı fatihan*<sup>158</sup>**



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<sup>158</sup> The necessary numeric data is taken from Gökbilgin's work, "Rumeli'de Yürükler...", p. 269-272.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study has been to examine the settlement process of the Ottoman Empire in Deliorman Region in the 16th century within the framework of the Annales School. For this reason, it was essential for the content of this research to understand how the geographical conditions of the Ottoman region, along with the formation of its political presence, were influential in the process of settlement. The results we have obtained have yielded important information about the nature of Ottoman rule in the region.

The first conclusion is that bloody scenes of conquest did not come into play as the Ottomans established dominance in the region. In contrast to the ideas of some nationalist historians, the reality is that diplomatic relations were the main tool of communication and interaction with local groups. At points where diplomatic channels were stuck, military campaigns did of course remain an option for an ultimate solution. Yet during these campaigns, in places where voluntary surrenders occurred, the use of disproportionate force was not felt. Additionally, it is also deducible that there were no massacres in the manner envisioned and put forth by some nationalist historians. Their calculations, based on the existence of the occasional idle zones, *mezraa*, are

nothing but false claims about the dominance of the Ottomans in the region. Indeed, they are aimed at showing that the pre-conquest population was slaughtered, and hence that Ottoman rule was established through bloody wars. However, there is a point here that the existence of the state in fact relied on an institutional basis. Records kept in *defters* were the instrument that reflected the state's existence in written documents and through which one can follow population movements. Therefore, one of the points in this work is that the spread over a large territory covered about 200 years and proceeded through institutional structures rather than by violently forcing the existing inhabitants to acknowledge Ottoman sovereignty.

The second conclusion is that geography is a significant determining factor in how the decision-making processes of individuals work. The behavioral patterns of people in the face of nature often share similar characteristics. It is not surprising that the first established civilizations were established around river basins like the Nile, the Indus, and in Mesopotamia. These regions, where the basic human needs are easily provided, have always been a major attraction because of their proximity to clean water sources and their facilitation of basic agricultural activities. If we look at the picture from a broad perspective, it is possible to see how geographical forms shape civilizations. The division of civilizations into two groups -desert or sea-borne- is natural. The kind of attitude people have towards geographical conditions shows how these two different types of civilizations progressed. Whereas, for the civilizations based on land the lifestyle was mostly based on nomadism, sea-borne civilizations were more interested in economic activities requiring a sedentary life like trade.

In this context, one can observe that the first settlements in Deliorman region were related to the Danube river. Since ancient times, Deliorman has been the home of many different groups because of this feature. The most important factor in this is

that the geography has the capacity to support the lifestyles of different groups. The base of this capacity is also suitable for new settlements in terms of climate, plant cover and geographical formations. As a result, as the population of the settlement increased, certain distinctive forms of settlement emerged over time. Groups of people living in semi-mountainous or mountainous areas preferred nomadic or transhumant movements, while people living in flatter lowland areas chose a settled life. This is one of the most important consequences of this study because it allows us to reach a conclusion about the boundaries of the lives of the nomads under the Ottoman rule and the continuity of that life dependent on the economic activities.

When the impact of geographical formations on the flow of the history is examined, the results are quite informative concerning the settlement process lasting a long period. In this regard, the data acquired from the *defters* as the primary source shows that there were some points at which new groups coming from Anatolia had to consider while seeking new homeland for themselves in the region. Already existing settlements could not be destroyed. Hence, these settlements, some of them reaching back to ancient times, were preserved. Newly arriving groups instead settled in empty and available areas around these settlements. The fact that the original names of the old settlements were used in their original form in the *defters* is one of the most important proofs of this situation.

The settlements in a given region are also related to how geography directs the new wave of population to open places. Hence, nomadic groups, named as *yürüks*, could only reach the places where the geography favored the establishment of new settlements. The settlement pattern of the Naldöken and Tanrıdağı groups explains this situation in a clear way. The Naldöken yürüks, the first settlers to choose Şumnu, the optimal region for settlement in Deliorman, formed many ocaks here. The Tanrıdağı



group, arriving to the region after Naldökens, by contrast had to transfer the surplus of their people to the further northern areas like Çernovi after Şumnu had been filled to its geographical potential. This situation was also valid for the neighboring districts.

The sources also mark that the *yürüks* were not a community wandering around without any reason. The codifications identifying their status within the state are one of the most important reflections in terms of institutional mechanisms. The state, whose control of nomadic groups could be limited, wanted them to be settled. In this respect, these groups were offered some incentives such as tax reductions. It seems that these incentives were effective when we compare the situation in two separate districts of Deliorman such as Şumnu and Çernovi. In the first place, we see that in two *defters* kept at intervals of 7 years, people who were recorded as nomads in the first one had become *çift*-owners and begun agricultural economic activity in the second. It is possible to regard this situation as a sign of the gradual establishment of full sedentarization in the region.

As a result, the final conclusion reached in this thesis is that the dynamics behind the Ottoman settlement in Deliorman region relied largely on the basis of human and geographical factors. The Ottomans, who were seen as nomadic by some scholars, were expected to demolish the place and to start nomadization in the region. However, the results of this research have shown that the main purpose of the state in terms of creating settlement patterns is in fact one of sedentarization through some encouragements due to the reasons mentioned above. This situation can, in turn, be a response to further questions about the reasons for long duration of Ottoman sovereignty in the region.

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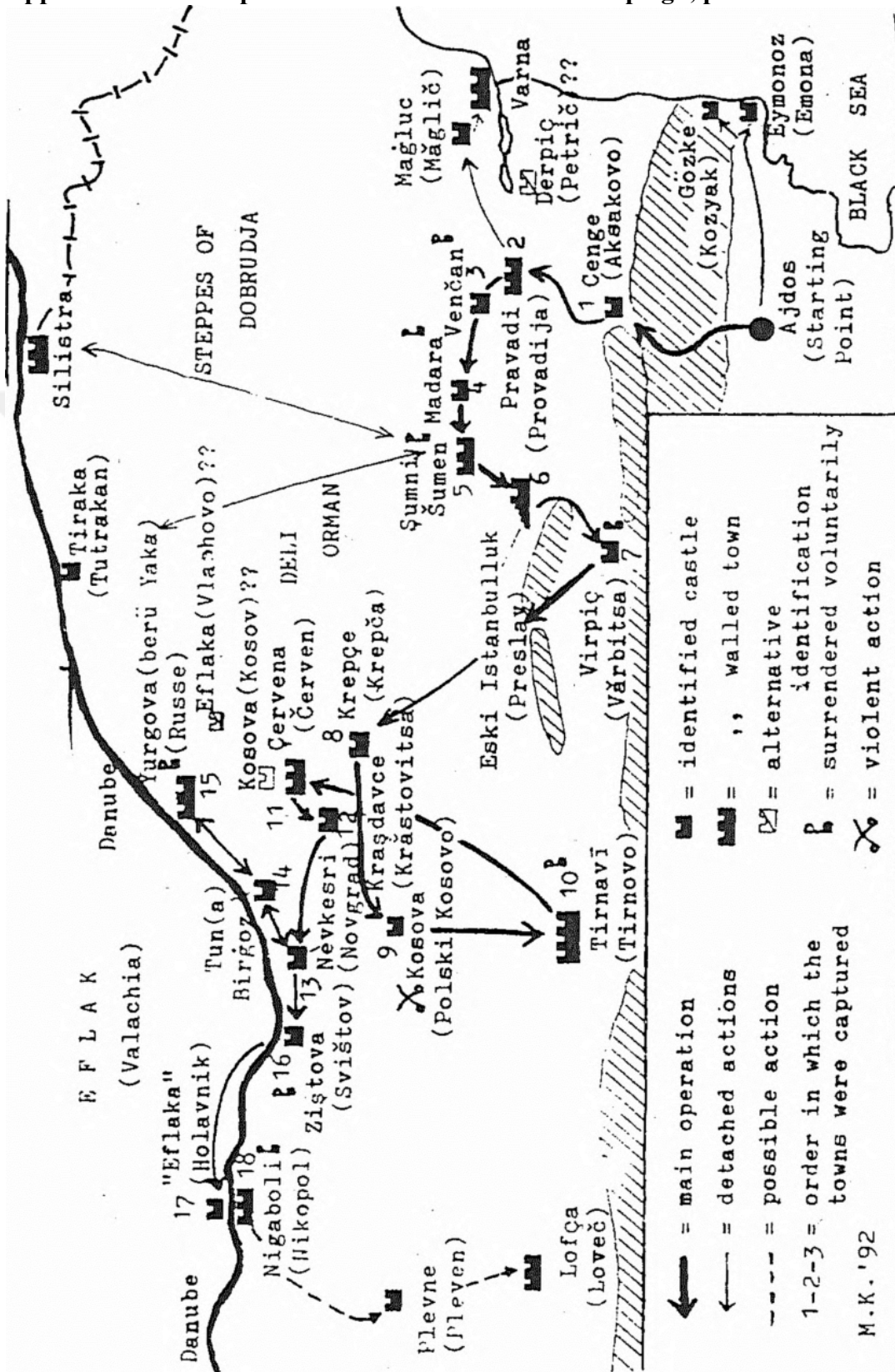
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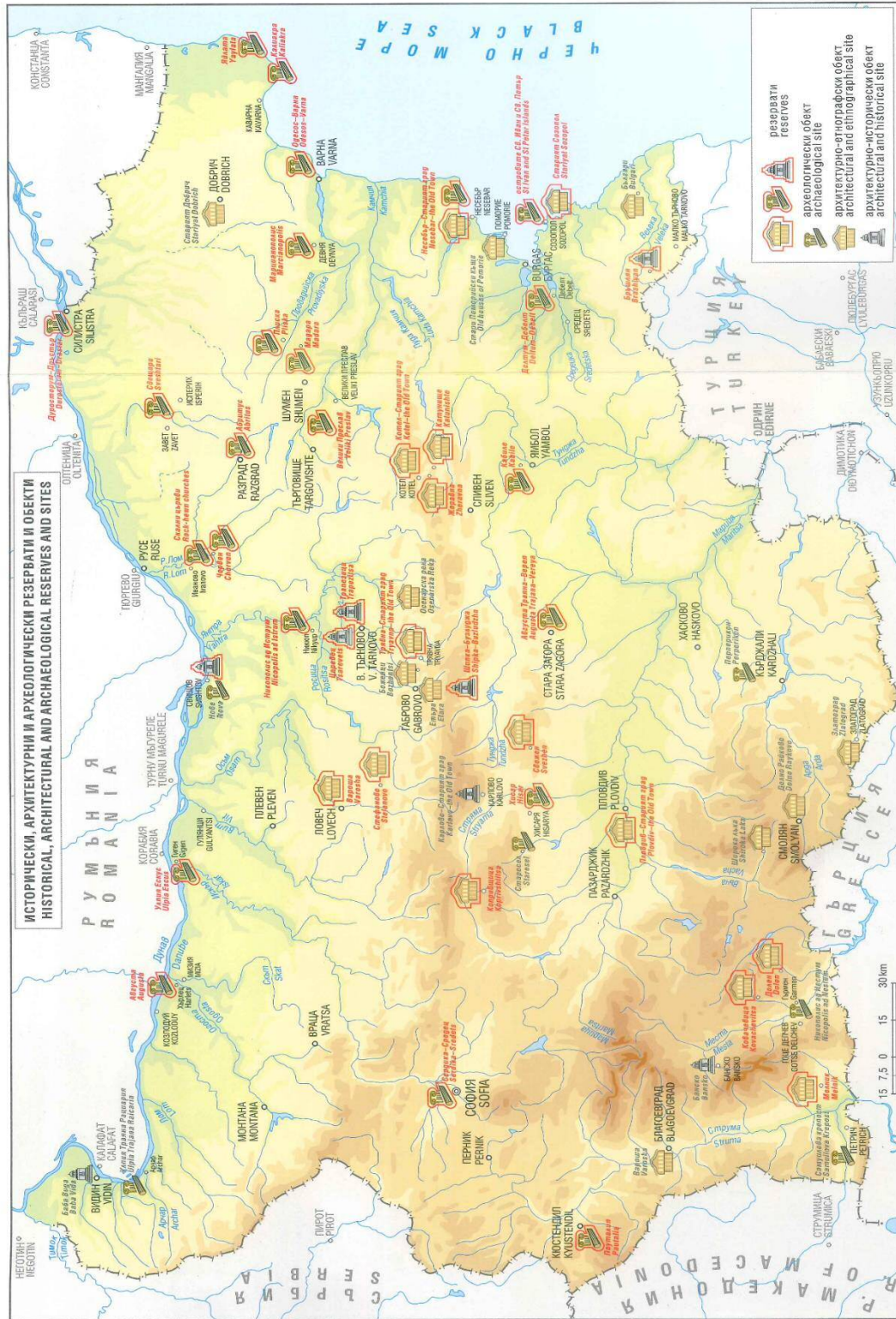
## APPENDICES



