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**FROM AGRARIAN HISTORY:
ON LENTILS AND FAVA BEANS IN MEDIEVAL SERBIA
UNTIL THE END OF THE 15th CENTURY**

Abstract: The paper analyzes the cultivation and representation of lentils and fava beans in medieval Serbia until the end of the 15th century. Their use in the everyday diet of people was influenced by their high protein content. Serbian medieval sources (typikons, charters) indicate that lentil was an obligatory part of monastic meals. The available information on fava beans is scarce, but it can be concluded that they were used in the diet of the poorest social classes. Turkish census records (defterler) created immediately after the Turkish conquest of Serbian lands illustrate the economic circumstances of the time they were compiled and demonstrate the representation of legumes in the production of the time, prompting their analysis in this paper. The paper further briefly analyzes the works of Greek and Roman authors referring to the cultivation and use of legumes in the diet of people, and their usage in religious purposes. Legumes are also shown in the context of traditional Serbian culture.

Keywords: Serbia, the Middle Ages, economy, farming, lentil, fava bean, diet, defter.

Due to their high protein content, legumes have been part of the human diet since ancient times. The lentil (Latin – *Lens culinaris*; Turkish – *mercimek*; Greek – φακή, ἡς ἡ) is an annual plant belonging to the family *Fabaceae* (*Leguminosae*) according to the botanical classification.¹ Its exceptional nutritional value contributed to its frequent use in the Middle Ages. On the basis of diplomatic materials, it can be concluded that lentils in medieval Serbia were extensively used during the long-lasting Lent, which came frequently. With respect to religious fasting, lentils are an integral and indispensable part of the monastic table. It is considered the “standard of Lent food” in the “Serbian national cultural codex”.²

¹ Karadžić 1898³: 723; Divković 1980³: 593; φακή, ἡς ἡ - *a dish of lentils* (φακοί), *lentil soup*. LiddelScott 1991: 854; φακός, ὀ - *lentil, and its fruit*; φακός, οῦ (ὀ) - 1 lentille (Ervum lens), 2. lentille d'eau (Lens minor); Π objets en forme de lentille: 1 vase lenticulaire pour les fomentations *ou* pour l'huile; 2 ornement plaqué sur un lit; 3 tache sur le peau, t. de rousseur; φακή, ἡς (ἡ) – 1 lentille; 2 soupe *ou* purée de lentilles; φάκιος, η, ον fait de lentilles; φάκιον, ου (τό) décoction de lentilles. Bailly 1950: 2050.

² Vulović 2015: 126.

The fava bean (Lat. – *faba*, *ae*, *f*; Tur. – *bakla*; Greek – κούμος) is also a representative of the aforementioned family, belonging to the genus *Vicia*.³ In the wider Mediterranean area, Byzantium and Serbia, fava beans were primarily used in the nutrition of the poorest layers of the population.⁴

Cooked meals were made from these foods. The fava bean is “the oldest type of Slavic vegetable stew”.⁵ By all accounts, Southern Slavs had been familiar with it in their ancestral homeland.⁶ In some parts, pods of young fava beans were also consumed.⁷ In addition to its basic meaning, the word lentil (Serbian – *sočivo*) in Dalmatia also refers to “all vegetable stews in general”.⁸

Biblical texts testify to the use of these legumes in the diet. The older son of Isaac and Rebekah, Esau, renounced his birthright in favour of his twin brother Jacob for “the red food”, that is, for bread and cooked lentils (Gen. 25, 29-34).⁹ Fleeing Jerusalem, after the rebellion of Absalom, King David and the people suffered tremendous hunger and exhaustion in the desert. In Mahanajim they were served cereals, dairy products, fava beans and lentils (2 Sam. 17, 27-29). According to the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, Ezekiel ate bread made of wheat, barley, fava beans, lentils, millet and spelt for 430 days, referring to the famine during the siege of the city (Ezek. 4, 9).

