

TURKIZATION OR RE-TURKIZATION OF THE OTTOMAN BULGARIA: CASE STUDY OF NIGBOLU SANDJAK IN THE 16th CENTURY

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Abstract

Pre-Ottoman Turkic settlers such as Uzs, Pechenegs, Cumans, and Tatars were the main political and military actors of the Danubian Bulgaria until the Ottoman conquest and even after the post-conquest era, their descendents kept memory of these steppe peoples alive for centuries under the Ottoman Rule. The famous Ottoman Traveller Evliya Chelebi (1611-1682) in his travel book, *Seyahatname*, called the north-eastern region of the Ottoman-Bulgaria, as “*Uz Eyaleti*” (the province of Uz). After the conquest of Bulgaria, medieval military inheritance of the Balkans consisted basis of the Ottoman system and Ottomans adapted the well-functioning institutions and organization of the Bulgarian Kingdom such as administrative division, local taxes, and military organizations consisted of many Turkic soldiers. During the post-conquest era and even in the first half of the 16th century, ethnic and military culture of these Turkic steppe peoples were still alive in civil and military organizations of Ottoman Bulgaria. Examination of Ottoman cadastral surveys and military registers shows that these pre-Ottoman Turkic inhabitants in Christian settlements consisted of an important part of multi-ethnic urban and rural demography of the region as well as being an important non-Slavic and non-Greek Christian element of Ottoman military class in Bulgaria.

Turkic peoples of the northern steppe region came to these lands as populous nomadic invaders. Byzantine against the invasions hired these Turkic people as mercenary or recruited them to the Byzantine army. The Byzantine chronicler, Akropolites, states that Cuman soldiers (stratiotai) became smallholding soldiers in the Byzantine army and the other Byzantine chronicler Bartusis interprets recruitment of the Turkic steppe warriors into the Byzantine army and transplanting them to the borders as a success of the emperor Vatatzes that broke the aggressive influence of Bulgarians on the Turkic tribes. Until the Mongolian invasion, there had not been any Cuman migration to the Bulgarian lands but after the defeat of Cuman-Russian army against the Tatars in 1223, the first wave of Cuman migration reached to the Balkans and the Central Europe. The populous Cuman groups crossed the Danube in 1237 and the Bulgarian king Ivan Asen II could not do anything against the migration other than let them march through Bulgaria. In 1241, the second wave of Cuman migration arrived at Bulgaria from Hungaria, where after the assassination of their leader Kóten (Kötöny in Hungarian, Kotjan in Russian), Cuman tribes plundered the rural settlements and they were forced to migrate Bulgaria where populous Cuman groups had already settled. The second migration wave in the mid-thirteenth century brought the main political actors, boyar families and dynasties of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom such as the Shishmans in Vidin, Teters in Tirmovo and Dormans in Branichevo. Father of the a leading political figure Tsar George Terter I of Tirmovo must have been among the immigrants of the second wave of Cuman migration too and must have a blood tie with the Cuman chief Kóten in Hungaria who was a member of Terter(oba) clan.

Gagauzs are the other Turkic group in northeastern Bulgaria who speaks a dialect of the Anatolian Turkish but their religion, Orthodox Christianity, distincts them from other Anatolian-Muslim groups in the region. They were the other category of Turkic soldiers in Byzantine army and Byzantine chronicles stated them as Tourkopouloi who were consisting of 30-40 Muslim clans came to the Byzantine lands with the fugitive Anatolian Seljukid Sultan Izz al-Din Kay Ka'us II. They settled in Kavarna Land (Dobrudja) Christianized but they kept their language and many cultural motifs of Seljukid Anatolia alive for centuries. Even today in the northeastern Bulgaria and Moldavia, descendants of Tourkopouloi known as Gagauzs are a group of orthodox Christian people speaking a dialect of Anatolian Turkish and having their own distinct cultural rituals.

This study examines the Turkic Christian population of Nigbolu Sandjak in the 16th century Ottoman cadastral and military surveys and specifically focuses on some regions of the sandjak such as Çernovi, Hezargrad, and Şumnu, which are the main settlement area of the pre-Ottoman Turkic people since the ancient times and some other random samples from the Christian settlements of Lofca, Yanbolu, Tirmovi, and Zagra-I Eskihisar were examined to make generalizations on the pre-Ottoman Turkic, especially Cuman, settlers in the boundaries of the

Bulgarian Kingdom. Non-Slavic, non-Greek and non-Biblical personal names of Christian soldiers and peasants in the region indicate the multi-ethnic elements of the native Christian population of the region and among these names, pre-Islam Turkic names were registered more often than other ethnic names. These names out of Islamic-Arabic or/and Sufi-Persian naming tradition should be linked with the Turkic peoples of the steppe region who were Christianized and became a part of local population of the region.

Pre-Islamic Turkic names were registered in Christian districts of three big administrative centers Nefs-I Rus, Nefs-I Tutrakan, and Nefs-I Şumnu. In provinces, these Turkic names were registered in ten villages in Şumnu, thirteen villages in Çernovi, and six villages in Hezargrad. On the other hand, this is not a local case because examination of randomly chosen Christian villages all around the Nigbolu Sandjak indicates that as late as mid-sixteenth century, Cuman names were registered in Christian villages in every region of the Nigbolu Sandjak. Majority of these names are pre-Islamic Turkish names out of Islamic-Arabic or Sufi-Persian naming tradition and specifically majority of these names reflect ethnic and warlike character of these Turkic people as much as naming tradition of their nomadic culture. Ottoman tax registers shows that three hundred years after the last Cuman migration to these lands, Turkic names were still given in the region. Among these, the most common ethnic name Cuman is very characteristic and well-known name in the Turkic territory from China to Hungaria.

Examination of late 15th century *timar* registers, mid 16th century tax registers of Nigbolu and early 16th century military registers shows that the first centuries of the Ottoman rule in Bulgaria were the era of Anatolian migration and settlement. Nigbolu Sandjak emerged as one of the main regions of interaction between Muslim Anatolians, Christianized Turkic groups, Muslim steppe peoples (Tatars) and native Christians. Findings of this study indicate that when Ottomans came to these lands there were a significant number of Christianized Turkic people were consisting a part of peasant population and military organizations of the former Bulgarian Kingdom. During the Ottoman era, migration of Anatolian in the 15th and 16th centuries re-populated the abandoned old settlements and extended the settlement network to uninhabited lands of the Nigbolu sandjak, which was the re-Turkization of Bulgaria and mingling of pre-Islam Turkic and Muslim-Anatolian Turkish population, culture and language in the region.

Introduction

Transformations and changes in the nomadic northern Asia had been deeply affected Europe since the ancient times and invasions of Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Magyars, Cuman-Kipchaks and Mongolian-Tatars Europe changed ethnic, demographic, political, cultural and economic structure of the peninsula.¹ In the last decades of the first millennium, Khazar State (7th-10th A.D.) became powerful enough to impose political control over the lands stretching between the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus and the Black Sea.² Although the endless mobility of the nomadic tribes in the region seriously restricted the Khazar's political power and domination in the Eurasian steppes, the Khazar Empire brought stability and peace, *pax-Khazarica*, to Eurasia which was a period for the vicinity of the Pontic steppes, especially for Byzantine Empire suffering from the penetration of the nomadic invaders towards the Danubian border of the Empire.³ Danube was a natural border between the settled empires and nomadic world since the Roman times⁴ and the Khazar State as the political authority in the steppe region protected Eastern Europe and the Balkans from invasions and raids of populous nomad masses until end of the 10th century.⁵

After the disintegration of the Khazar Empire, waves of mass migrations and invasions of Turkic nomads reached as far as Central Europe. Ethnic, cultural, political and linguistic inheritances of these invasions transferred

¹ İnalçık, Halil. 2010. Osmanlılar: İmparatorluk, İmparatorluk, Avrupa ile ilişkiler. İstanbul:Timaş Yayınları, 228.

² Alan, K. 2006. The Jews of Khazaria, Brook ; Golden, Peter. Haggai Ben-Shammai, and András Róna-Tas (eds.) 2007. The World of the Khazars; Dunlop, D. M. 1967. The History of the Jewish Khazars; Golden, P. 1980. Khazar Studies: An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars.

³ For the Pax-Khazarica see, Boba, I. Nomads, Northmen and Slavs : Eastern Europe in the 10th Century; Obolenski, D. The Crimea and the north before 1204; Pritsak, Omelian. The Origin of Rus, I, Old Scandinavian Sources other than Sagas; Zimonyi, I. The Origin of the Volga Bulgars; Magochi, R. P. A history of Ukraine,; Rona- Tas, A. Hungarian and Europe in the Early Middle Age: An introduction to Early Hungarian History.

⁴ See Gy. Moravcsik (ed.) 1967. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio. Dumberton Oak: Center for Byzantine Studies, 51; Vasary. 2005. Cumans and Tatars, .69.