Appendix 1: The Map of the Route of Ali Pasha's Campaign, p.13



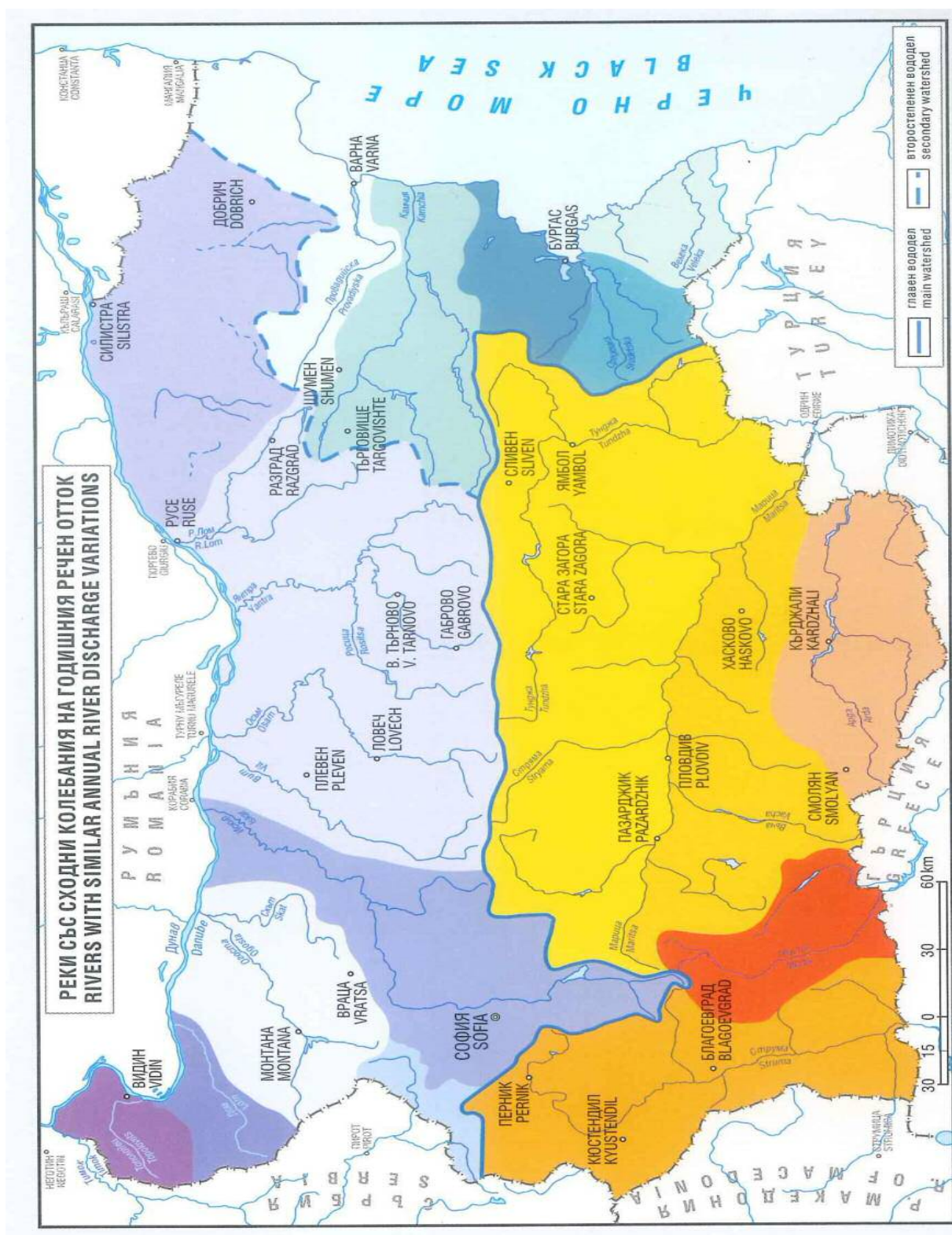
Appendix 2: The city, Arbittus, p.25



Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.185.

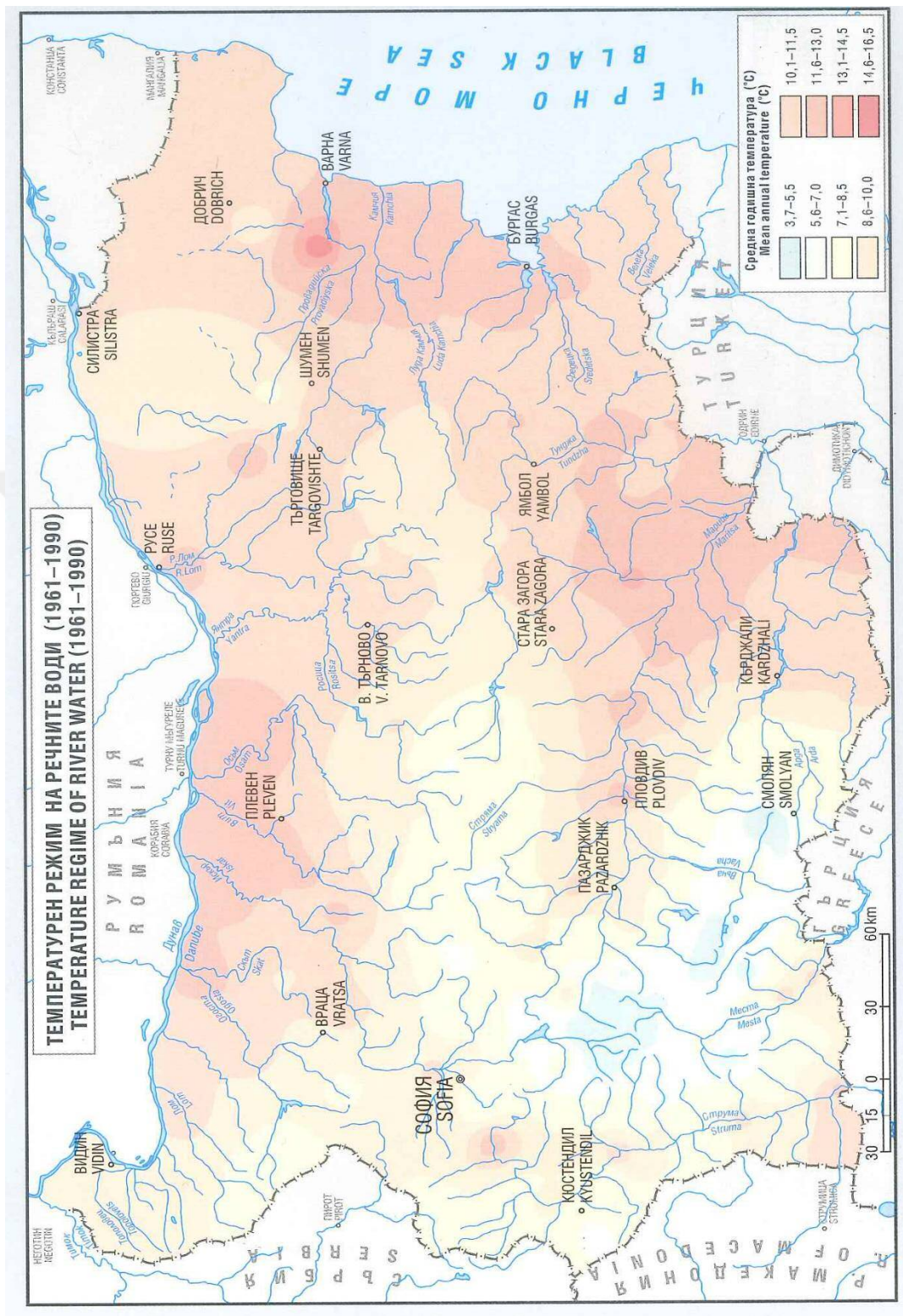


Appendix 3.1: The rivers of the region, p.30



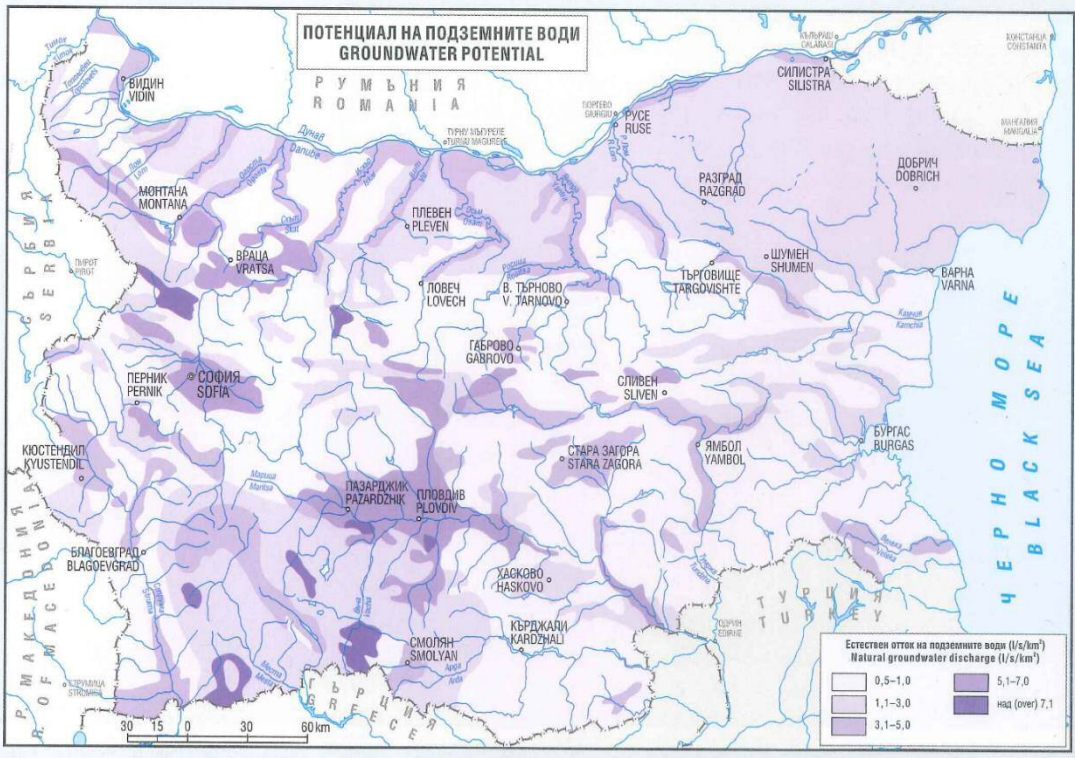
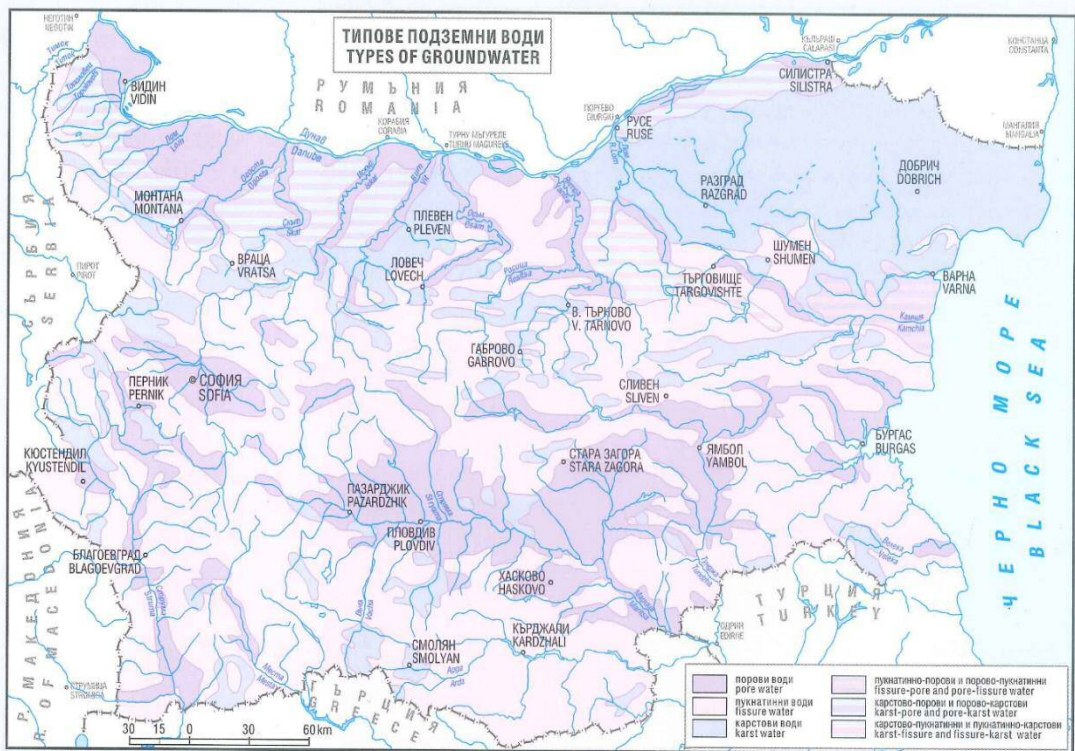
Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.99