Lentils originated in the Middle East and fava beans in Southeast Asia.¹⁰ These prehistoric cultures appeared in the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Stone Age.¹¹ A number of archeological excavations and paleo-ethno-botanical excavations of sites in the Mediterranean contributed to shedding light on the cultivation process of legumes.¹²

1. In the works of Greek and Roman authors – the ancient world

In addition to archeological findings, Greek and Roman authors provide valuable sources on the cultivation and use of legumes in the diet and on their use for religious purposes. In addition, these sources inform us about the conditions and the process of cultivation, distribution, as well as the nutritional value of legumes. Only some of them will

³ Lewis, Short 1891: 712; Karadžić 1898³: 33; Divković 1980³: 394.

⁴ Hrabak 1971: 241.

⁵ Trojanović 1935: 150.

⁶ Niederlé 1911: 188.

⁷ Mijatović 1908: 15.

⁸ Trojanović 1935: 150.

⁹ Having despised the blessing, Esau ended up as a martyr.

¹⁰ Njegovan 2018: 73, 74.

¹¹ There are numerous data on the findings of lentils and fava beans in Europe during the transition from Old to New Era. Kreuz 1995: 70; Tapavički-Ilić, Arsenijević 2005: 112–113, 115–116.

¹² Numerous localities on the territory of Serbia confirm the use of legumes since ancient times. Studies of the Old Neolithic settlement belonging to the Stračevo culture (Slatina-Turska česma) near Paraćin revealed the remains of carbonized lentil seeds. Perić, Obradović 2012: 17–18; In addition to cereals, communities of Vinča used legumes (peas and lentils). Filipović, Obradović 2013: 25–55; In the area above the valleys of the rivers Crni Timok and Beli Timok (the site of Gamzigrad), lentils and fava beans were identified. They are found in late Roman (from the 3rd to the 5th century) and early Byzantine production (from the end of the 5th to the end of the 6th century), where, based on the analyzed archaeobotanical material, lentils are represented in greater volume. Medović 2008: 152, 154, 157–159.

be mentioned in the text that follows.

In ancient Greece and Rome, the food of the poor was very different from food of wealthy citizens and was, therefore, an indicator of one's membership of a certain social class. Thus, for example, the staple food of ancient Romans consisted of thick wheat pulp (*puls* or *pulmentum*), a variety of stews that included lentils and fava beans, and vegetables.¹³

Lentil is the most frequently mentioned legume in Greek and Roman literature.¹⁴ It is one of the earliest domesticated plants in ancient Greece. Herodotus, in the fourth book of his *Histories*, talks about the Callipidae, who, like the Scythians, cultivate and eat wheat, onions and garlic, lentils and millets.¹⁵

Some authors refer to lentils as a poor man's food. Aristophanes, for example, regards this type of legume as a food of the lower class and mentions it repeatedly in his *The Wasps*,¹⁶ *Plutus*,¹⁷ and *The Knights*.¹⁸ According to Petronius (*Satyricon*), legumes represent the staple food of the poorest social class.¹⁹ There are also opposite views. The Greek polymath Athenaeus of Naucratis, in his *Deipnosophists* (*Δειπνοσοφισταί*), emphasizes the positive characteristics of this legume.²⁰ In the handbook *On Agriculture* (*De re rustica*), Columella mentions the lentil as a plant that, along with some other legumes, is very useful and, together with them, represents the best food for humans.²¹ Practical instructions for growing this legume are on two occasions given in *On Agriculture* (*De agricultura*) by Marcus Porcius Cato.²² Pliny the Elder also writes about lentils on several occasions (*Naturalis historia*).²³

In the second book of his *Histories*, Herodotus mentions that Egyptians do not sow fava beans on their fields, nor do they eat wild beans, whereas their priests loath the very sight of them because they consider it an "impure stew".²⁴ According to a legend, as Pausanias writes (*Description of Greece*), Demeter was warmly received by Trisaules and Damithales and she in turn gave them all kinds of legumes apart from fava beans, which she forbade them from sowing.²⁵ Pliny in his *Natural History* (*Naturalis historia*) associates fava beans with the cult of the dead, because they contain the souls of the departed, which is why the Pythagoreans avoided using it in their diet.²⁶ Fava bean seeds at the same time represent a symbol of the dead and of their well-being. According to Orpheus's and Pythagoras's prohibition, eating a fava bean meant "eating your parents' head, sharing food with the dead, a way of remaining in the reincarnation cycle".²⁷ Fava beans are "the first

¹³ Arango-Ruiz, V. Salvan, I. Caporali, R. et. al. 1967: 72–73.