⁵ Spinei, V.2009. The Romanians and the Turkic Nomads North of the Danube Delta from the Tenth to the Mid-Thirteenth Century, Brill, 48.

generation to generation for centuries in the Balkans, Eastern and the Central Europe. During the formation of the medieval and early-modern identity of these regions, these warlike and nomadic Turkic peoples of the steppe region played an important role until Danube became the border of Christianity and Islam in the 1395 when the Ottomans conquered the last castle of the Bulgarian Kingdom.⁶ Information and historical sources on the early nomadic invaders such as Huns, Avars, Bulgars and Khazars are very limited but historical accounts and chronicles of the early Middle Ages give valuable information about Pechenegs, Uzs and Cumans such as Byzantine chronicles especially written in the period from Constantine Porphyrogenetus (905-959) to Anna Comnena (1083- 1153) stating the invaders, with their role in the Byzantine army and balance of power in the region.⁷ On the other hand, Codex Cumanicus is one of the main historical sources for the language and daily life of the Turkic steppe peoples.⁸ Prior to the Ottomans, these Turkic people constituted the Asiatic heritage in Europe and these Nomadic-Turkic migration waves shaped the ethnic, cultural and political character of Bulgaria as well as the Balkans, Eastern and Central Europe. In the twentieth century, a number of cultural and linguistic studies made on medieval sources examined the demographic, military and cultural effects of Turkic nomads of the Eurasian steppes on Europe and their close relationship with dynasties of western Eurasia, the Balkans and Central Europe. Among these, Bulgarian scholars such as Zlatarski, Mutafchiev and Pavlov gave a special interest on pre-Ottoman Turkic people and their political relations with Bulgarian dynasties and they made valuable contributions to the field. On the other hand, works of Romanian scholar Oberländer also studied on Turkic peoples and their contributions considered these people on a different view. On the other hand, during the early Ottoman era and even in the first half of the 16th century, ethnic and military culture of these Turkic steppe peoples were still alive in Ottoman civil and military organizations in Bulgaria. Examination of the two late 15th century *icmal* surveys of Nigbolu Sandjak “ODBNL 45/29” and “ODNBL 12/9”, “TD382 1556 Nigbolu Mufassal Register”, “MAD 81 1522-23 Tarihli Istılab-I Âmire Voynukları Defteri” and “TD151 1528 tarihli Voynuk Tahrir Defteri” indicate that these pre-Ottoman Turkic inhabitants registered in Christian settlements were an important part of multi-ethnic urban and rural demography of the region as well as an important non-Slavic and non-Greek Christian element of military class in the Ottoman Bulgaria.⁹ This study examines demography, settlement regions and status of pre-Ottoman Turkic peoples in Ottoman Bulgaria and their role in Ottoman provincial army as members of various organizations of Christian soldiers in Danubian frontier in the 16th century.

When Anatolians Turks came to these lands after the conquest of Bulgaria in the 1395, Turkic settlers following the northern migration path passing through Eurasian steppes had already become an integral part of the local Christian population and military system in the region and 15th and 16th century Ottoman surveys registered their Turkish names in Christian villages and in various organizations of Christian soldiers. This study examines pre-Ottoman Turkic settlers of the Nigbolu Sandjak and their existence in social and military organization of the Ottoman system in the period of late 15th and mid- 16th century when Muslim Anatolians re-populated abandoned old settlements or populated the empty regions of the sandjak. Byzantine chronicler states how these steppe warriors became a part of the Byzantine military organization along the frontiers and Hungarian archival sources

⁶ For more information on the pre-Ottoman Turkic presence in these regions see, Vasary, I. “The role of the Turkic peoples in the ethnic history of Eastern Europe Ethnicity and Nationalism: Case Studies in Their Intrinsic Tension and Political Dynamics”, in *Tatars and Russians in the 13th-16th Centuries*, 7-34.

⁷ Toynbee, Arnold. 1973. *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his world*. London: Oxford University Press; Sewter E.R.A (trans.) 1969. *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*. Penguin Books; Gyula Moravcsik, and Romilly James Heald Jenkins. 1985. *Constantine, De administrando imperio*, Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies; Cyril Mango (trans.) *Short history / Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople*; R. Guiland, R. (trans.) 1927. *Correspondance de Nicéphore Grégoras*. Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles lettres"; Failler, Albert.(trans.) 2001. *La version brève des relations historiques de Georges Pachymérés*. Paris : Institut français d'études byzantines; Obolensky, Dimitri. *The Byzantine Commonwealth, Eastern Europe*, 500-1453.

⁸ Drüll, von Dagmar. (trans.) 1980. *Der Codex Cumanicus : Entstehung u. Bedeutung*. Stuttgart : Klett-Cotta; Kuun, G.(ed.) *Codex Cumanicus*, Grönbech, K. 1992. *Kuman lehçesi sözlüğü : Codex Cumanicus'un Türkçe Sözlük Dizini*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları.

⁹ The late 15th century registers are “ Oriental Depatment of Bulgarian National Library “St. St. Cyril and Methoius”, Or. Abt., Signature OAK., 45/ 29” and “Oriental Depatment of Bulgarian National Library “St. St. Cyril and Methoius”, Or., Abt.,Signature Hk., 12/9” and these are being kept in Bulgaria. The other tax and military registers are kept in Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul.

give clues of the last Cuman migration from Hungary to Bulgaria that brought the dynasties and boyar families of the second Bulgarian Kingdom but there are not any archival sources other than Ottoman surveys registering these pre-Ottoman Turkic settlers name by name in urban and rural settlements or in organizations of Christian soldiers. Christian pre-Ottoman Turkic settlers and Anatolian Muslim immigrants were registered in the same Ottoman surveys with the same pre-Islamic Turkish names during the centuries, which are the most detailed source of information for the pre-Ottoman Turkization of the region, cultural and linguistic remaining of the Turkic steppe identity during a new era of Turkization under the Ottoman rule.

The most comprehensive secondary source for the origin of Turkic place names and personal names is Laszlo Rasonyi's collection of Turkic names, *Onomasticon Turcicum* published in 2007.¹⁰ Ransonyi's study includes Turkic personal names attested in many ancient and modern Turkic dialects collected from medieval and modern sources. Also Rasonyi's other books and articles on the pre-Ottoman Turkic people in history of the Eastern and the Central European politics, demography and settlement are very important secondary sources for this study.¹¹ Russian, Armenian and Georgian chronicles including many Cuman and Pecheneg names are primary sources to make comprehensive lists of Turkic names with different pronunciations of these names in other languages, which make easier to determine common and rare pre-Islam Turkic names among many Slavic, Greek, and Biblical names including their versions and abbreviations in the Christian settlements of the Ottoman Bulgaria.¹²

1. Pre-Ottoman Turkish Presence in the Danubian Border

Migration of proto- Bulgarian tribes was one of the instrumental demographic movements on the south shore of Danube. Byzantine chroniclers Rhetor, Priscos and Suidas give the earliest information on the Bulgarians' migration to the Eastern Europe.¹³ These chronicles recorded that after the disintegration of the Western Hun confederation, the Bulgarian tribes settled in the steppes stretching between Danube and Volga and in 481 A.D., Johannes Antioch mentioned the name of "Bulgars" for the first time and they appeared as a powerful rival against the Byzantine Empire in the Balkans founded their state and became rulers of the southern-Slavic tribes.¹⁴ Although Byzantine set its cultural and religious domination on the southern Slavic population and eliminated the political and administrative-ecclesiastical independence of Bulgaria in the 11th century, nomadic invasion of Turkic tribes was still a serious potential threat on the northern frontier of Byzantium. Second half of the 12th century was period of political and economic decline for the Byzantine Empire that prepared the conditions for a new political revival in the Danubian region. Against the rise of Italian cities, Byzantine lost its leading role and increasing financial problems weakened the central authority even further, which increased anarchy and unrest of rural population in provinces.¹⁵ A Bulgarian uprising in 1185-1186 changed the political balance of power in the Balkans. Byzantine Chronicler Niketas Choniates as the primary source of the uprising states the two Bulgarian nobles, Peter and Asen

¹⁰ L. Rásonyi. 2007. *Onomasticon Turcicum*.

¹¹ Rásonyi, L. 1983. The old Hungarian name Vajk- A note on the origin of the Hunyadi Family *Acta Orientale* H 36:419-428; Rasonyi, L. "Ortaçağda, Erdel'de Türklüğün İzleri", II. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildirileri, İstanbul ; Rasonyi. 1966-1969. "Kuman özel adları" *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları*. 3-6: 71-144; Rasonyi. 1939. "Tuna Havzasında Kumanlar" *Bellekten*, 3: 401-422.

¹² For lists of these names see, Rásonyi, 2007. *Onomasticon Turcicum*; Rásonyi.1966-1969. *Kuman özel adları*, 71-144; Rásonyi. 1927. *Valacho-Turcica*, Aus den Forschungsarbeiten der Mitglieder des Ungarischen Instituts und des Collegium Hungaricum in Berlin dem Andenken Robert Graggers gewidmet. Berlin-Leipzig.

¹³ See, Greatrex Geoffrey (ed.) 2011. *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor : Church and War in Late Antiquity*. Liverpool : Liverpool University Press; Blockley R.C. 1983. *The fragmentary historians of the later Roman Empire : Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus*. Liverpool, Great Britain : F. Cairns; Guthrie Kenneth Sylvan. 1918. *Plotinos : complete works, in chronological order, grouped in four periods : with biography by Porphyry, Eunapius, & Suidas, commentary by Porphyry, illustrations by Jamblichus & Ammonius, studies in sources, development influence, index of subjects, thoughts and words*. London : G. Bell and sons ; Grantwood, N.J. : Comparative literature press.