Appendix 3.2: The temperature of the rivers, p.30



Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.99

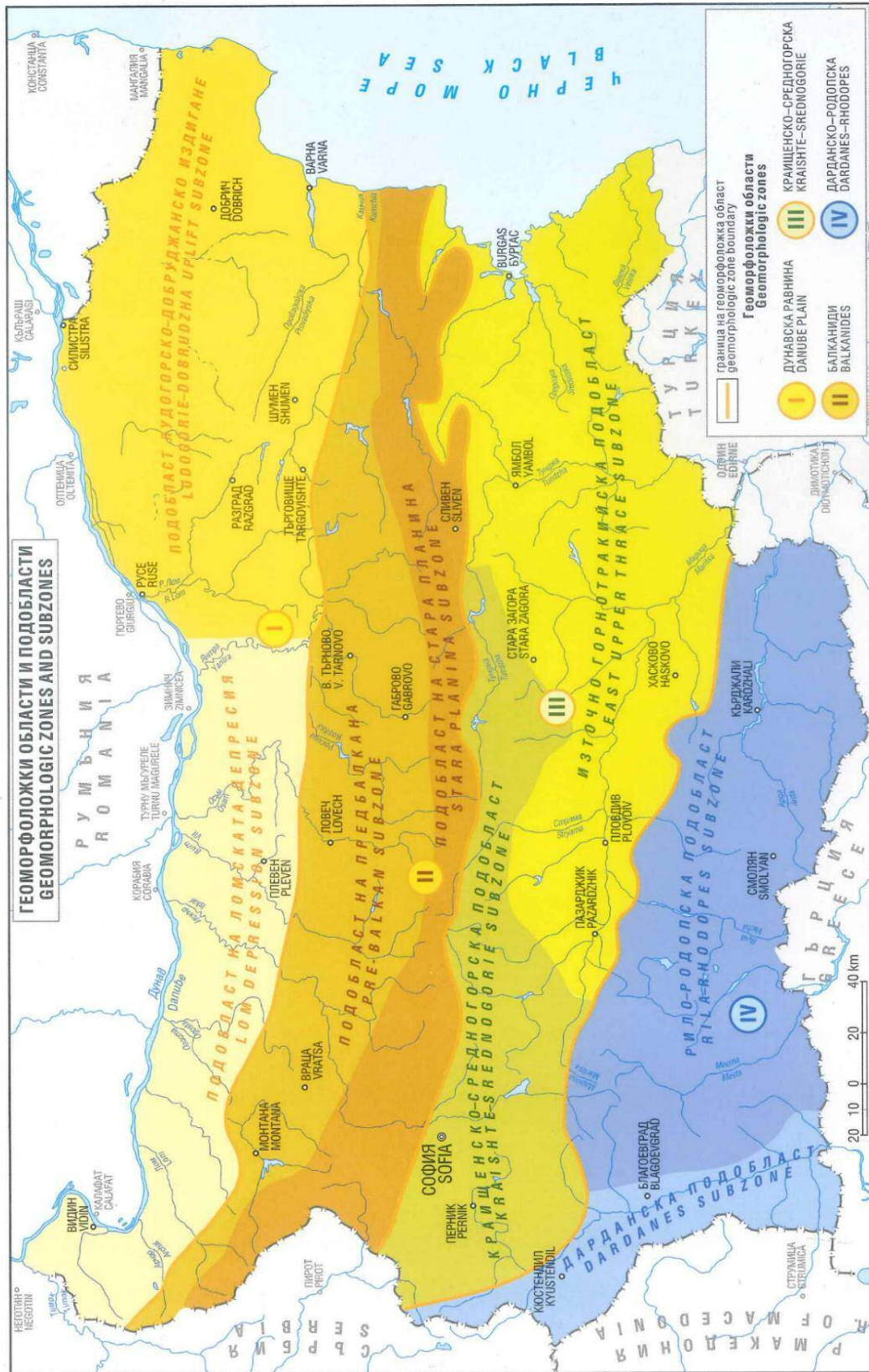
Appendix 3.3: The groundwater structure of the region, p.30



Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.103

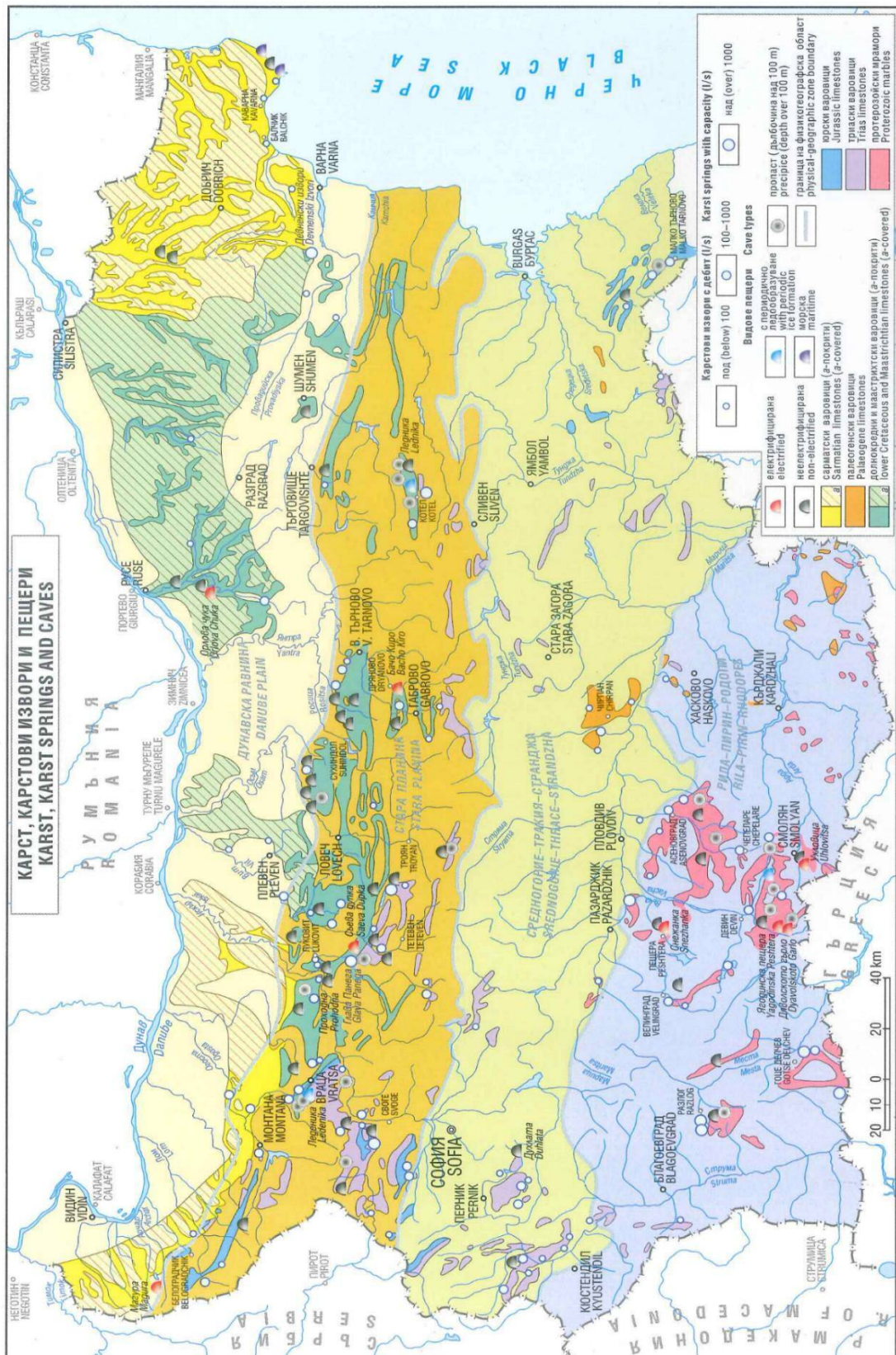


Appendix 5.1: The geomorphological zone of the region, p.34



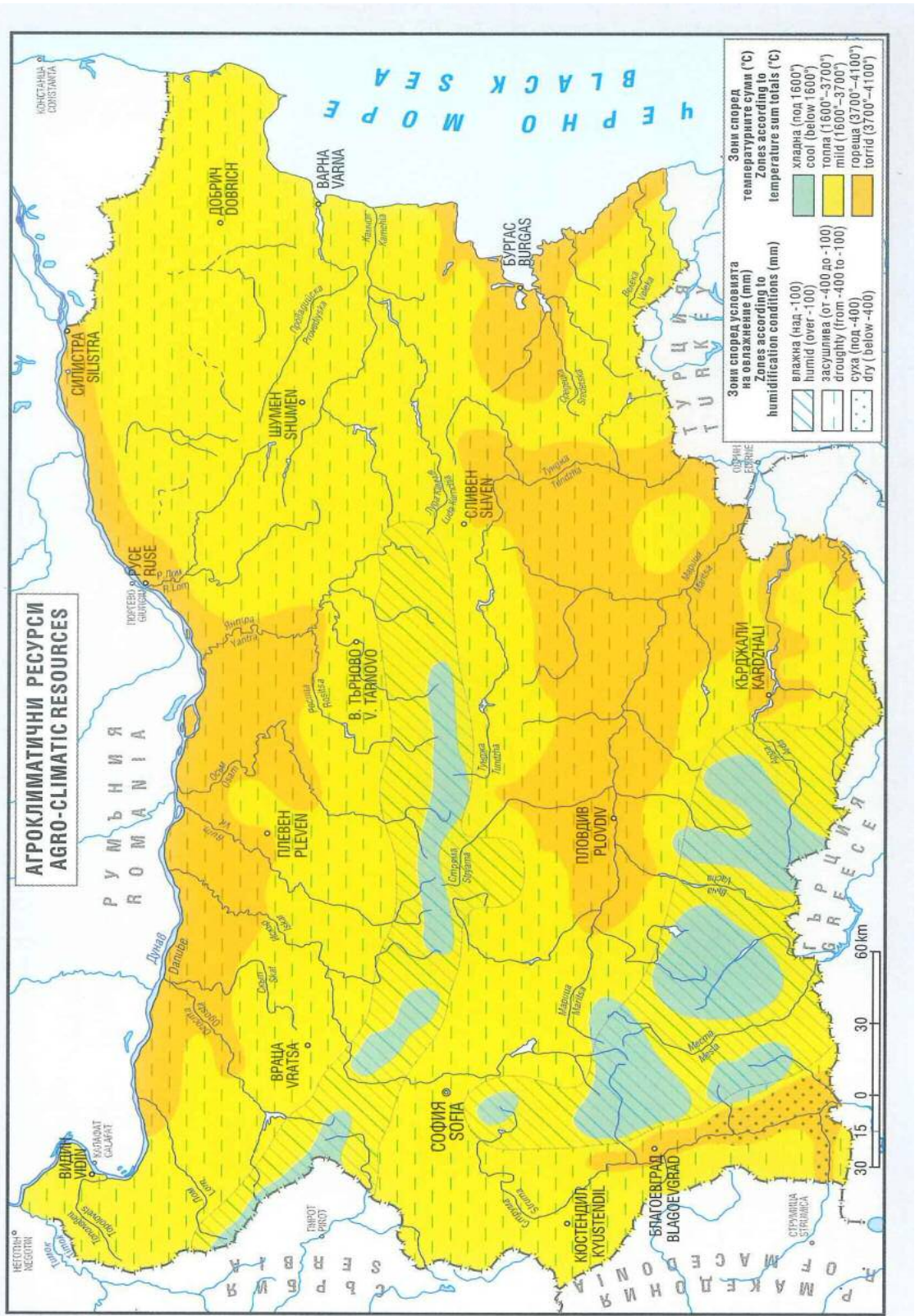
Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.63