¹⁴ Flint-Hamilton 1999: 375.

¹⁵ Hdt. IV 17. [...] σίτον δὲ καὶ σπείρουσικαὶ σιτέονται, καὶ κρόμμινα καὶ σκόροδα καὶ φακούς καὶ κέγγρους.

¹⁶ Ar. *Vesp.* 811. πῶρ γε τουτί: καὶ προσέστηκεν φακῆ [...]; 984. [...] οὐδέν ποτ' ἄλλ' ἢ τῆς φακῆς ἐμπλήμενος.

¹⁷ Ar. *Plut.* 1004. ἔπειτα πλουτῶν οὐκέθ' ἤδεται φακῆ [...].

¹⁸ Ar. *Eq.* 997. περὶ Ἀθηνῶν, περὶ φακῆς [...].

¹⁹ Petr. 14, 145.

²⁰ Ath. 4.157.

²¹ Col. *Rust.* 2.7.1. Leguminum genera cum sint, maxime grata et in usu hominum videntur faba, lenticula [...].

²² Konte 2016: 240, 241.

²³ Plin. Nat. 18.48, 49, 51.

²⁴ Hdt. II 37.5. ...νομίζοντες οὐ καθαρὸν εἶναι μιν ὄσπριον.

²⁵ Paus. 8.15.3. ... κύαμον δὲ οὐκ ἔδωκέ σφισι; Srejoníć, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1989: 110.

²⁶ Plin. Nat. 18.48

²⁷ Chevalier, Gheerbrant 1994: 52–53.

gift to come from the underground every spring”.²⁸

2. Serbian traditional culture

Legumes can also be analyzed in the context of Serbian traditional culture. According to old customs, in some parts of Serbia lentils and fava beans are cooked together with other legumes on Todor’s Saturday (the first Saturday of the Great Lent), Andrew’s Day (13 December) and on the eve of the Feast of Saint Barbara (17 December).²⁹ The swollen grains are large and as such symbolize progress and prosperity.³⁰ Fava beans appear in ritual songs performed at *babine* celebrations, i.e. on the occasion of the birth of a child.³¹

With respect to the use of lentils during fasting and on Christmas Eve, a phraseological unit was created, recorded in the first half of the 19th century by Vuk Stefanović Karadžić: Imposes oneself as lentils on Christmas Day [*Nameće se kao sočivo na Božić*], suggesting that this vegetable does not have a place on the Christmas table.³² Fava beans were also eaten on the eve of the feast of Christ’s birth.³³ According to Čajkanović, they “played an important role in the cult of the dead among all Indo-Europeans”.³⁴ This is the food that was “given to the dead” on Christmas Day.³⁵ The strictest day of Christian fasting – Good Friday is called *Сочельник* in Russia (the name comes from the word for lentil, that is, it denotes the preparation of porridge from this plant). According to traditional medicine, fava bean juice has a beneficial effect on one’s health.³⁶

The rank of the legumes on the imaginary scale of medieval plants and their position in society (an indicator of the status of the people who consume them) is illustrated by the essay entitled *The Story of the Blessed Beans (The Passion of the Blessed Beans)*.³⁷ It is a Slavonic-Serbian translation of a 12th century Greek text entitled *The Book of Fruits (Πορικολόγος / Porikologos)*.³⁸ Lentil is a character with remarkable attributes. She is “the first and last of all, Madam Hostess”.³⁹ She is shown as a “house manageress”. It follows from this that she was

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Zlatković 2016: 287.

³⁰ Čajkanović 1932: 167–228; Rusić 1956: 7–8, 22; Trajković 2013: 114.

³¹ Vujanović 2016: 116.