¹⁴ See, Hrbek, I. "Bulghar." *El*. Second Edition, I:1304.

¹⁵ See Vasary. *Cumans and Tatars*. 13-15.

brothers, as the leaders of the movement and their strong ties with the Turkic Cuman tribes living in the north shore of Danube. After a few decades of anarchy on the Danubian border, Bulgarian independence was restored with the help of Cumans and the Asen Dynasty succeeded the throne of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. After the revival of the Bulgarian State Terterid and Shishmanid Dynasties having clear ties with Cuman tribal nobility reigned in Bulgaria until the coming of Ottomans.¹⁶

Bulgarian State with its Turkic ruling elite was one of the most remarkable power having strong tribal ties with the nomadic communities of the steppe region, which is the main force behind the long-lasting regional and rival power of the Bulgarian State against the Byzantine Empire.¹⁷ After three hundred and fifty years from the Bulgarians, invasions of Pecheneg tribes in the mid-eleventh century changed the balance of power in the Western Eurasia.¹⁸ Bitter struggles between the Pecheneg tribes weakened them against the Byzantine Empire and when the internal conflicts and struggles came to an end, a group of Pecheneg tribes made a peace treaty with Byzantine in 1048 to settle in Dobrudja. Following the successful march of the Byzantine army, the other Pecheneg tribes accepted the Byzantine rule and their conversion to Christianity accelerated the amalgamation of the Pechenegs into the native population of the Danubian Frontier.

In the second half of the 11th century, Cumans' invasions opened the way for the migration of Uz tribes to the south bank of Danube, where these tribes settled in northern Dobrudja, Deliorman the Black Sea coast and their raids made raids ruined the rural settlement system of the Eastern Danubian region.¹⁹ Although they defeated the Byzantine army including many Pechenegs served as mercenaries, they could not be long lived in the Balkans and a number of these tribes became subjects of the Byzantine Empire, while the rest of them went back to the steppes and lived along the Russian border.²⁰ In 1224, following the Mongolians' defeat of the Russian-Cuman, the Uz tribes on the Russian border crossed the Danube and settled in Dobrudja where the other Turkic peoples had inhabited.²¹ A number of Christianized Uz tribes preferred to live along the shore of the Black Sea, especially in Mahgalya, Kavarna, Varna, and Silistre, where, inhabitants were still known as Uzs in the seventeenth century.²²

After a few decades from Uzs, Cuman tribes invaded the steppe region in the 11th century. After Cumans' victory over the three Russian princes in 1068, invasion of populous Cuman tribes reached to the Pontic steppes, Rumania, Carpathian plains and the Danubian Basin in a few decades.²³ While the Greeks called the Kipchaks "Comans," the Saxons of Transylvania called them Valvi, or Falben, i.e., "sallow people." The Russians called them

¹⁶ See, Wolff . 1949. " The Second Bulgarian Empire: its origin and history to 1204", *Speculum* 24 /2: 167-206; Vasary. *Turks, The role of the Turkic peoples in the ethnic history of Eastern Europe Ethnicity and Nationalism: Case Studies in Their Intrinsic Tension and Political Dynamics, Tatars and Russians in the 13th-16th Centuries*, 27-34; Stephenson. 2000. *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900-1204*. Cambridge, 288-294; Bekker Immanuel (ed.) 1865. *Nicetae Choniates Historia*. Bonn, 487-488; Golden, Peter. *Nomads and Their Neighbors in the Russian Steppe: Turks, Khazars and Kipchaks*, 147-150.

¹⁷ Some historians stress the Turkic origin and its political advantages for the Bulgarian state. See, Fiedler, Uwe. 2008. *Bulgars in the Lower Danube Region: A Survey of the Archeological Evidence and of the State of Current Research in The Other Europe in the Middle Ages: East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages (450-1450)* ed. by Florin Curta, Leiden, 151.

¹⁸ For general information on Pechenegs see, Pritsak. 1976. *Pecheneg: A Case of Social and Economic Transformation*, The Peter de Ridder Press, Lisse; Kurat A. N. 1937. *Pecenek Tarihi*, Istanbul; Kurat A. N. 1935. "Peçeneklere Dair Araştırmalar I: Karadeniz'in Şimalindeki Bozkırlarda Peçenekler" *İstanbul Üniversitesi Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 5:101-140; Horváth, András. Pálóczi.1989. *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians : steppe peoples in medieval Hungary*. Budapest: Corvina; Spinei, Victor.2006. *The great migrations in the east and south east of Europe from the ninth to the thirteenth century*. Amsterdam: Hakkert.

¹⁹ Some historians argue that these are not two different Turkic groups but branches of the same tribal community. For the theoretical discussion see, Jireček. 1876. 286 cited by Manof .1939. 8-9.

²⁰ See, MacArtney, C. A.1929. "The Pechenegs." *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 8/ 23: 348; Ülküsal. 1940. *Dobruca ve Türkler*, 30-31.

²¹ İvanov, Y. Kumans, *Mir Newspaper*, 26 February 1926 cited by Manof. 1939. 11.

²² Ülküsal. 1940. 16-17.

²³ Horvat Andras Palóczi. 1989. *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians: Steppe People in Medieval Hungary*, Budapest, 42-43.

Polovtsy, which some philologists derive from *polovoy* but which is generally taken to mean "steppe folk" from pole. The Hungarians used both of these forms, "Kun" and "Palocz", as the name of Cumans in their archival sources.²⁴ At the end of the eleventh century, northern steppe region was known as "Cumania" and the name "Deşt-i Kıpçak" was used for western Eurasian steppes even after the Mongolian invasion. One of the most distinguishing characteristic of the Cumans in the medieval world is being such a widespread Turkic pastoral nomadic society whose representatives were in everywhere in Russian lands, China, Central Eurasia, Caucassia, Xarazma, Danubian Europe, Balkans, Western Anatolia, Syria, Egypt, and India.²⁵

Cumans' invasion reached to the south shore of Danube when they first crossed the Danube in 1087 to join the Pecheneg army on the battlefield against the Byzantine. Their attacks and plunders on Byzantine settlements did not stop even after Emperor Alexius Comnenus hired them as mercenaries against Pechenegs' in 1091 and some of these Cumans were granted fief lands, which made Cuman mercenaries a part of Byzantine military class in the region. These Cumans formed the lesser nobility class in the Byzantine provincial army and its long-term effects other than stopping nomadic raids and plunders would be better understood during the Mongolian invasion.²⁶ The Byzantine chronicler Nikita Honiat's account states that Cuman tribes had already settled permanently in the north shore of Danube in the last quarter of the 12th century²⁷ and according to Nikita Honiat, Peter and Asen brothers convinced the Cumans to support their campaign on the Byzantine in 1186²⁸ and at the beginning of the 13th century, Rober de Clary's account mentions the Bulgarian state and their alliance with one of the main political actors of the Danubian Frontier, neighbouring Cuman tribes in the region.²⁹ Even Byzantine Empire Constantine VII in his book, *De Administrando Imperio*, underlines that no one even Russians could not act in Danubian region without any consent with Turkic tribes³⁰ and Byzantine chronicles supporting this statement mentions that the recruitment of Cumans to the Byzantine provincial army was a successful imperial policy eliminating the Cuman threat on the Danubian border and restoring the security along the eastern and western borders.³¹ During the Mongolian invasion in 1238, many Cuman tribes took refuge in the Byzantine territory³² and they were settled in Trace, Macedonia and Danubian region.³³ Also there are many other examples for the Cuman place names in the Balkans, Eastern and Central Europe such as (G)Uman in Ukrain, *Comania*, *Comanica*, *Comani*, *Bengeçeg (Mengüçek)*, *Konta*, *Tayta*, and *Kongrolu* as village names in Romania; settlement names such as *Kumanpataka*, *Comanfalu*, *Komanufalva* in Hungarian archival documents; a village *Kumanich* in the region *Nevrekop* and *Kumaniche* a village in Ottoman documents near *Sofia*. Names of many settlements, mountains and rivers in the Balkans, Eastern and Central Europe within the

²⁴ See, Bostwell, A. 1927/1928 Bruce, *The Kipchak Turks*, Slavonic Review, 6 p.70; Vasary, I. 2005. *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans (1185–1365)*, Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 5.

²⁵ Golden, Peter. 1984. "Cumanica I: The Qipiaqs and Georgia." *Archivum Eurasia Medii Aevi*, 4: 47.

²⁶ See, Ostrogorsky. 1968. *History of the Byzantine State*, Oxford, 366-7, 370; Irwin, *The Middle East*, 16; Omeljan Pritsak. 1991. "Cumans", Kazhdan, A. (ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols., New York: Oxford University Press, I:563-564.

²⁷ Even more Anna Comnena states the Cuman raids plundering Vidin in 1114. See, Anna Comnena, Alexiadis, ed. Bonn, II, s. 302; Chalandon, F. 1990. *Essei sur le régime d'Alexis Jer Comnéne*, Paris, 260; P. Mutafciev, *Bulgares et Romanins*, 309.