Appendix 5.2: The soil composition of the region, p.34



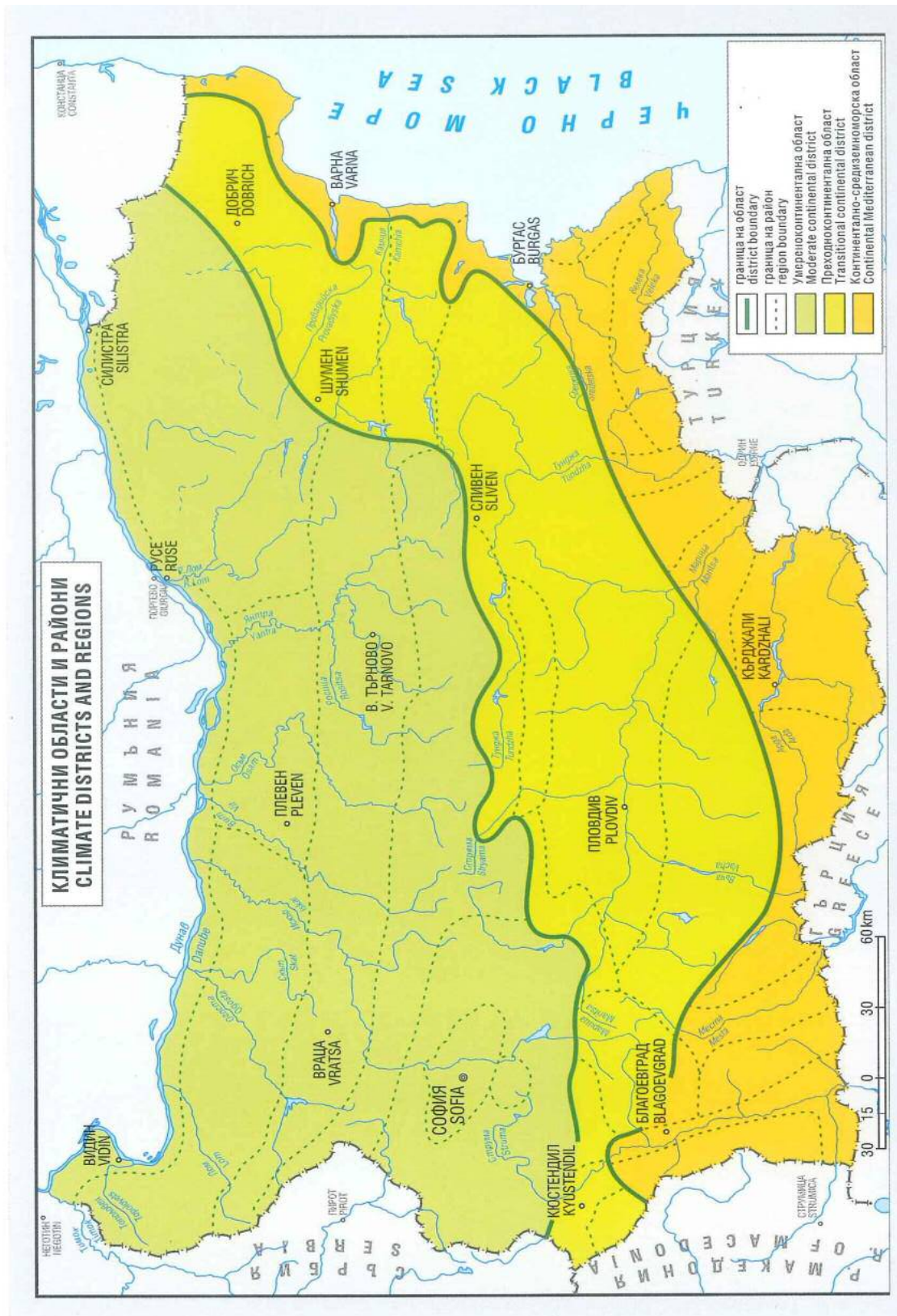
Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.62