³² Karadžić 1849: 189.

³³ Fava beans are a legume that can be found in a number of Serbian phraseologisms which point to honesty, distinction, value, futile work, quantity and a job well done. Karadžić 1849: 231, 271; Vrebalov 2012: 107, 110–111; Vulović 2015: 59, 90, 149–150.

³⁴ The Serbs also used fava beans when telling one’s fortune, as evidenced by the phrase: “As if he were casting fava beans” [*Kao da je u bob vraćao*]. Karadžić 1849: 130; it is assumed that the objects used for these purposes are in some way connected with the “underworld”. Čajkanović 1924: 41; Kulišić, Petrović i Pantelić 1970: 32, 96.

³⁵ Čajkanović 1924: 41.

³⁶ Novaković 1877: 505; Blagojević 2004²: 85;

³⁷ Daničić 1870: 311–312.

³⁸ The Greek text is a kind of a “parody” of the multiplicaton of “titles in Byzantine society”. The action takes place in the courtroom. Beans is the defendant, while various kinds of fruits and vegetables appear as the representatives of the highest authorities and as witnesses. They are assigned human traits and behaviors. The Slavonic-Serbian text is preserved in several transcripts. Jovanović 2015: 79–80.

³⁹ Daničić 1870: 312; Jovanović 2015: 89.

extremely valued in the Middle Ages. The fava bean, on the other hand, is a “nourisher of the poor and is good,” which is most likely an allusion to its role in the diet of the poor.⁴⁰

3. Agricultural work

Climate and the pedological composition of the soil are factors that determine the presence of plant species in a particular terrain. Lentil is a cool-season crop, suited to well-drained and gravelly soil. Good soil preparation for its cultivation involves autumn ploughing. The period from March to the end of April is the optimum time for sowing. The plant is sensitive to frost and cold and can withstand drought and heat.⁴¹ It has a relatively short vegetative period, amounting to about 110–130 days.⁴² With respect to grain size there are large seed and small seed lentils. The grain colour can be green-yellowish, yellow-gray, red, black and dark green.⁴³

Unlike lentils, fava beans are not resistant to drought. They need water throughout their vegetation.⁴⁴ They thrive in sandy soil and it should be emphasized that they show exceptional tolerance to soil that is not suitable for other arable crops. In areas with extremely warm (Mediterranean) climate, fava beans can be sown as a winter crop, whereas in temperate climates as a spring crop. Sowing usually took place in March. The length of the vegetative phase is about 100-140 days. In mid 13th century in Byzantium, crop rotation involving fava beans and wheat was practiced.⁴⁵ Somewhat later, in Serbian lands winter sown crops were rotated with spring crops (cereals and legumes).⁴⁶ The seeds differ in grain size and colour: green, yellowish, brown, purple and black. Sources from the 15th century Dubrovnik refer to two types of fava beans: “small” and “black”.⁴⁷

Archival records show that small farming households in the territory of Dubrovnik grew lentils and fava beans on small parcels of land, in gardens and vineyards.⁴⁸ By all accounts, this was also the case in the territory of Serbia. During the Middle Ages, Dubrovnik steadily imported cereals and legumes.⁴⁹ Lentils and fava beans arrived on the Dubrovnik markets from the March of Ancona and southern Italy (Apulia, Otranto).⁵⁰ They were usually purchased along with wheat, as evidenced by surviving contracts.⁵¹ With respect to Greek areas, imported crops came from Artá, Euboea, Crete and Corinth.⁵²

⁴⁰ Daničić 1870: 311–312; Jovanović 2015: 80, 89.

⁴¹ Lukičević 1902: 77–78.

⁴² Glamočlija 2004: 260.

⁴³ Lukičević 1902: 73.

⁴⁴ Glamočlija 2004: 254–255.

⁴⁵ Hrabak 1971: 241, note 241.

⁴⁶ Hrabak 1974: 62.

⁴⁷ Sources from Dubrovnik Archives (mid-15th century) mention “fave nere” and “fave menude”. Blagojević 2004²: 85, note. 99.