²⁸ See Sathas. 1872. *Medieval Livrary*, v.I, 78 and compare Zlatarskio. *İstoriya na Blgarskata Drjava*, II, I, 448, 451, 453ç

²⁹ de Clary, Robert. 1873. *La Prise de Constantinople Chroniques greco-, romanes*. Berlin, 52.

³⁰ See Moravcsik (ed.) 1967. *Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Administrando Imperio*. 51; Also Vasary underlines the importance of Cumans' alliance to be able to act safely in the eastern Danubian region along the Byzantine border for Russians during the 13th century. See, Vasary. 2005. *Cumans and Tatars*, 61.

³¹ See, Georgi. 1903. *Acropolitae Opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg, I. Leipzig, 53-54 and 65; See Ostrogorski. 1969. *History of the Byzantine State*. New Brunswick, 442; Charanis, Peter. 1951. "On the Social Structure and Economic Organization of the Byzantine Empire in the Thirteenth Century and Later", *Byzantinoslavica* 12 :133; Asdracha, C. 1976. *La region des Rhodopeas aux XIIIe et XIVe siecles*. Athens, 81 and 242-43; Angold, 1975. *M. A Byzantine Government in Exile*. London, 105; Bartusis, Mark. 1990. "On the Problem of Smallholding Soldiers in Late Byzantium." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 44:12.

³² Spuler, B. 1945. *Die Goldene Horde*. Leipzig, 19-20.

³³ see Ülküsal, 1940. 16-17; Manof, Gagauzlar, 11-12.

boundaries of Cuman domination kept their Cuman names for ages.³⁴ These place names and many others in the archival documents indicate the wide diffusion of Cuman elements into the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic inheritance beyond the western and southern boundaries of the Eurasian steppe frontiers.

Historical accounts and linguistic studies made on the Turkic peoples of the Eastern Europe indicate that besides the nomadic migrations from the Kipchak steppes, there were pre-Ottoman nomadic migrations from Seljukid Anatolia. Gagauz are one of the various Turkic groups in the Eastern Europe and Danubian frontier including northeastern Bulgaria who speak a dialect of the Anatolian Turkish but their religion, Orthodox Christianity, distinct them from other Turkish-Muslim groups in the region. Origin of Gagauz had remained controversial for decades and a number of hypothesis on the ancestor of these people were matter of discussion among turcologist but the discussions came to an end after publication of Paul Wittek's comparative study on the original Turkish account of Yazijioghlu Ali (1421-1451) and the Byzantine chronicles.³⁵ Wittek completely rejects the hypothesis that the Gagauz were Anatolian Turks who immigrated to Dobrudja under the Ottoman rule and been subsequently Christianized under the influence of the surrounding population. Such a gradual apostasy from Islam is not possible under the Sultan's rule, so the conversion must be in the pre-Ottoman period. Wittek also rejects the hypothesis that the Gagauz are Bulgarian, Greek or Wallachian Christians adopted Turkish language under the Ottoman rule because there are many examples indicating opposite cases in the Balkans such as Pomaks (Bulgarian speaking Muslims of Rhodop region), Bosnians and Muslim Albanians.³⁶ According to Wittek, after the publication of Kowalski's careful analysis of the Gagauz Turkish, it is proved that the Gagauz Turkish essentially has southern, in other word Anatolian characteristics.³⁷

The account of Yazijioghlu Ali tells the story of the fugitive Anatolian Seljukid Sultan İzz al-Din's Kay Ka'us II and his soldiers. After Michael VIII Palaeologos' re-capture of Constantinople from the Franks in 1261, Sultan İzz al-Din's Kay Ka'us II left Anatolia with his household and navy against the threats of both his brother Rukneddin and the Mongolian protectors. Yazidjioghlu states after coming of Anatolian clans under the command of a dervish Sari Saltuk in 1263-64, these Seljukid troops (Tourkopouloi) were settled in Kavarna Land stretching between the Golden Horde Khanate, the Bulgarian State and the Byzantine Empire.³⁸ Byzantine chronicles states that settlements of these Anatolian nomads consisting 30-40 Muslim clans functioned as a defence line along the border against any attack could come from the northern steppe region.³⁹ Although Byzantine frequently employed foreign mercenary troops from various regions, Turkic peoples of the Kavarna Land offered an important number of these mercenary soldiers in the Byzantine army but neither these tribes nor these lands were under the control of the Byzantine Empire.

According to the account of Yazijioghlu, after some time, the emperor feared from the Turkish tribes coming together under the leadership of the former Anatolian Seljukid Sultan and Byzantine imperial army marched on the region to prevent emergence of a new enemy on the northern border of the Empire. The new-Muslim Khan of the Golden Horde, Berke, survived İzz al-Din Kay Ka'us with two of his sons and brought them to Crimea. Also the Muslim subject of the sultan İzz al-Din's Kay Ka'us with their religious leader Sari Saltuk were transferred to the steppe region under the protection of Berke Khan and then his successor Noghay continued the Tatar protected on these Muslims of Kavarna Lands. However, according to Gregoras, a number of Turkish soldiers stayed in Kavarna

³⁴ For examples of Cuman place names see, I. Conea, I. Donat. 1956. Contribution à l'étude de la toponymie péchénoise-comane de la plaine roumaine de Bas-Danube. in Contribution Onomastiques. Publiées à l'occasion du VIe Congrès international des sciences onomastiques à Munich du 24 au 28 Août 1956. Bucarest, 1958 pp. 154-158; Diaconu, P. 1978. Les Coumans au Bas-Danube aux XIe et XIIe siècles. Bucarest, 26-27; Schütz, I. 1985. "Des „comans noirs“ dans la poésie populaire albanaise." Acta Orientale H, 39: 198-201; Stayanov, Valery. 2000. Cumanian Antroponymics in Bulgaria During the 15th Century in The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization v. IV Ed. Kemal Çiçek, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 114-115.

³⁵ Wittek. 1952. "Yazijioghlu Ali ." 639-68.

³⁶ For more detail on his discussion on previous hypothesis see, Wittek .1952. "Yazidjioghlu Ali.", 658-660.

³⁷ See Kowalski, T. 1933. Les Turcs et la langue turque de la Bulgarie du Nord-East. Krakow.

³⁸ We learned the name of the region as " Kavarna " from the document that Asen II gave the to the merchants of Ragusa. Manof (1939), p. 20.

³⁹ See, Wittek. 1952, 648. and İnalçık. 2003. "Dobruja." EI.

were baptized and enrolled in the Byzantine army.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the other two sons of the Sultan with their mother who was the relative of the Byzantine emperor were granted fief land and a feudal title in Verria (Karaferye) in Macedonia. One of the Seljuk princes stayed in Verria and the other one went to Constantinople. Yazijioghlu denotes that when the Sultan Bayezid I, conquered Verria in 1385, the grandsons of the Seljuk dynasty were still living there and Bayezid I deported them from Verria to Zikhne in eastern Macedonia. The eldest son of the family, Lizaqos, appointed as *subashi* and Lizaqos renewed his imperial diploma to be exempted from poll tax.⁴¹

Mongolian invasion was the last wave of tribal invasion from the steppe region penetrated the Eurasia.⁴² A decade after the stormy days of the Tatar invasion, Wilhelm Von Rubruk who went on a missionary journey on the order of the King Louis IX of France to convert Tatar and Mongolian rulers in 1253 stated in his travel account that the Bulgarians, Vlaks (Ulacs), Poles, Bohemians Russians, and Slavonians were vassals of Tatar Khanate.⁴³ In the thirteenth century, colonization of populous Tatar tribes gained acceleration along the shores of Danube and the Black Sea⁴⁴ and these pre-Ottoman Tatar settlements were registered in 15th century Ottoman *tahrir* and *wakf defters*.⁴⁵

2. Pre-Ottoman Turkic Settlers in Nigbolu Sandjak: Turkic People as Christian Peasants and Soldiers in the mid-16th Century Ottoman Tax Register

Turkic steppe people had already been a part of pre-Ottoman local population and military elite in the Danubian frontier, when the Ottomans conquered the Bulgarian Kingdom in 1396. The earliest registers of the Nigbolu region indicate Turkic place names in the region but detailed surveys of the 16th century register these Christianized Turkic people one by one as peasants in pure Christian villages and as members of various organizations of Christian soldiers in Bulgaria.

While examining the Christian population of Nigbolu Sandjak, personal names of Christian subjects in Ottoman tax registers indicate different ethnic elements of the native Christian population of the region. There is non-Slavic, non-Greek and non-Biblical names registered in towns, villages and fortifications, among which the number of pre-Islam Turkic names were registered more often than other ethnic names. These names out of Islamic-Arabic or Sufi-Persian naming tradition should be linked with the Turkic peoples of the steppe region who were Christianized and became a part of local population of the region. Ottoman registers of 16th century are the unique archival sources for the Turkic people in Bulgaria, where they were settled since the early medieval times. On the other hand, lists of Muslim nomad names in the region are the other important sources of this study to determine common pre-Islamic Turkish names given by both the Muslim Anatolian nomads and Christian Turkic people of the region.⁴⁶ While examining the Turkic names in Christian villages, this study focus on some specific territories in Nigbolu Sandjak such as Çernovi, Hezargrad, and Şumnu, which are the settlement area of the pre-Ottoman Turkic people and some other random samples from the Christian settlements of Lofca, Yanbolu, Tirnovi, and Zagra-I Eskihsar were examined to make generalizations on the pre-Ottoman Turkic, especially Cuman, settlers of Nigbolu Sandjak.