Appendix 5.3: The agro-climatic resources, p.34



Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.84

Appendix 6.1: The climatic districts and regions, p.37

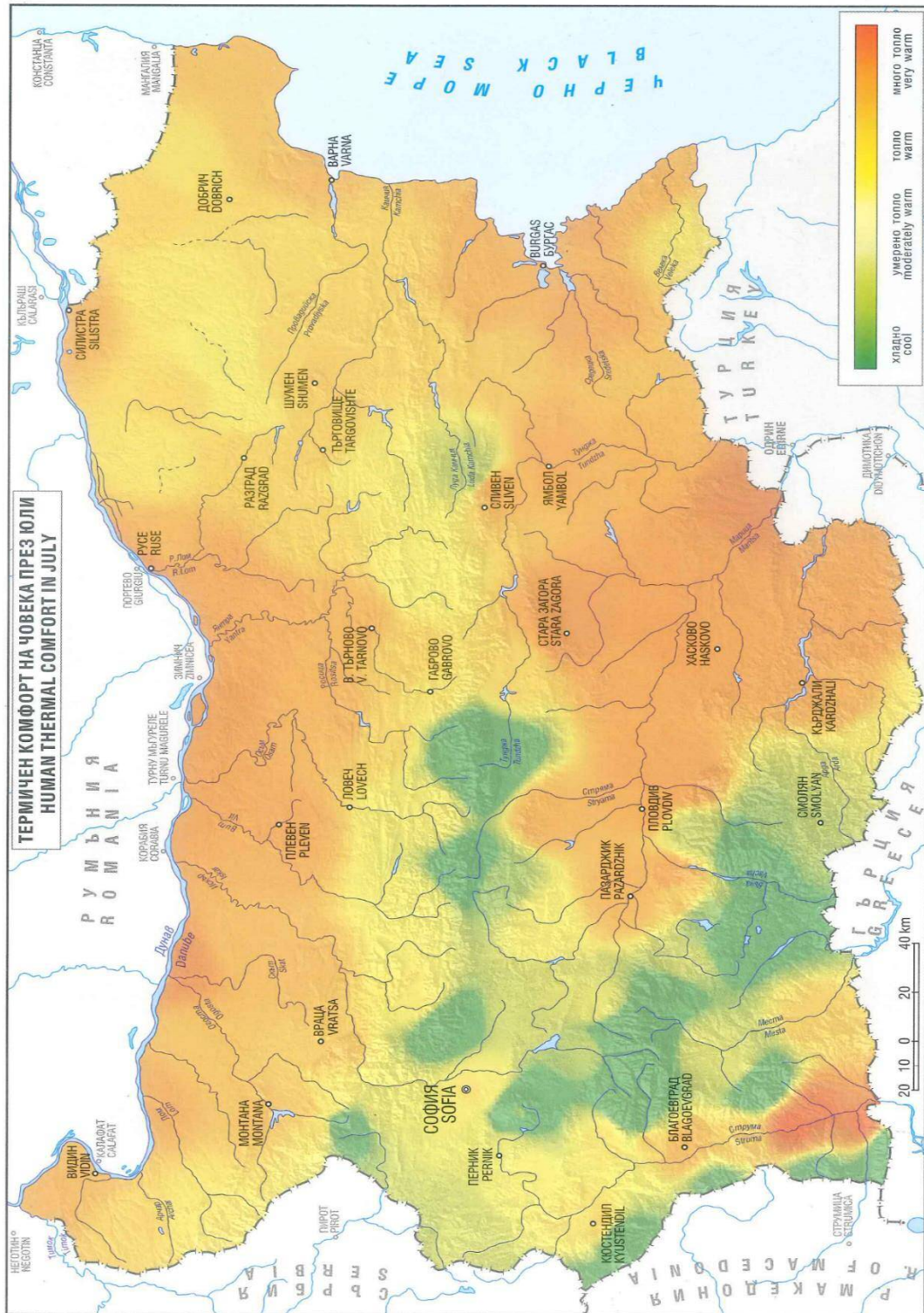


Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.89



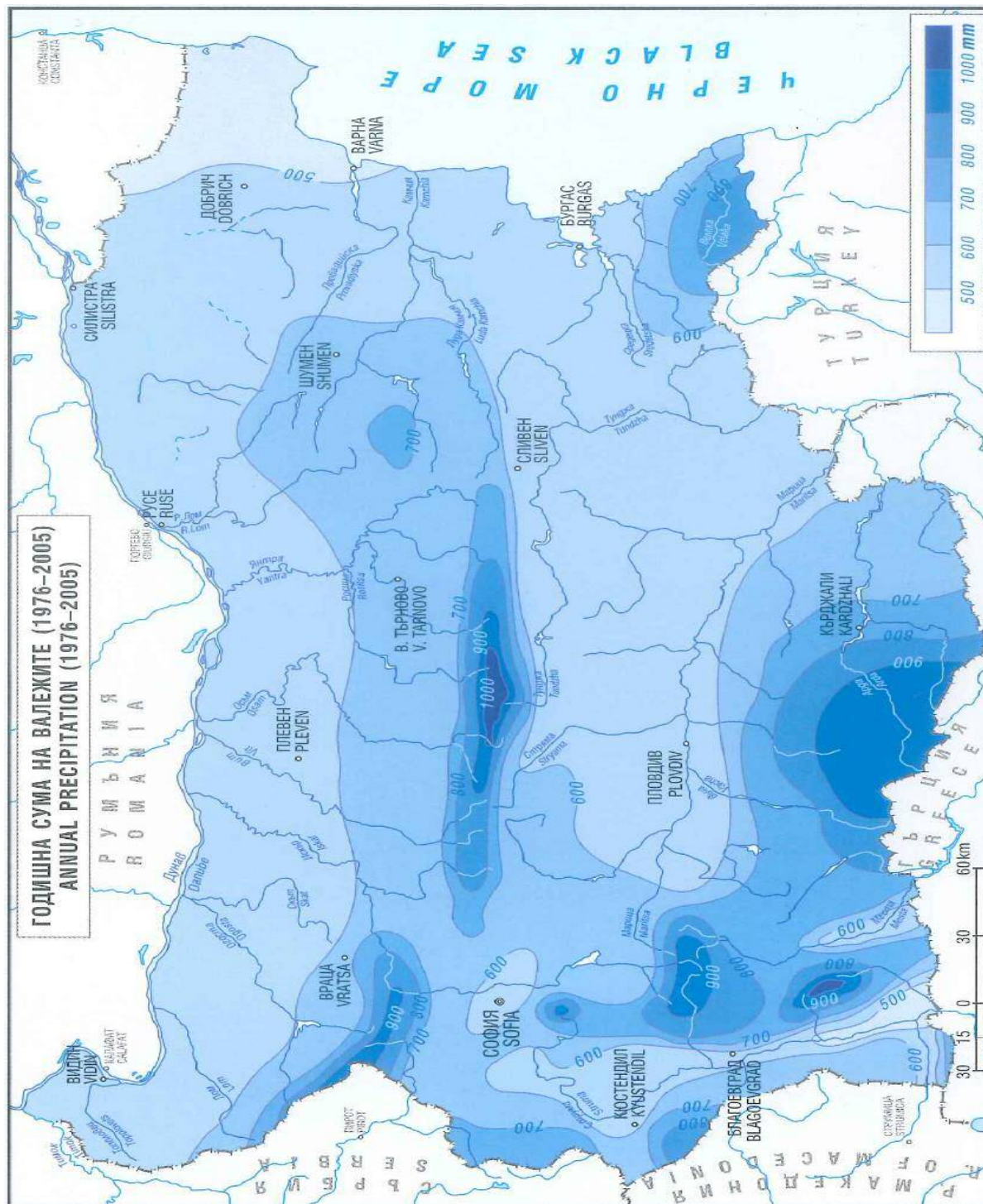


Appendix 6.3: Human Thermal Comfort in July, p.37



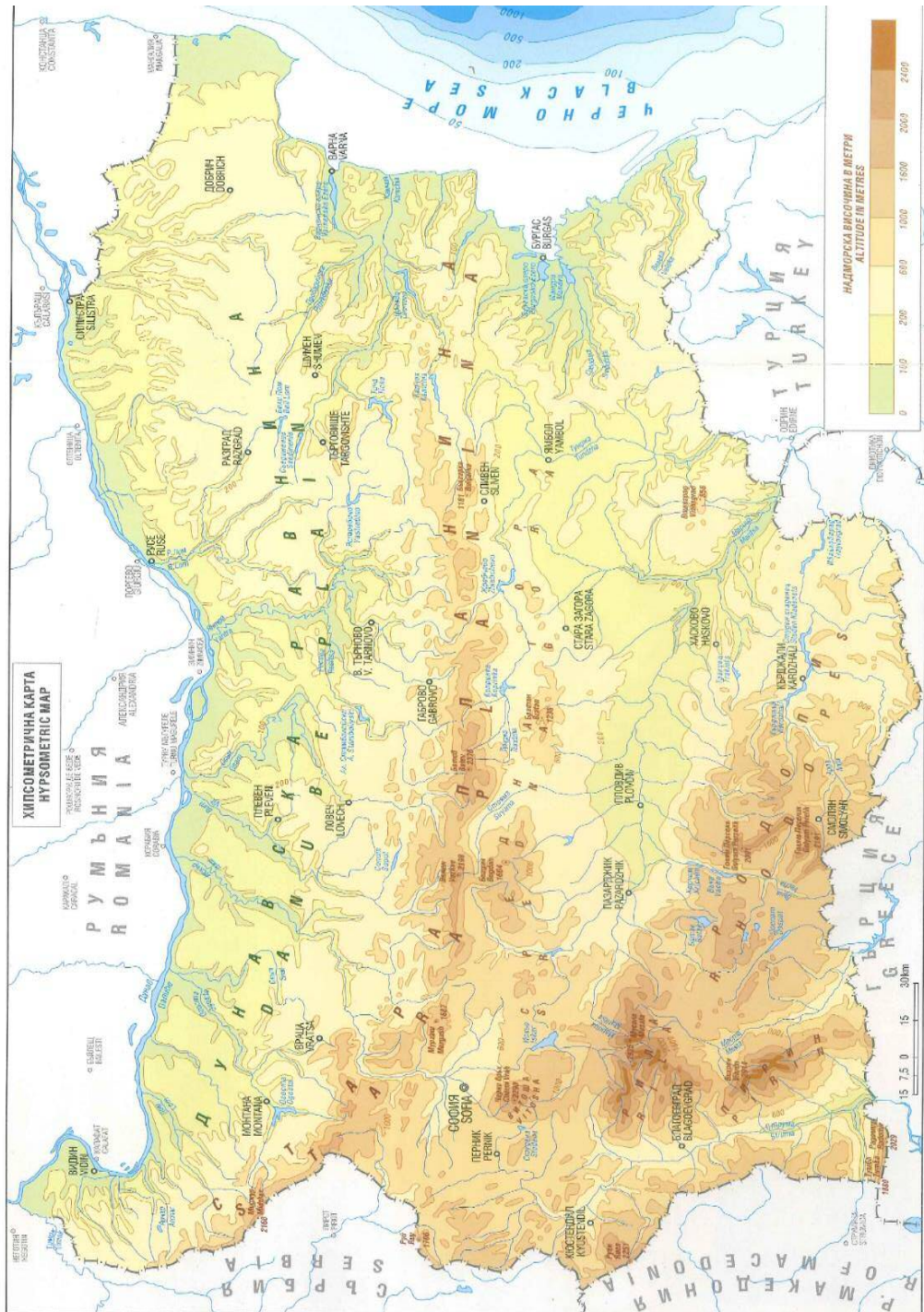
Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.86

Appendix 7: The annual precipitation, p. 37



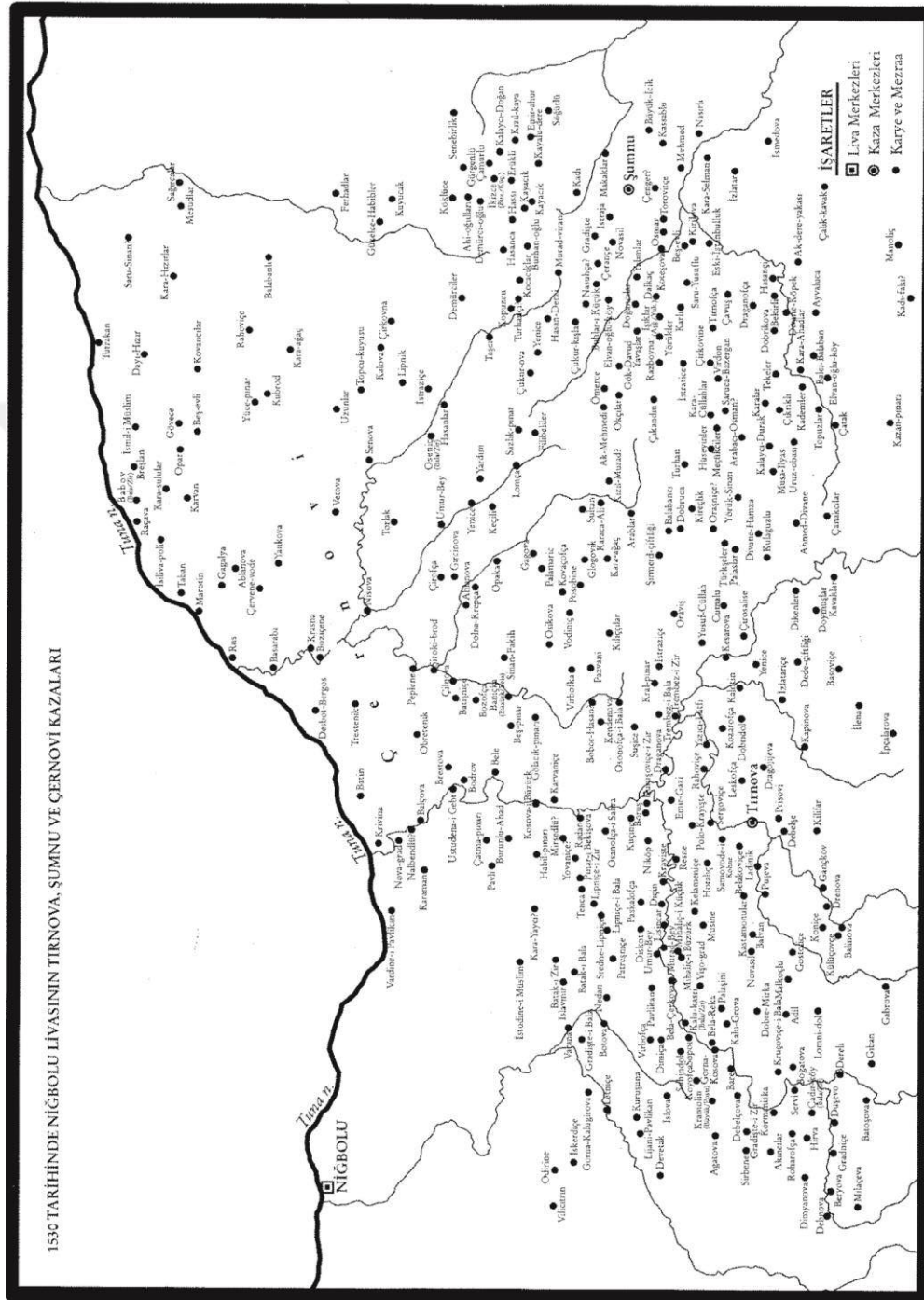
Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p.74

Appendix 8: The hypsometric structure of the region, p.41



Source: Bulgaria- Geographic Atlas, Sofia: Tangra, 2010, p. 53

## Appendix 9: The demographical change in Deliorman between 1530 and 1579



Retrieved from 370 numaralı muhâsebe-i vilâyet-i rûm-ili defteri ( 937 / 1530 ) II, Ankara – 2002.











Appendix 11.1: The register of Naldöken yürüks in Çernovi, BOA TT 357, fol 99, p.67

۱۰

نام و نام خانوادگی

نام و نام خانوادگی	مرد	زن	مرد	زن
...	...	...	...	...

۱۰۰۰

نام و نام خانوادگی

نام و نام خانوادگی	مرد	زن	مرد	زن
...	...	...	...	...

۱۰۰۰

نام و نام خانوادگی	مرد	زن	مرد	زن
...	...	...	...	...

۱۰۰۰

TT\_0357





## Appendix 12.1: The villages of Çernovi in the registers, TKGM TD 42, p. 67

Karye-i Gergi İslatina nam diğeri Yürükler tabi' Çernovi

Yusuf bin Yahşi, Maden birader-i o, Mustafa birader-i o, Kadir bin Adil, Selim bin İğdir, ... bin İğdir, Sevdiyar bin Hamza,

Mürsel bin Yusuf, Emrullah bin İğdir, Hızır bin Selman, Ferhad bin Abdullah, Hüdaverdi bin Abdullah, Budak bin Seydi, Talib bin Seydi

Bayramlı bin Seydi, Kurdbali bin Seydi, Hasan bin Ali, İlyas bin Ali, Oruç bin Ali, *sipahizade yazılıb*, Eynesi bin İsmail, Sadullah birader-i o

Receb bin Yunus, Ahmed bin Abdullah, Nusret bin Kabil, Ali bin Kabil, Bayramlı bin Veli, Şahkulu bin Eminci(?), Mir Veli birader-i o

Pir [...] birader-i o, Balaban bin Ali Bali, muattık; Mahmud bin Budak, *muattık*, Hoca bin Veled, Nasuh bin Veled, Murad bin Bali, Habib bin Bali

### Fol.45b

Hasan bin Bali, *muattık*, Bazarlı bin Veli, Abdullah bin Veli, Solmuş bin Veli, Kurd bin Hoca, Nasuh bin Yahşi,

Seydi bin Ahmed, İsa Bali bin Hacı Ali, Hacı Ali, veled-i o, Adilhan bin Hacı Ali, Seydi Ali bin Turhan, Bahtiyar bin Turhan, [...]

İsmail bin Ali, Süleyman bin Ali, Hüsam bin Yusuf, Mir Ali bin Yusuf, Atmaca bin Ali Baba, [...], Maden bin Hasan, [...]

İlyas bin Yusuf, Pir Nazır bin Ali, Yolcu bin Kurd, Vahid Kalender bin İsa, Zülfikar bin İsa, Emrullah bin Selim, [...]

Durak bin Emrullah, Ali bin Hoca, Osman bin Budak, Akıncı bin Ali, Seydi Ali bin Osman, Bayramlı bin İsa, [...]