⁴⁸ Blagojević 2004²: 85, 88.

⁴⁹ Filip de Diversis 1983: 9; Dinić-Knežević 1967: 79.

⁵⁰ Hrabak 1963-1964: 130; Hrabak 1970: 121.

⁵¹ Rokai 1995: 134.

⁵² Hrabak 1971: 229, 234, 239, 242–244.

Albania was known for exporting beans in the Middle Ages.⁵³ Significant quantities were also procured from Alexandria.⁵⁴

4. Lentils and fava beans in Serbian medieval sources

While the accounts of the fava bean are more than modest, Serbian medieval sources allow us to form an image of the use and spread of lentils in our region. With respect to the topic of this research, significant information is provided by the *Hilandar Typikon*, written in the 13th century, after the *Karyes Typikon* (1199).⁵⁵ It was created as a translation and adaptation of the *Evergetis Typikon* from Constantinople. Sava Nemanjić (Saint Sava) makes provisions with respect to the organization of monastic life and the administration in Hilandar. Detailed instructions on the diet of monks during fasting days are given in Chapter 10 (*About the Great Lent and the two Small Lents, of the Holy Apostles and the birth of Christ*). During the first week of Great Lent, from Tuesday to Friday, monks ate raw greens, fruits and “lentils soaked in water”. During the other days of the Great Lent, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, no vegetable stews were allowed, only “soaked lentils” and some water. On Good Friday, the monks of Hilandar ate raw greens, fruits, and “soaked lentils”

The monks took care of the poor and sick people. In Chapter 38 of the *Hilandar Typikon* we learn that they clothed “the naked and the barefooted”. People in need and hunger were given “bread, wine and lentils” from the monks’ own food left uneaten.⁵⁶

The *Studenica Typikon* (1208) is written with minor adjustments and modifications to the *Hilandar Typikon*. It regulates the administration and life of the Studenica monastery. The provisions on fasting and the use of soaked lentils in the diet of monks were repeated.⁵⁷

It is clear from the aforementioned that the lentils were grown on the estates of Hilandar and Studenica at the beginning of the 13th century and that their use during fasting was allowed.

Syntagma Canonum by Matthew Blastares from the first half of the 14th century provides information about lentils in the rule “About bringing fruits to holy temples”. In addition to grapes, it is explicitly mentioned among the first summer crops (“new seeds”) used for nutrition – “lentils and other miscellaneous vegetables”. Bishops and presbyters, if they were to receive these gifts, were obliged to distribute them to the faithful people. The bloodless sacrifice is known to be offered only in wine and bread. In this context, it is forbidden to bring honey, milk or any other drink, or animals and “lentils” to the temple.⁵⁸ Fava beans are mentioned in only one place in *Syntagma Canonum*.⁵⁹

Several charters from the time of King Milutin and his grandson King Dušan, eloquently convey the importance of lentil for the life of the hermits of Mount Athos. Serbian King Stefan Uroš II Milutin issued a gold seal charter (1317/1318) to the cell of

⁵³ Hrabak 1973: 45.

⁵⁴ Hrabak 1970: 161–162.

⁵⁵ Sv. Sava 2008: 68–69.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 96–97.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 107–108.

⁵⁸ Novaković 1907: 337; Matija Vlastar 2013: 248.

⁵⁹ Novaković 1907: LVI.

Saint Sava in Karyes at the request of the Hilandar abbot Nicodemus and the elder of the aforementioned cell, Teodul.⁶⁰ The ruler purchased “adelphates”, obtained the funds for the restoration of the cell and furnished it with “books, venerable icons and all necessities”. In order to ensure that the hermits of Karyes spent their days and nights in fasting and prayer, the abbot of Hilandar together with the fraternity was obliged to provide them with clothing and footwear, and with “bread, oil and lentils”. An identical provision of “bread, wine, and lentils” for the inhabitants of the Karyes cell is found in the *Charter of the Fraternal Assembly of the Monastery of Hilandar on the Adelphates for the Karyes Cell of Saint Sava*, issued on 16 June 1332.⁶¹

King Milutin purchased three adelphates for the provision and supply of the inhabitants of the cell of Ascension and Holy Trinity on Mount Athos (1317–1321). The charter emphasized the necessity of obtaining “bread, wine, butter, lentils, clothing and footwear” for the hermits.⁶²

The Cyrillic data on fava beans, already presented in the paper, are very brief. With the onset of the Turkish era we have more information available.