⁴⁰ See, Guillard R. (ed.) 1927. Correspondance de Nicéphore Grégoras. Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles lettres"; Grégoras, I, p. 101, II, 16-19 and Wittek (1952) s. 657.

⁴¹ Wittek .1952, 650; Kiel. 1978, 207-208.

⁴² See Vasary. 2005. Cumans and Tatars, 69-71.

⁴³ Jakson, Peter. (trans.) 1990. The Mission of William of Rubruck: His Journey to the court of the Great Khan Möngke 1253-1255. London: The Hakluyt Society, 139.

⁴⁴ See, Ekrem .1983, 1600.

⁴⁵ Barkan (1949-50) p. 543.

Karye-I Arpuz Ata

Vakf-I Arpuz Ata Cengiz Han zamanından berü vakf imiş vakf-I evladlık üzere tasarruf olunurken timara verilmiş imiş. Şimdiki halde padişahımız Sultan Bayezid Han halledallahu sultanehu giru mülkiyetini ve vakfiyetini mukarrer dutub tevki-I şerif irzani kılmış. Haliya hatun Pülad ve Sitti ve Şahi nam hatunlar giru nesli olmağın vakf-I evladlık olmak üzere tasarruf ideler. (Başvekâlet Arşivi, Defter no: 818).

⁴⁶ For the list of the Anatolian nomad names in the Ottoman Balkans see, Gökbilgi, T. 1957. Rumeli'de Rumeli'de Yürükler, Tatarlar ve Evlad-ı Fatihan. İstanbul: Osman Yalçın Matbaası.

Pre-Islamic Turkic names were registered in Christian towns of three big administrative centers Nefs-I Rus, Nefs-I Tutrakan, and Nefs-I Şumnu. In provinces, these Turkic names were registered in ten villages in Şumnu, thirteen villages in Çernovi, and six villages in Hezargrad. On the other hand, this is not a local case in Nigbolu region because examination of random sample Christian villages all around the Sandjak indicates that as late as mid-sixteenth century, Cuman names were registered in Christian villages in every region of Nigbolu Sandjak.⁴⁷ Majority of these names are pre-Islamic Turkish names out of Islamic-Arabic or Sufi-Persian naming tradition⁴⁸ and specifically majority of these names reflect ethnic character of these Turkic people as much as naming tradition of their nomadic culture.

Ottoman tax registers shows that three hundred years after the last Cuman migration to these lands, names such as Kuman, Kun, Kara, Dusman, Aldo, Barak, Tatar, Sarica were still names given by the Christian settlers of the region. Among these, Kuman and Kun are very characteristic names very well known in the entire Turkic territory from China to Hungaria.⁴⁹ Kuman was a very common name among the non-Slavic, non-Greek and non-Christian population of the Ottoman Bulgaria⁵⁰ Also derivatives of this name such as Kumanina, Kuma, Kumalin, Kumli, Kumalič, Kumčo, Kumo, Kumyo and Kunbeg were registered in Tirnova, Nigbolu, Vratsa, Vidin, Sofia, Pernik, Samakov, Şumnu, and Plovdiv.⁵¹ Combination of Turkic names with the title “*bek*” (prince) in Kipchak dialect other than the Oguz form “*beg*” or “*bey*” eliminates the any possible linguistic influence of the Ottomans and Anatolian settlers.⁵² Anthroponomical studies indicate that there are many derivatives of the name “Kun” such as Kuno, Kune, Kuni, Kunina, Kunin and these names registered in the Ottoman tax registers.⁵³ A Polovtsian name Kunuy (Кунуй) in the Russian sources⁵⁴ indicates a probable lineage between the Cuman name Kun and its derivatives, Kuno and Kunin.

Table 2.1 shows the Turkic names registered in urban and rural settlements of central and northeastern regions of Nigbolu Sandjak in the mid-16th century and Turkic names such as (Or)kuman and (Ra)kuman were registered in Nefs-I Yergögi as the names of Christian soldiers *toviçe* and *zenberekçi*. Examples of these names and their meanings are listed below.⁵⁵

Aldo: The name is a version of the Cuman name “ Aldomir, Altemir (red-iron), El-temir (hand-iron) and il-temir (country-iron). This name was registered in mid-16th century Nigbolu register in Çernovi.

Bâli: Elder brother, grown up. The name is very common as a simple adjective noun among Anatolian nomads especially in Isparta, Elazig, Ankara and Muslim *yörüks* of Bulgaria. Also the name is used as the adjective part of a compound name in Anatolian *Oguz* dialect such as Bâli-Bey and Bâli-Şeyh. On the other

⁴⁷ See, Table 5: Cuman names Registered in Nigbolu among the Christians and Table 6: Cuman Names in Villages of Çernovi, Hezargrad, Şumnu.

⁴⁸ For the examples of common Arabic and Persian names See, Gençosman, K. Z. 1975. *Türk İsimleri sözlüğü*, İstanbul : Hür yayın ve ticaret A.Ş.

⁴⁹ For the archival sources and more examples of the name Kuman from different parts of the Balkans see, Stayanov, V. 2000. Cumanian Antroponymics in Bulgaria During the 15th Century in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization* v. IV Ed. Kemal Çiçek, Ankara:Yeni Türkiye, 114.

⁵⁰ See, Stayanov. 2000. Cumanian Antroponymics, 116.

⁵¹ See, Stayanov. 2000. Cumanian Antroponymics, 116-122.

⁵² See, Stayanov, V. Cumanian Antroponymics, 116.

⁵³ Main sources of these anthroponymic studies in Bulgaria are *Izvori za bŭlgarskata istoriia. Fontes historiae Bulgaricae.* (FTHB) Sofia v. 1(1954), v.2 (1966), v. 3 (1972).

⁵⁴ А. И. Попов. Кыпчаки и Русь. - Ученые записки Ленинградского государственного университета. P. 119.

⁵⁵ For these names and their meanings see, Rasonyi. *Onomasticum Turcicum; Rásonyi. Kuman özel adları*, 71-144; Rasonyi. 1943. “Ortaçağda, Erdel'de Türklüğün izleri”, II. Türk Tarih Kongresi Bildirileri, İstanbul ; Moravcsik, Gyula. 1958. *Byzantinoturcica*, Berlin Akademie-Verlag ; Yücel. *Türk Kavimlerine Ait Şahıs İsimleri*,181-211; Stoyanov, Valery. 1999. Cumanian Anthroponymics in Bulgaria During the 15th Century in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*. Vol. 4: Culture and Arts. Ankara, 113-126; Boyev. 1965. *Bulgaristan'da Minzuhar Koyunde Özel Adlar*, Turk Folklor Arastirmalari, 9/191: 3767-3770.

hand, the name is as a part of a compound noun in *kipchak* dialect in Central Asia such as Qaya-Bâli, Gülüm-Bâli, Jatan-Bâli.⁵⁶ In mid-16th century Nigbolu Mufassal, this name registered in Şumnu in simple adjective noun form, which is most probably name of a Gagauz.

Barak: Having long and thick hair. Kuman 1521 (Dimitrius Barag) a Kuman from Hungary (Gyarfas III, 750); 18th century, Barak, a Khazak sultan of Middle hord; 1538-39, Barak-Han, a Sheybanid, the ruler of Taskent; 20th century, Barak-Uruw, a Quara-Nogay Clan; 20th century. This name was registered in Christian villages of Çernovi and Hezargrad in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Dusman: Enemy. In mid-16th century Nigbolu Mufassal, this name registered in Şumnu.