Mahmud bin Durbali, Mürüvvet bin Abdullah. **Hane 53. Mücerred 25. Sipahi 1.**

Resm-i çift neferen 53 fi 22 – 1166

Resm-i Mücerred neferen 25 fi 8 – 200

Hınta kile 80 kıymet – 720

Şa'ir kile 40 kıymet – 240

Alef ma' mahlut kile 40 kıymet: 300

Öşr-i kovan: 100

Öşr-i ketâncik ma' fiğ : 80

Öşr-i Besatin – 42

Öşr-i Meyve

Resm-i Arus – 42

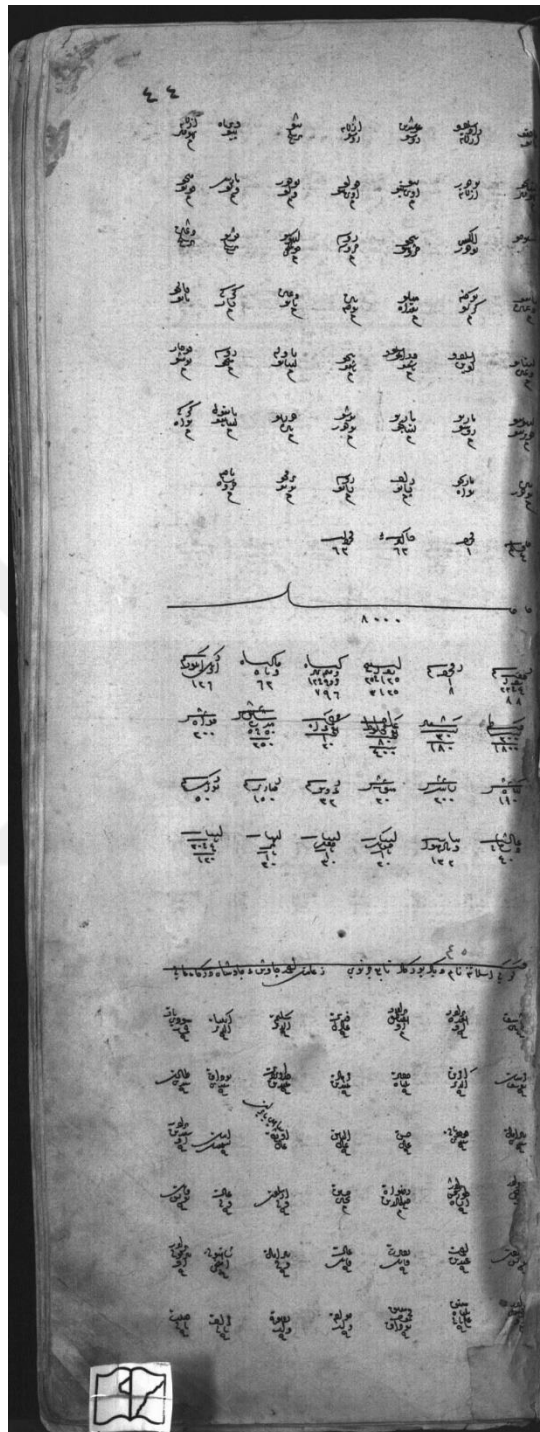
Resm-i Dönüm (ve) Bağat 4 fi 20 kıymet: 80

Adet-i Deştibani: 80

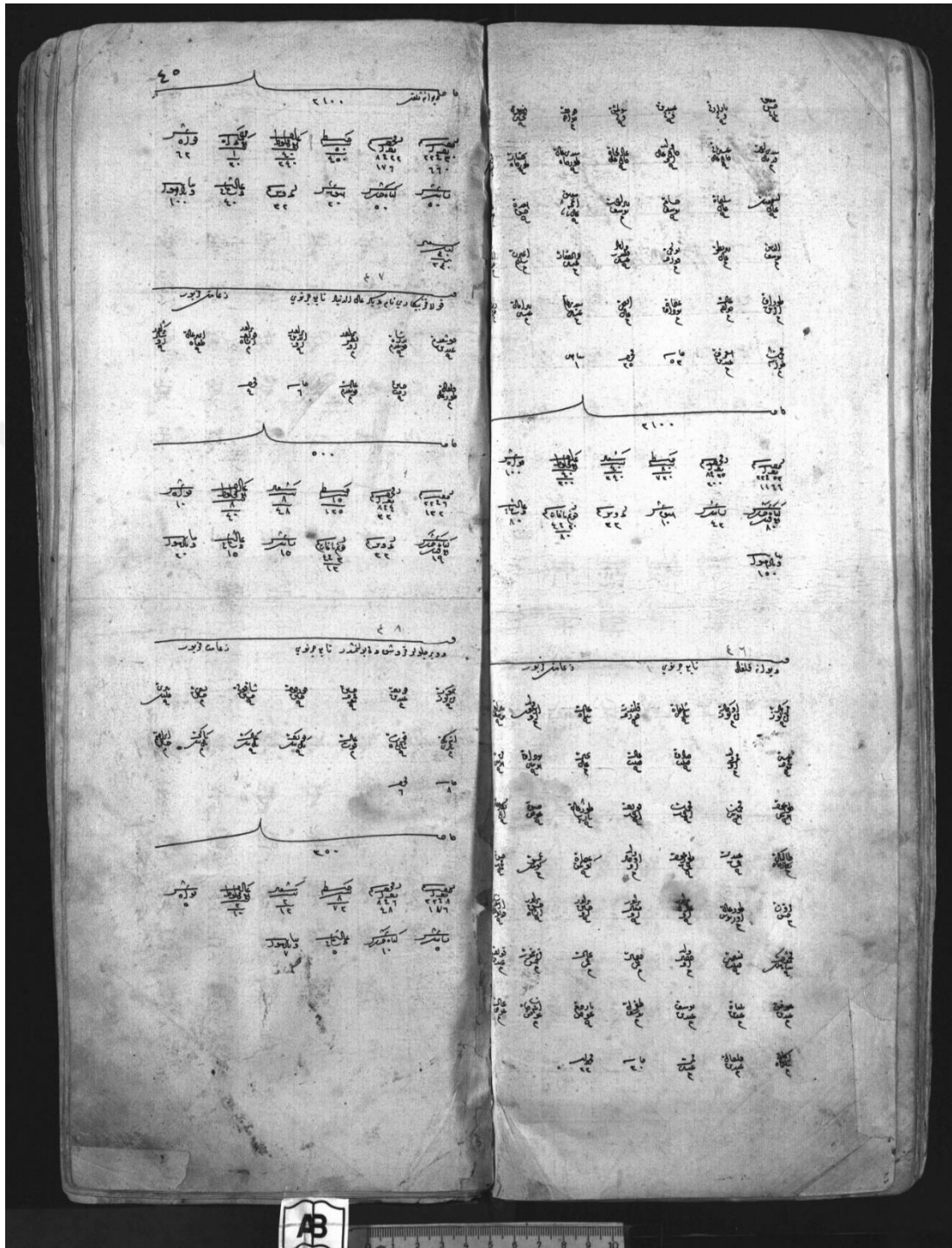
Niyabet ve Bad-i Heva: 150

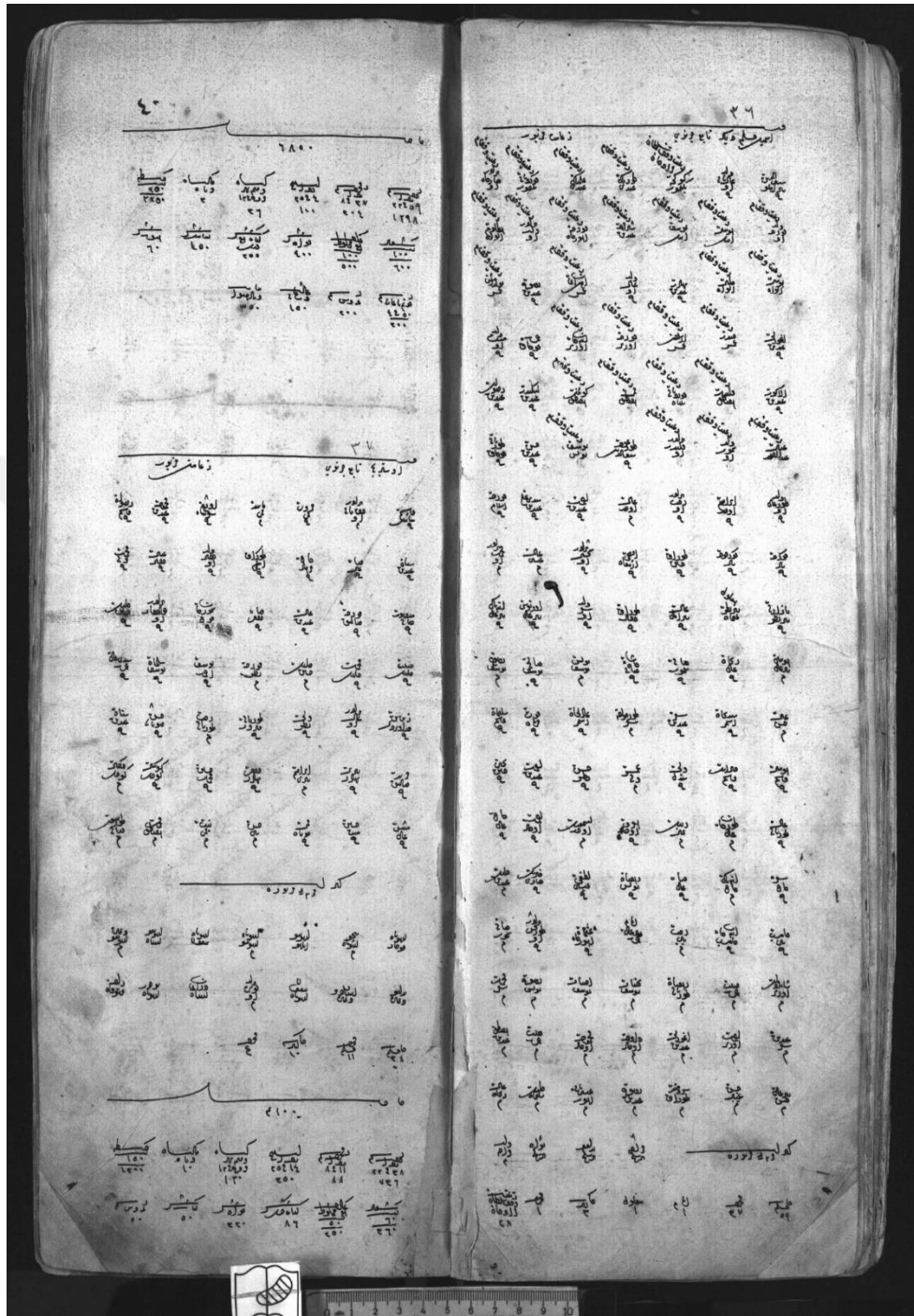
Hasıl: 2100

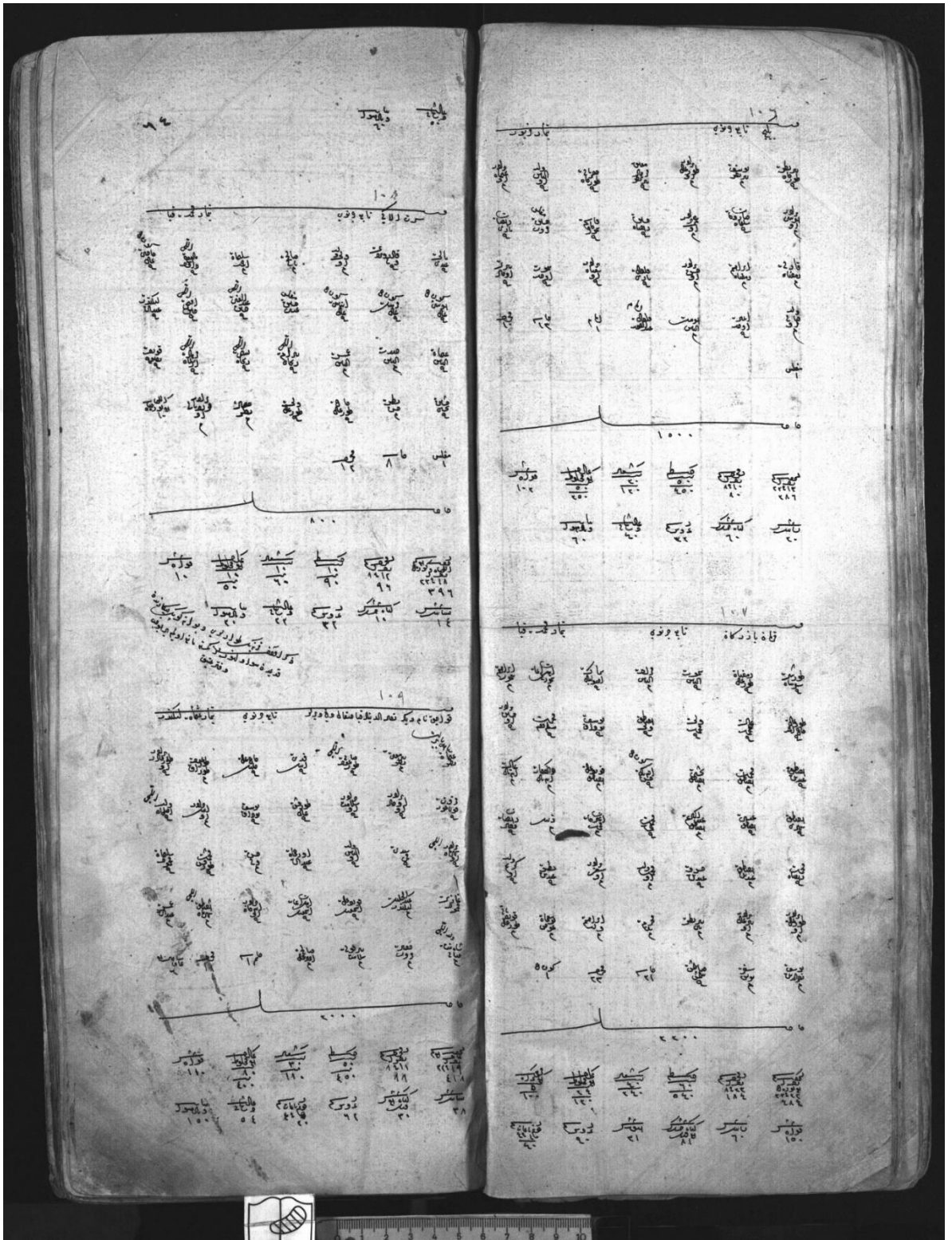
Appendix 12.2: The Village of Gergi Islatina, TKGM TD 42, fol 44a, p.67



Appendix 12.3: The Village of Gergi Islatina, TKGM TD 42, fol.45b,p.67



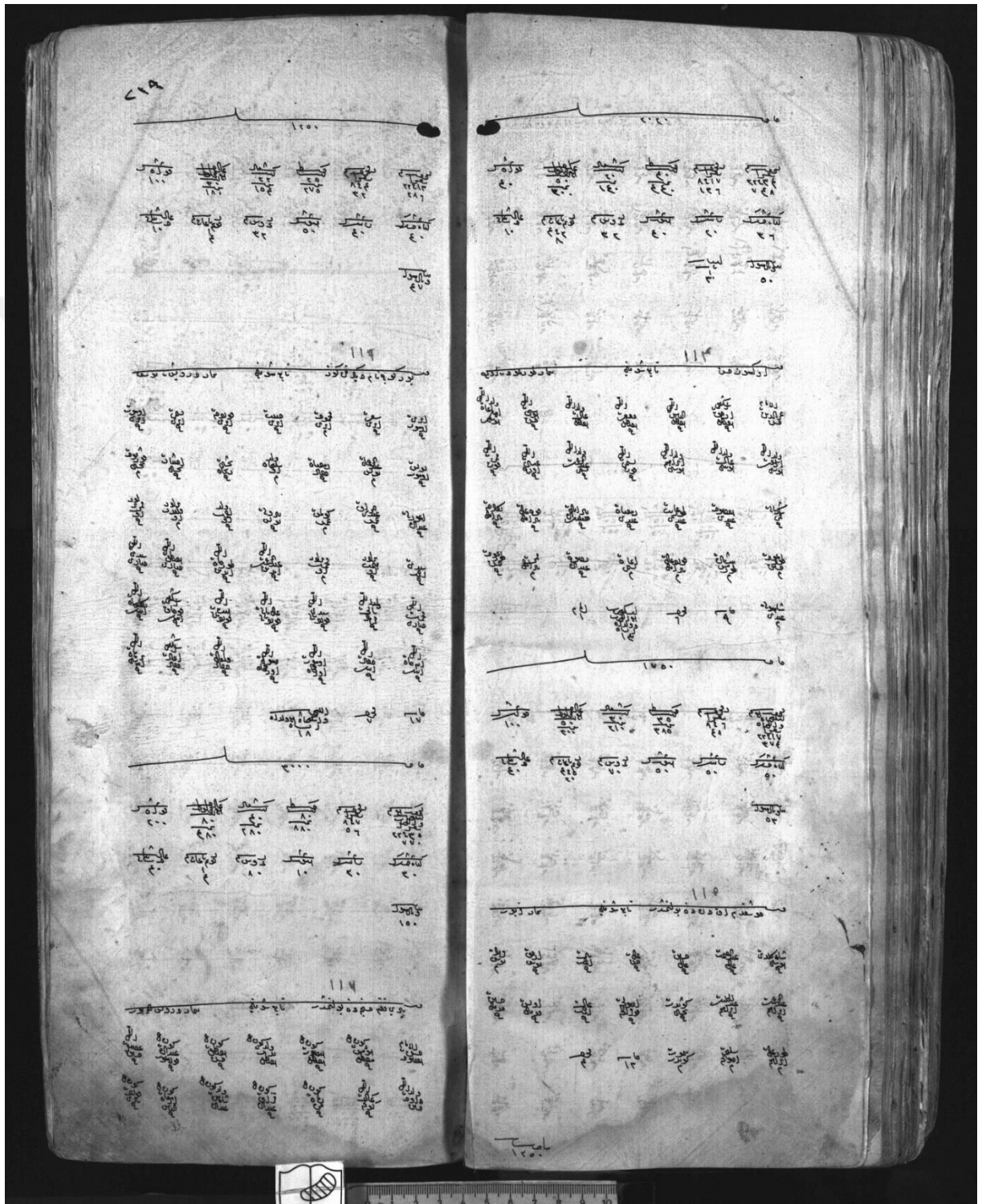






Appendix 13: The Villages of Şumnu and Eski Cuma in the registers, p.68

The Village of Karagözler, TKGM TD 42, fol.219



## Appendix 13.1: The village of Dođancı,p.68

### Karye-i Dođancı tabi'i- Şumnu an Zeamet-i Mahmud Çavuş el mezbur

Durmuş bin Cafer, mücerred; Güvendik bin Kölemen, çift; Seydi Ali bin Mehmedi çift;

Şahsefer bin Cihanşah, *ellici*, çift;; Sultanşah bin Nasuh, *ellici*; Ergani bin Evhad mücerred; Mustafa bin Hasan mücerred; Nureddin bin Evhad, *ellici*; Durmuş bin Evhad, eşküncü; Yusuf bin Nesimi, *ellici*.

Turgud bin Evhad, *ellici*; Hızır bin Canpaşa, *ellici*, çift; Şahin bin Canpaşa, *ellici*, çift; Hasan birader-i o, *ellici*, çift; Mahmud birader-i o, *ellici*, çift; Timurhan bin Mustafa, *ellici*, çift; Durali bin Burhan, mücerred.

Kademli bin Abdi, çift; Ali bin Sevindik, çift; Yusuf bin Sevindik, çift; Mahmud bin Yahşi, çift; Rıdvan bin Sinan, çift; Durali bin Sadık, *ellici*, çift; Saruhan bin Sadık, *ellici*, çift.

Yusuf bin Sinan, çift; Seydi bin Tapdık, *ellici*, çift; Ali bin ..., *küreci*, çift; Abduhamid bin Ali, *küreci*, çift; Kurdbali bin İlyas, çift; Mustafa bin Seydi, çift; İbrahim bin Piri, el-imam.

Mustafa bin Piri, çift; Mahmud bin Şahsefer, mücerred; Nasuh bin Kalgıl, mücerred; Yusuf bin Ahmed, eşküncü; Sıtkı bin Ali, veled-i eşküncü; Ali bin Mustafa, mücerred; Behzad bin Şahin, mücerred.

...? bin Ferdan; Hızır bin Kasım, malul; ...? bin Sadık, *ellici*.

Zulfikar bin Mehmedi, çift, *ellici*; Ali bin Mehmedi; Ali bin Mehmed; Nasuh bin Nesimi

Hane 12, Mücerred 10, Eşküncüyan, *ellici* ma küreci 21, imam 1, malul 1.