Kara: Black. This name was registered in Christian villages of Şumnu, Çernovi and Hezargrad in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Karagöz: Black Eye(d). In the Nigbolu Mufassal, the name in Christian villages were registered in the form of Anatolian Oguz dialect other than the of the Kipchak form Kara-köz, Kara-küz or Kara- küsö which most probably indicates Gagauzs. This name was registered in Christian villages of Şumnu and Çernovi in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Karakul: Chagatay 15th century, (Quara-qul Ahmed Mirza) Barthold V. V, Ulug Beg und seine Zeit Ed. Walther Hintz. Leipzig 1935; Kzk. 19th century Karakulov (Grod., Pril. 34; Kzk. 19th c. Karakul (SODŠ. 90); Kzk. Karakul Iş-Aliyev (SKSO VIII, 207) (Rasonyi, Onomasticon, p. 423). This name was registered in Christian villages of Çernovi in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Karaman: Black. A name used for dogs and horses. Gag.? Xaraman (Wickenhauser, Moldowa I, 66); Gag.? 1434 Karaman, Berin's brother, a Gypsy slave of the monastery in MoldowicaTurk, (Wickenhauser, Moldowa I, 18); Crm., 1689 envoy of Russians in the Crimea, Karaman Kutlu-bayev (Smirnov, Krym. 625); 1540, head of the Sheykh Mihmadlu tribe in Diyarbekir; Turk, 1543, yoruk name among the Yoruks of Kocacik; Turk, 1471, Karamanoglu Dynasty; Turk., Name of a Zeybek tribe in the region of Tire; Uzb. 1851 a village in the region of Khiva. (Rasonyi, Onomasticon, 435). This name was registered in Christian villages of Çernovi in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Kuman: Ethnic name of Kuman (Polovets), yellowish grey. Bulg. 14th c., Quman a noble Bulgar (Byz-Turc. 163); Kuman 1096, 1103 Quman, a Polovets (Ipat. 166, 184, Lavr. 269, PSRL VII, 20); Selj.? 1128, emir, governor of Haleb; Maml. 1298; Kzk. 19th century. (Rasonyi, Onomasticon 492). This name is one of the most common Turkic name among the Christianized Cumans and the name was registered in Christian villages of Şumnu, Çernovi and Hezargrad in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Kun: Bashk. 1735 Qun; Bashk. 1738, Qun-bay. This name is one of the most common Turkic name among the Christianized Cumans and the name was registered in Christian villages of Şumnu, Çernovi and Hezargrad in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Sarica: Little yellow, little blond. Maml., 1310; yörük, 1543; Kharezm 14th century, an emir; yörük 1611, Saricalar, a tribe; Turk 20.yy, a village in Konya. (Rasonyi, Onomasticon 637) This name was registered in nefs-i Şumnu, in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Tatar: Bulg.? 1334; Kuman 1333, Ugedey's son among the Cumans of Hungary; Kuman 14th century, a prince of Cumans in Hungary; Selj. 11-12th century, an emir, doorkeeper; Maml., 1414; Maml. 1421; Yörük century, an emir; 1543 Kocacik yörük. (Rasonyi, Onomasticon 718). This name was registered in nefs-i Çernovi, in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

⁵⁶ See, Grodekov. 1889. *Kirgizy i Karakirgizy Syr-dar'insko oblasti*. I, Taskent 1889, 205;

Togan: Chuv. 18-19 c. Togan; Maml. 1298; Maml. 1328, 1333, 1340, 1414, 1422, 1439, 1461, 1469, 1477, Dogan. Yörük 16th century, yörüks of Kocacik. (Rasonyi, Onomasticon 756-757) This name was registered in villages of Çernovi, in mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal defter*.

Some names clearly indicate strong influence of Kipchak dialect⁵⁷ such as *Togan* instead of Dogan in Anatolian dialect or ethnic names such as Kuman, Kuno, Kun or names specifically used in steppe region such as Aldo(mir), Tatar, and Dusman. Also there are common pre-Islam names given in both Anatolia and Eurasian steppe region registered in Christian villages of the sandjak such as Bâlî, Barak, Kara, Karagöz, Karaman, İlyas, and Sarıca. On the other hand, Turkic names also became a part of Christian names such as Kara Yovan, Kara Yorgi or used with some suffixes and prefixes (Or)kuman, (Ra)kuman, Kun(o), Kun(e), which increases the number of different versions of these names. Table 2.2 shows the villages where these Turkic names of Christians were registered. It is very significant to see that these Turkic people were living in old settlements where the Anatolian nomad immigrants did not settle, which shows that they had been living in these villages since the pre-Ottoman times. These Christianized Turkic people had adapted the settled life and had mingled with the native Christians before the Ottoman conquest and in the 16th century, at least Turkic names, as a continuation of steppe culture and language, were still given without exposing any cultural or linguistic effect of new immigrant Anatolian nomads.

These Turkic names were also registered in Christian quarters of the big towns of the region such as Şumnu, Tutrakan, Yergögi and Rus, where significant number of Muslims had already been settled since the early Ottoman times. Graph 1 shows demography of native Christians and Muslim settlers in these villages and towns and the table indicates that many of these villages were purely Christian and the Muslim population consisting a few Muslim household were most probably converts other than Muslim Anatolian newcomers. Thus we can conclude that Christian Turkics were registered in either old Christian settlements or big towns, which indicates that they were pre-Ottoman Turkic steppe people or Anatolian (Gagauz) settlers of these lands. Muslim craftsmen and unmarried men seeking for job consisted the growing Muslim population in Nefs-I Yergögi, Tutrakan and Şumnu but in rural areas, as it is seen in Graph 1, Turkic people were living in pure Christian settlements without any direct connection with the Anatolian nomads.

2.1 Turkic Christian Warriors in the Early 16th century Registers of Bulgarian Voynuk

Voynuks as one of the unique military inheritances of the pre-Ottoman military culture of the early Medieval Balkans and its transfer to the Ottomans' military system as organization of Christian soldiers survived the Turkic members of the pre-Ottoman military class and their warlike culture in the organization of Bulgarian Voynuks for centuries. The earliest *Voynuk* registers of the Christian military organization, MAD 81 and MAD 151 defters of İstılab-I Âmire Voynukları and these two *defters* are compared to determine Turkic elements and their regional distribution among the Christian settlements of the Nigbolu Sandjak. These are mufassal registers of Voynuks in Sofia, Nigbolu, Kamarofca, Izvor, Kurşuna, Lofça, Zıştovi, Tatarcık, Samako, Yanbolu, Tirnovi, Silistre and Filibe and Edirne. Each register includes name of the Christian soldier, his fathers' name, his status such as Voynuk or Yamak and their *baştina* lands.

According to Ottoman chronicles, pre-Ottoman Christian soldiers of Bulgaria was institutionalized as Voynuk organization in the late 14th or early 15th century and since the early Ottoman times Voynuks kept their pre-Ottoman status, fief lands and tax exemptions as the organization of Christian soldiers in the Ottoman military system.⁵⁸ Idris Bitlisi, a famous historian of the 15th century, states Voynuks as Christian soldiers forming an important part of

⁵⁷ For more information about Kipchak language and its relations with the other Turkish dialects see, Karamanlioğlu, Ali Fehmi. 1994. *Kıpçak Türkçesi grameri*, Ankara : Türk Dil Kurumu; Caferoğlu, Ahmet. (ed.)1931. Abu Hayyan: Kitâb al-idrâk li-lisân al-Atrâk. İstanbul: Evkaf Matbaası ; Sertkaya Osman Fikri (ed.) 1966. János Eckmann: Harezmi, Kıpçak ve Çağatay Türkçesi üzerine araştırmalar, Ankara : Türk Dil Kurumu.

⁵⁸ See, Orhonlu, C.1967. Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Derbend Teşkilatı, İstanbul, 69 and Ercan, Y. 1986. Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar. Ankara: TTK, 11-12.

the Ottoman army in the Balkans.⁵⁹ Late 15th century Niğbolu *timar* surveys also include voynuk registers including “zevaid-i voynugan-ı Gigan”, “voynugan-I Niğbolu”, “an zevaid-I voynugan-I Niğbolu”.⁶⁰ Even though Voynuks gradually lost their warrior status and became a part of auxiliary troops in the 17th century onward, the organization remained as a part of Ottoman military system until its final abolition in 1878.⁶¹

Voyini or *Voynici* is a Slavic military term used for land-holding lesser military nobility in Serbia and Macedonia during the empire of Stephan Dushan (1333-1355)⁶² and Ottomans’ *Voynuk* organization brought members of the pre-Ottoman military nobility together under the roof of a separate organization of Christian soldiers. Many registers in the Ottoman *tahrirs* indicate that Voynuks were generally kept their pre-conquest status and exemptions, which is the general attitude of the Ottomans towards the military, administrative and financial system of conquered lands.⁶³ *Voynuk* registers of the 16th century, *Voynuk kanunnames* and articles of various *kanunnames*⁶⁴ indicate that the hereditary characteristic of the military status with their fief (*baştina*) lands and tax exemptions⁶⁵ were strictly kept in the Ottoman military system since the re-organization of these Voynuks in the early Ottoman times.⁶⁶ Although archival sources do not give enough information to determine the number of the Voynuk soldiers in the Ottoman Balkans, early Ottoman *tahrir* registers indicates that there were small *Voynuk* groups in Macedonia, Thessaly, Albania, Serbia, and Bosnia but *Voynuk* as a term in Ottoman military system refers to Bulgarians as the most populous Christian military group in the Ottoman army.⁶⁷ Although there is Voynuk registers in *tapu and tahrir defters* of 15th century⁶⁸, the first Voynuk *Defter* in the Ottoman Archive (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, BOA) is dated to early sixteenth century. The *Voynuk Defters* in BOA are MAD 81 (1522-23 Tarihli İstılab-I Âmire Voynukları Defteri), TD151 (1528 tarihli Voynuk tahrir defteri), MAD 533 (1576 tarihli Niğbolu ve Silistre Voynukları Defteri) and MAD 546 (1579 tarihli Niğbolu ve Silistre Voynukları Defteri). The earliest *kânunnâme* in the register of the Imperial Stable (Kânunnâme-i Voynugân-ı İstabl-ı Âmire) defines law and regulation on taxes, exemptions, rights, duties, responsibilities and many other issues related with members of the Voynuk organization. According to the earliest *kanunname*, *Voynuks* possessed *baştina* lands which was their hereditary fief lands since the pre-Ottoman times and they were exempted from peasant taxes such as *haraç*, *ispenç*, *öşr*, *rüsûm* and *avariz*. Also *voivoda* of Moldavia was required to pay the annual tribute in ducats to furnish Voynuks serving as light cavalry in time of war.⁶⁹ On the other hand, when they were cultivating on such a land having a taxable status like *haraçlı baştina*, *tîmâr*, *vakf*, or *mülk* lands, these *voynuks* had to pay the taxes that status of the land requires. Also if these *voynuks* fail to fulfill their duties and loose their status, they had to pay *haraç*, *öşr* and all other peasant taxes.⁷⁰ *Voynuk kanunnames* detailed the regulations that when it was needed, *kadı* was responsible to organize the labour force consisting *Voynuks*, *Yörüks* and *reaya* for cutting hay, serving in the imperial stables, woodcutting and some other auxiliary duties.⁷¹

⁵⁹ See İnalçık, Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tedkikler ve Vesikalar, 177.