Resm-i çift eşküncü ve küreci ma' *ellici* neferen 32 fi 22 – 704

Resm-i Mücerred 10 fi 8 – 80

Hinta kile 3 kıymet – 33

Şa'ir kile 1 kıymet – 7

Alef ma' mahlut kile 2 kıymet – 12

Öşr-i kovan – 5

Öşr-i ketancık – 5

Öşr-i meyve – 2

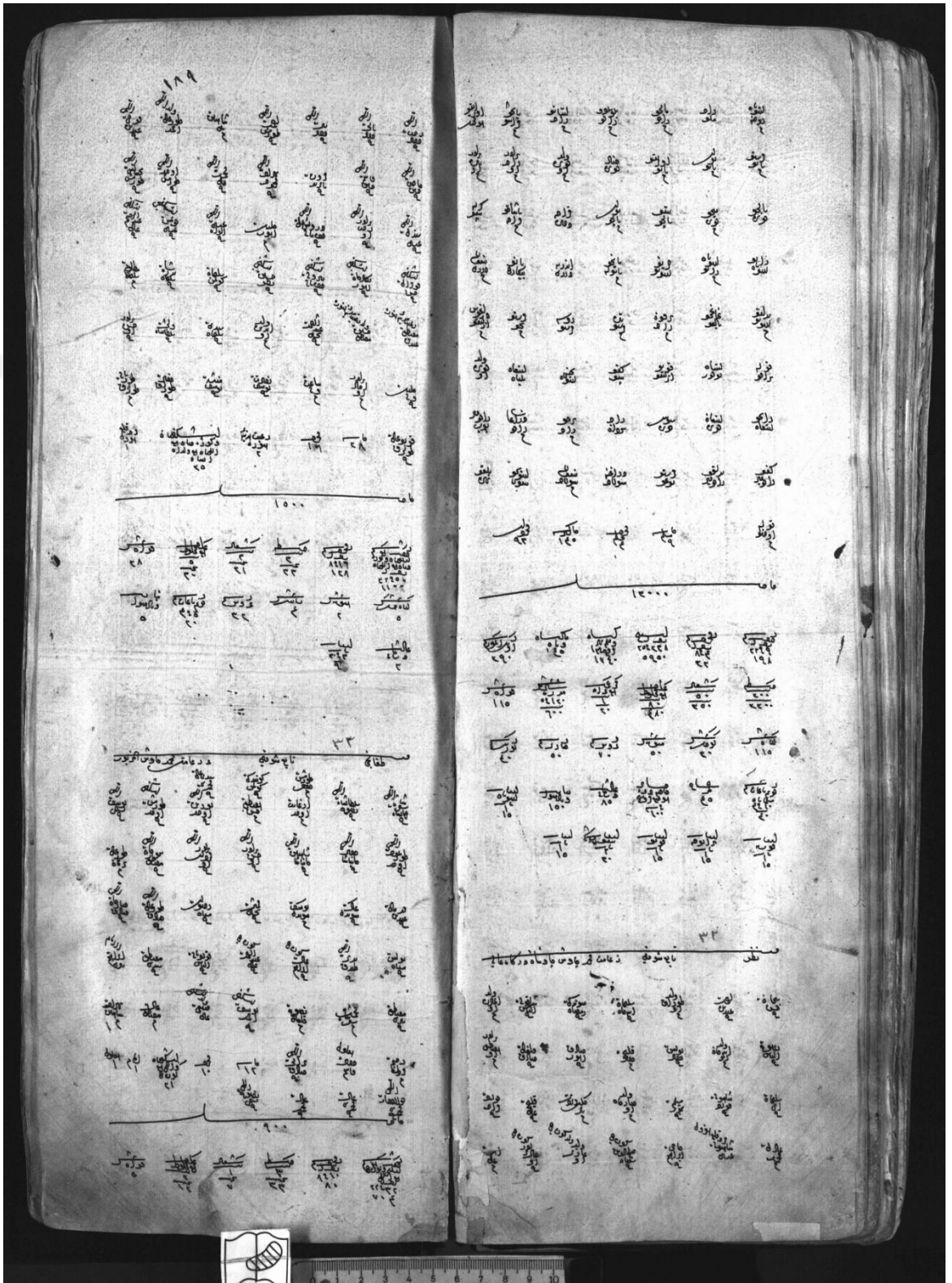
Resm-i arus – 32

Dönüm-i bağat 2 fi 2 – 4

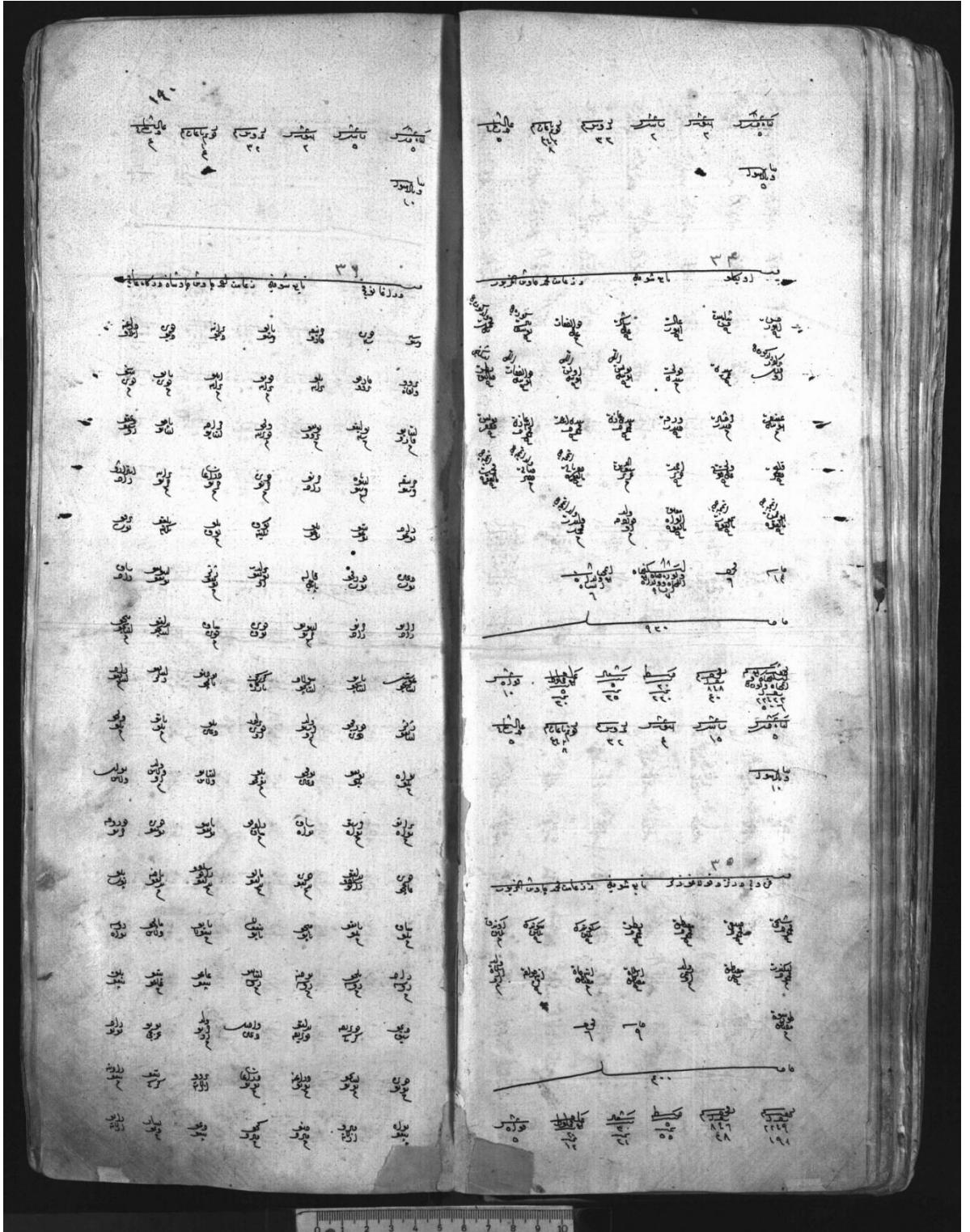
Adet-i deştibanî – 5

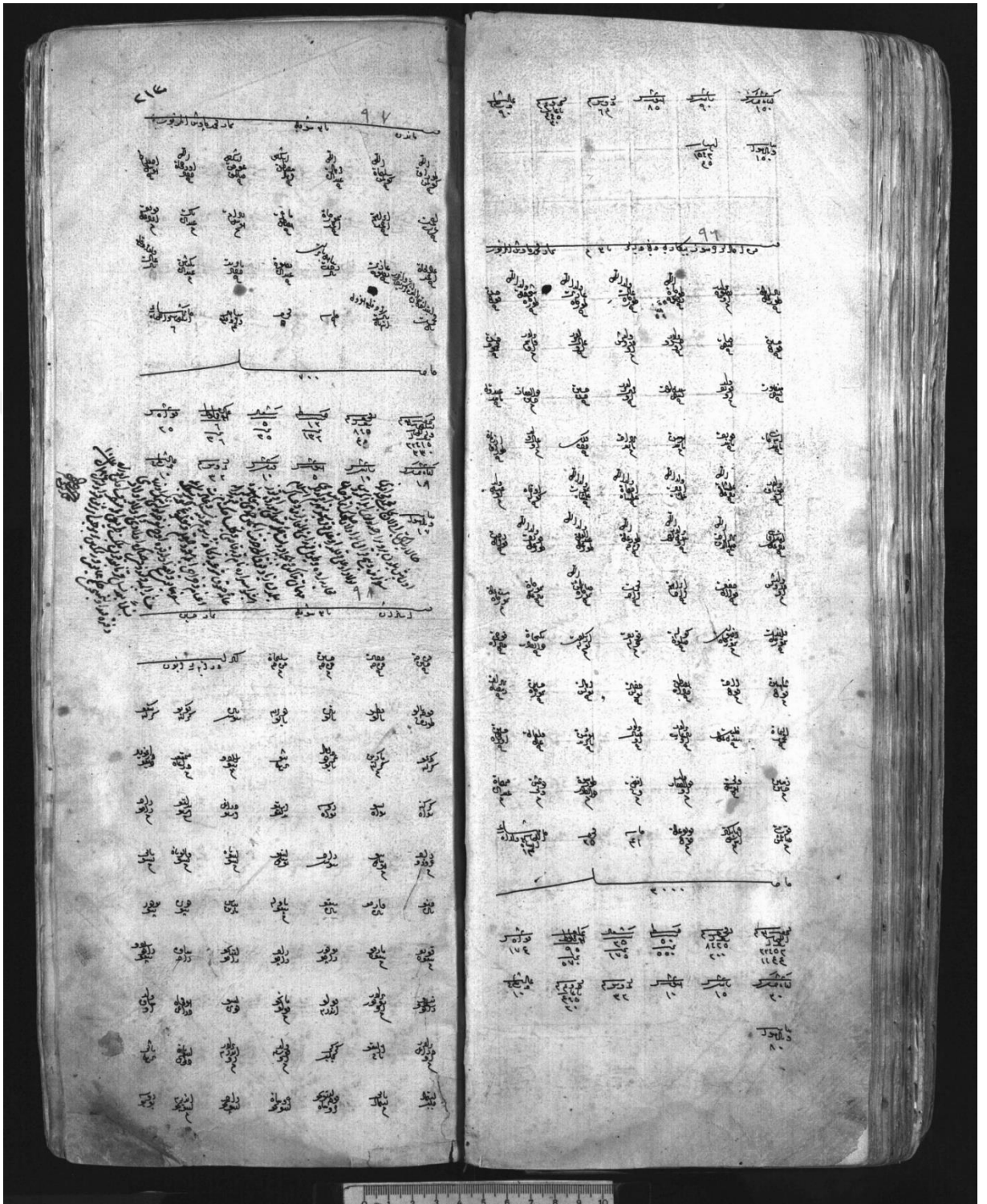
Niyabet ve bad-i heva – 5

Appendix 13.2: The Village of Doğançı, TKGM TD 42, fol 189a, p.68

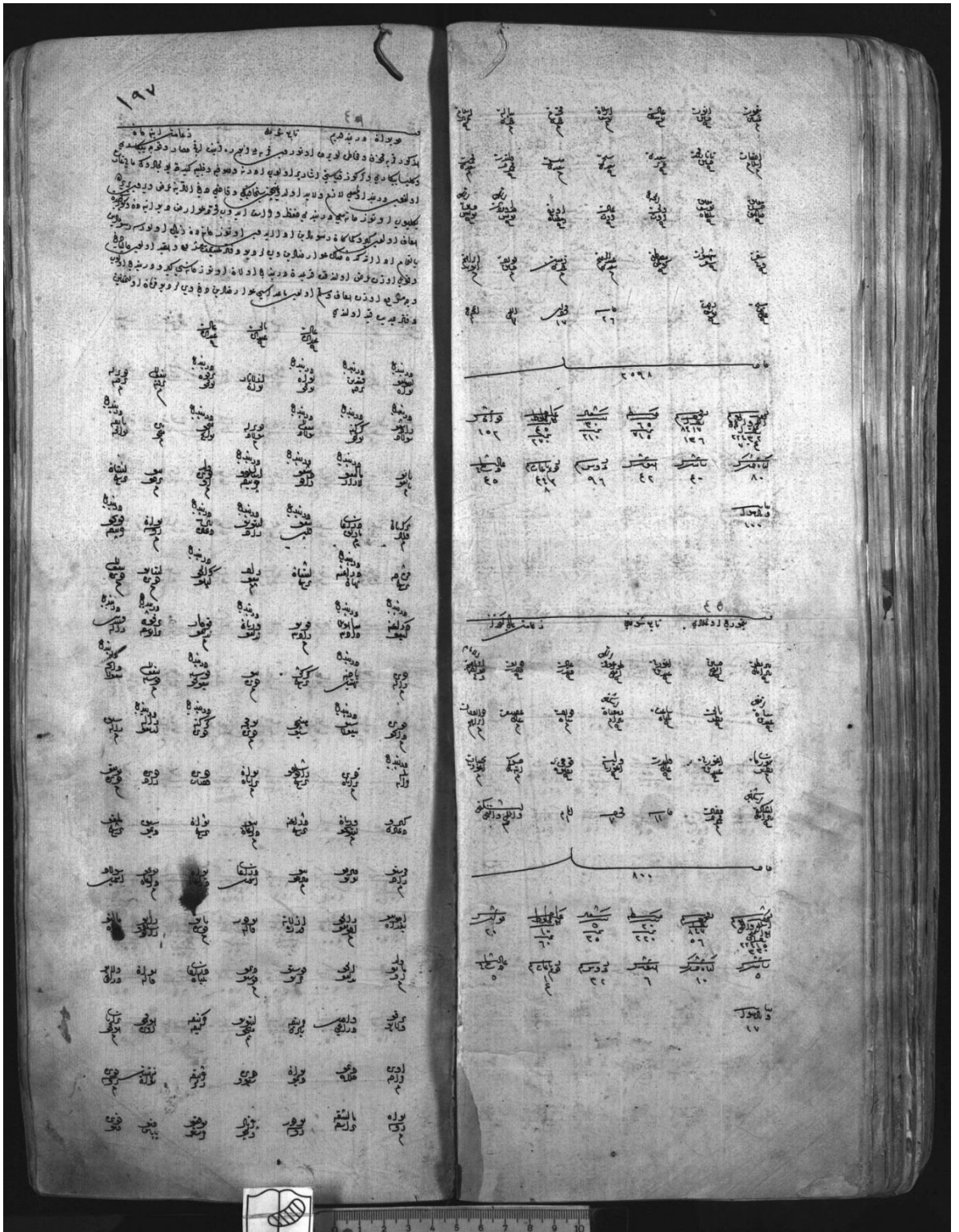


Appendix 13.3: The Village of Doğançı, TKGM TD 42, fol.190b, p.68





Appendix 13.5: The Village of Timurcu (Demirci) Oğulları, TKGM TD 42, fol. 198a, p. 68



Appendix 13.6: The Village of Yalımlar, TKGM TD 42, fol 259, p.68