⁶⁰ See, late 15th century Niğbolu Timar register from Sofia Archive, Sofia, Oriental Department of Bulgarian National Library “St. St. Cyril and Methoios”, Or., Abt.,Signature Hk., 12/9.

⁶¹ See Ercan, 1986: 11-14.

⁶² Kadlec K. 1933. Introduction à l'étude comparative de l'histoire du droit public des peuples slaves, Paris, 97-98; Orhonlu, C.. 1967. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Derbend Teşkilatı*, İstanbul, 16.

⁶³ See Inalçık, 1954, Ottoman Method of Conquest, 114 and Inalçık. 1996. XV. asırda Rumeli'de hristiyan sipahiler ve menseleri, in Stefan Dusan'dan Osmanlı İmparatorluğuna Toplum ve Ekonomi. İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 237-241.

⁶⁴ For the examples from *kanunnames* and *tahrir* registers, see İnalçık, Fatih Devri Üzerine Tetkikler ve Vesikalar, 174-175; Inalçık 1954 Ottoman Method of Conquest, 115.

⁶⁵ See, Ercan, 1986: 75-77.

⁶⁶ For the transcription of these *Voynuk Kanunnames* see, Ercan. 1986: 114-121.

⁶⁷ See, Ercan. 1986: 43.

⁶⁸ See, İnalçık. 1954. Hicri 835 Tarihli Sûret-I Defter-I Arvanid, and Fatih Devri Üzerine Tetkikler ve Vesikalar, Ankara.

⁶⁹ See İbrahim Peçevi. 1866. Tarih-i Peçevi II. İstanbul, 152; Kortepeter. 1966. Ottoman Imperial Policy, 102.

⁷⁰ See Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri*, Vol. 4, 653-656.; Barkan, Kanunlar, 264; Ercan, Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar, 74-77.

⁷¹ For the examples see, Dorev. (ed.) Dokumenti za Bulgarskata Istoriya, I II/1; Dokumenti iz Turskite Derzhavni Arkhivi (Sofia, 1940) Dorev, Dokumenti III/1, pp. 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 13 and Kortepeter, 1966:98.

Bulgarian Voynuks were not an ethnical but a geographical term that refers to Christian soldiers in Bulgaria because the group of soldiers were descendents of the Byzantine provincial military nobility most of whom were recruited from different non-Greek communities. Many names from non-Slavic and non-Biblical origin registered in the early 16th century Voynuk *defters* of Bulgaria, which indicate multi-ethnic and multi-cultural mosaic of the Byzantine's provincial military system in the Balkans. Examination of these registers shows that although Voynuks of Bulgaria were still keeping their Christian faith as late as in the early 16th century, multi ethnic structure of the organization had not been changed since the pre-Ottoman times. Besides Slavic, Biblical, Greek, Nordic, and Germanic ethnic names, pre-Islam Turkic names including very specific ethnic names such as Kuman and Kun consisting most significant non-Slavic ethnic group in these *defters*. Table 2.3 shows examples from the Turkic names registered in the Voynuk registers and it is seen that although there are some registers where both father's and son's name are Turkic such as *Kuno veled-i Kuno* or *Saruca veled-i Kuno* or *Düşman veled-i İldar (İlter)*, generally in most of these registers, son's or father's name is a Bulgarian, Slavic, Greek or a Biblical name. Majority of the Turkic names of these *voynuks* are ethnic names like Kun or Kuman and names referring to the warlike nature of these people such as *Düşman* or *Düşko* (Enemy), *İldar* (possessor ad ruler of a land), *Aldomir* or *Aldo* (red iron). On the other hand, many other Turkish words registered as Voynuk names such as adjectives describing physical appearance such as *Kara* (black), *Karagöz* (black eye), *Karaca* (black), *Karaman* (black), *Sarıca* (light coloured), *Şişman*, *Şişo*, *Şişko*(fat) or some other Turkic names derived from nature such as *Tuman* (fog), *Orman* (forest), *Togan* (hawk), which are very common names in nomadic naming culture of the Turkic world and especially names derived from nature is a part of naming tradition of nomadic people of Anatolia as well. These examples of *voynuk* names registered in various regions of Bulgaria indicate these Christianized Turkic warriors and their Turkic steppe culture survived almost every province of Bulgaria as late as in the 16th century.

On the other hand, *voynuk* registers of Nigbolu provide a closer look to the Turkic elements of the native pre-Ottoman Turkic inhabitants of Bulgaria. There were 1,030 voynuk and 2,024 *yamak* was registered in Nigbolu Sandjak in 1522-1523 "Defter-i İstılab-ı Âmire Voynukları" and contrary to the *voynuks* of Sofya, Filibe, Tatarcık and Samako, there were no *bashtina*, which is hereditary fief lands of these Christian soldiers since the pre-Ottoman times. Nigbolu Sandjak was a strategic region on the Danubian border and tax registers since the late 15th century indicate special military status of this region that *zeamet-i nefsi-i Rus* (known as Kal'a-i Yergögi beru yaka) was given to the voivoda of Eflak (Vlakhia) in the late 15th century in order to secure the strategic region on the Danubian frontier.⁷² The *serhad* region along the Danubian border was military security zone and for this reason there were very few *timar* land in the Nigbolu Sandjak since the 15th century. 16th century Nigbolu registers indicates that, all villages were *kadim* (old) and *cedid* (new) *hass* lands in Çernovi but in Şumnu and Hezargrad some villages were registered as *timar* lands while many of villages and towns were registered as *hass* lands. For this reason there were not any *bashtina* lands registered for the Voynuks of Nigbolu, which indicates a consistent military policy of the central authority in the region since the post-conquest era but when these voynuks lost their pre-conquest hereditary land property, they should have find a way to compensates their losses and improve their position. Islamization should have been the best way and when the registers of Muslim voynuks in Nigbolu Sandjak is examined it is seen that while all the other voynuks registered in the survey were auxiliary troops, the group of Muslim voynuks were *eşkinci* (warrior) who had a share in booty seized in the campaigns, which was a major motive for the fighting members of the military class. For this reason, it is not surprising to see the only group of Muslim and *eşkinci* (warrior) voynuks registered in the only region where hereditary *bashtinas* of the voynuks were confiscated and registered as *hass* lands in the voynuk *defters*. Registers of the Christian soldiers kept in the early 16th century shows that Islamization was not a motive for the voynuks of Bulgaria other than voynuks who were living in the Nigbolu region

Among these voynuks without *bashtinas*, Turkic *voynuk* names were registered almost in every voynuk village and pre-Islam Turkish names of these Christian soldiers underlines the warlike Turkic steppe culture with effect of native language and Christianity in the sandjak. Table 2.5 listed the Turkic *voynuk* names registered in

⁷² See one of the earliest registers of Ottoman Nigbolu dated to 1483, Sofia, Oriental Department of Bulgarian National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methoios", Or., Abt., Signature Hk., 12/9 and compare with the other registers: Sofia, Oriental Department of Bulgarian National Library "St. St. Cyril and Methoios", Or. Abt., Signature OAK., 45/29; 1570 tarihli Muhasebe-i Vilayet-i Rum İli Defteri(937/1530), T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Müdürlüğü, Osmanlı Arşivi Daire Başkanlığı, vol.1, Ankara, 2002.

Nigbolu shows that among these names, ethnic names such as Kun and Kuno, warrior names such as Düşman, Aldo(mir), and İlder are very specific examples indicating that these Cumans still underline their steppe origin as their distinctive military characteristics in the voynuk organization.

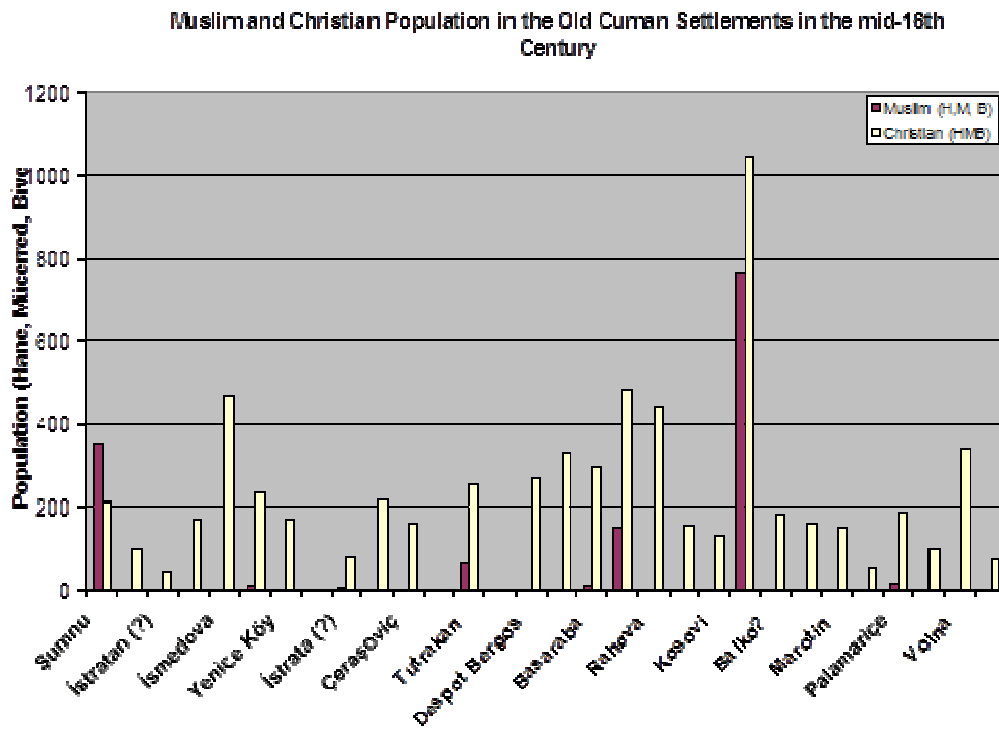
3. Conclusions

Turkic steppe people were a part of military history of Danubian Bulgaria, where they had appeared as invaders at first and then they were hired as mercenaries to fight against the other Turkic invaders at first but finally they became a part of the local Christian population and members of Byzantine military class in Danubian border. These Turkic warriors gained a privileged status in Byzantine society because of what made them different in Byzantine military class: their ethnic origin and warlike culture, which was the reason of why they could keep their ethnic and warlike names from generation to generation even in the Ottoman Era. Being a Turkic steppe warrior was a distinctive ethnic identity of these people during the pre-Ottoman times and their warlike nature and ethnic identity had provided them a military status in Byzantine borderlands and provincial army, which was not changed very much after the Ottoman conquest in the late fourteenth century. Ottoman registers indicate that ethnic, cultural and warlike steppe identity kept especially in the military class, which indicates the reason behind why Turkic names registered as names of Christian soldiers more often than in surveys of villagers and urban settlers of the Nigbolu Sandjak.

Examination of late 15th century *timar* surveys, mid 16th century tax registers of Nigbolu and early 16th century *Voynuk* registers shows that although Christianized Turkic people mingled with the rural and urban native Christian peasants, a significant number of them were still a part of Ottoman military system in Bulgaria. Either *mufassal* registers of Nigbolu Sandjak or *Voynuk* registers of Bulgaria indicate that Turkic members of Byzantine military class became a part of *Voynuk* organization or they kept their military status in other organizations of Christian soldiers. In fact the dominant military character of these Turkic people other than being agriculturalist villagers is very determinant even in the mid 16th century *mufassal* register of Nigbolu Sandjak, where some Turkic names were registered with military titles such as *Toviçe*, *Martolos*, and *Zenberekçi*. These Christian Turkics were still keeping their pre-conquest military status in various military organizations in Bulgaria and ethnic and cultural elements of these Turkic people could survive best in Ottoman military organizations rather than peasant societies of rural Bulgaria.

A gradual Islamization of pre-Ottoman upper military class was a part of the adaptation process in the conquered lands and the only one register of a *nev-Muslim* timar holder in the mid-16th century Nigbolu *Mufassal* register shows Islamization process took much more time than it is supposed to be. On the other hand, the *voynuk* registers and *mufassal* defter indicate that even among the Turkic members of the voynuk organization, the Islamization process in lesser military classes was much more slower than it was in upper military class. Although the Islamization process of timar holders in the region had been completed, pre-Ottoman lesser military nobility of Bulgaria, except a small group of Muslim Voynuks in Nigbolu, were still Christian in the early 16th century. Unlike the timariots, *Voynuks* completed their adaptation process into Ottoman military system without conversion to Islam and Muslim Voynuk was not a case in registers of Bulgarian voynuks in the early 16th century. Also ethnic and warlike Turkish names in other military organizations such as *Martolos* and *Toviçe* indicate that Islamization was not a motive for these members of the military class even in the first half of the 16th century.

Migration of Anatolian nomads since the early Ottoman era populated the ruined old settlements in the 15th century and these Anatolian Turkomans found new settlements in uninhabited lands of the Nigbolu Sandjak in the 16th century. Findings of these study indicate that old Turkic settlers in Ottoman military class and in old Christian settlements can be considered as the first phase of Turkization and the second phase of the Turkization movement is the migration of Anatolian nomads, craftsmen and landless young peasants (*mücerreds*) during the 15th and 16th centuries. For this reason, the second Turkish migration wave from Anatolia should be considered not Turkization but re-Turkization of Bulgaria during the Ottoman era.

Graph 2.1**Tables****Table 2. 1: Cuman Names in Christian Districts of Nigbolu in the mid 16th Century**

Aldo	Kara Yovan	Kuno
Bâlî	Kara(kol?)	Kurd
Barak	Karaman	Orkuman
Dusman	Kuman	(R)kuman
İlyas	Kuman(ar?)	Sarıca
Kara	Kun	Tatar
Karagöz	Kune	Togan

Table 2.2

Villages of Pre-Ottoman Turkic Settlers in Çernovi, Hezargrad and Şumnu			
Villages			
Ablanova-i Gebr Çernovi	Dolna Kovaçofça Hezargrad	Kosovi (?) Çernovi	Nefs-i Yergögi Çernovi Hassa-i Cedid
Balko? Çernovi	Eski İstanbulluk Şumnu	Kotoş? Şumnu	Palamariçe Hezargrad
Basaraba Çernovi hass	Draganova Hezargrad	Marotin Çernovi	Rahova Çernovi
Batin Çernovi Hass	Huyven Şumnu	Nefs-i Rus	Taban Çernovi
Batoşniçe Hezargrad	İsmolokoç (?) Şumnu	Nefs-i Şumnu	Tranbuş-i Bâlâ ? Hezargrad
Çeraşofiç Şumnu	İstrata (?) Şumnu	Nefs-i Tutrakan Çernovi	Volna ? Hezargrad
Despot Bergos Çernovi	İstratan (?) Şumnu	??? (15) Şumnu	Yenice Köy (Maden Geçidi) Şumnu

Table 2.3

Turkic Names in the Early 16th Century Voynuk Register of Bulgaria		
Dimitri son of Aldomir	İstanko son of Karaca	Nikola son of Kaloyan
Aldo son of Kostedil	Kuno son of Brayan	Niro son of Dirman
Doğan son of Dimitri	Kuman son of Çerno	Şişman son of Todor
Togan son of Dobri	Kumaniç son of Dragan	Yanko son of Orman
Düşko son of Lazar	Kalço son of Karagöz	Goran son of Şahin
Düşman son of Mihail	Nedelko son of Saruca	

Source: TD81 defter-i voynugan sene 929 (1522-23), TD151 defter-i voynugan sene 935 (1528-29), TD382 Nigbolu Mufassal Defteri(1556).

Table 2.4

Group of Muslim Voynuks 1522-1523	Group of Muslim Voynuks 1528
Kâsım veled-i Sarıca	İlyas veled-i Kâsım
İskender veled-i Karagöz	Mustafa veled-i Kara
Hamza veled-i Mustafa	Nasuh veled-i Karagöz
Nasuh veled-i Karagöz	Mustafa veled-i Karagöz becaı Mahmud veled-i Hıdır
Mahmud veled-i Hızır	Ramazan veled-i Kasım, becaı Ahmed veled-i Mir-Istavri
Oruç veled-i Mihail	Kurt veled-i Şahin becaı Şir Murad
İskender veled-i Abdullah	Nasuh veled-i Karagöz
Ramazan ve Kâsım becaı Ahmed	Mahmud veled-i Hızır
Karagöz veled-i Abdullah	Hasan veled-i Abdullah becaı İsa
Hızır veled-i Karagöz	Oruç veled-i ??? becaı İskender veled-i Abdullah
İlyas veled-i Karagöz	Mustafa veled-i Karagöz becaı Mahmud veled-i Hıdır
Mehmed veled-i Hıdır	Mihal veled-i Yovan becaı İlyas
İsmail veled-i Togan	Hasan veled-i Karagöz
Hasan veled-i Togan	İsmail veled-i Togan
Çakır veled-i Karaman	Çakır veled-i Karaman
Şahin veled-i Şirmurad	Rad veled-i Istoyan becaı Şahin veled-i Şir Murad

Table 2.5

Examples of Turkic Voynuk Names in Nigbolu			
Kuno son of Yovan	Niko son of Karaca	Gago son of Aldo	Niko son of Şişman
Doğan son of Düşman	Düşman son of İlder	Brayan son of Orman	Şişo son of Rayho?
Togan son of Sirko	Dralo son of Karaman	Nido son of Dirman	Brayno son of Tuman
Radol son of Düşko	Niko son of Kaloyan	Başalı son of İvanko	Yovan son of Şahin