5. Lentils and fava beans in Turkish 15th century defterler⁶³

Immediately after the conquest of Serbian lands, the Turks published cadastral censuses, which, among other things, registered the economic situation of the time. They provide a clear picture of the representation of individual crops in the total production. The new authorities collected one-tenth of the production of hand-picked legumes (a tithe).⁶⁴ The value was calculated for larger quantities in *lukno* and for smaller quantities in *akçe*.⁶⁵ Taking into account the time of the defter’s creation, we assume that a similar economic situation (the representation of certain cultures) also prevailed at the time of the Despotate.⁶⁶

It is possible to say with a high degree of certainty that legumes, which are the focus of our interest, were cultivated in Kosovo in the first half of the 15th century, i.e. in the former territories under the authority of Vuk Branković. This is evidenced by the Turkish cadastral census – *Defter of Vuk’s lands* from 1455, which was created after the capture of Novo Brdo and southwestern Serbia.⁶⁷ In addition to cereals, the population also sowed legumes – lentils,

⁶⁰ The chrysobull is kept in the Hilandar archives. The issue of the authenticity of this charter has been a point of interest in the historical science. The number and the provenance of the adelphate are disputed over. The document was interpolated in 1332, and again later, during Dušan’s Empire. Živojinović 1986: 385–396; Živojinović 2002-2003: 111–112; Živojinović 2006: 11–41; Mošin, Ćirković i Sindik 2011: 483–488.

⁶¹ The diplomatic peculiarities of the charter and the sale of the adelphates in the amount of 1.000 perpera for the Karyes Cell of Saint Sava are discussed in our historiography. Mošin 1939-1940, 181; Živojinović 2003: 41–54.

⁶² Mošin 1975: 340–343; Mošin, Ćirković i Sindik 2011: 515-517; Živojinović 1972: 121.

⁶³ A defter (pl. defterler) was a type of census in the Ottoman Empire.

⁶⁴ Hrabak 1974: 46; Zirojević 2011: 473.

⁶⁵ Lukno is a unit of measure for cereals. Its exact value in the 1455 defter is not known. In Braničevo (1467) one lukno of wheat equals 12 akçe, weighing at 92.361 kg. Blagojević 1969: 41-50; Ćirković 1974: 52–58; Hadžibegić, Handžić & Kovačević 1972: 357; Stojaković 1987: 35.

⁶⁶ Mišić 1994: 52.

⁶⁷ Božanić 2017: 166.

fava beans, vetches⁶⁸ and common beans,⁶⁹ as can be clearly seen from the precise records of the first Ottoman census of Serbian lands. A number of settlements where leguminous cultivation was confirmed in the mid-15th century are mentioned in the Nemanjić monastic charters, but due to the considerable time distance we will not monitor their continuity.

In the area of “Vuk’s lands”, lentil is the most prevalent legume in the Lab Nahiyah, the Vilayet of Kosovo, the Nahiyahs of Klopotnik and Morava. We have no information as to the cultivation of this crop in the relatively small Nahiyah of Dolci and the smallest Nahiyah to be recorded in the census – Trgovište. Fava beans were scarcely grown. It is the second most common legume in the Dolci Nahiyah, whereas there is no data for Klopotnik and Trgovište.

Number	Nahiyah	Lentil	Fava bean	Vetch	Common bean
1	Lab	24	10	4	11
2	Morava	7	4	7	3
3	Vučitrn	18	7	23	13
4	Kosovo Vilayet	5	1	4	/
5	Topolnica	1	1	6	1
6	Dolci	/	2	6	/
7	Klopotnik	3	/	2	2
8	Trgovište	/	/	/	/

Table 1. The villages in the nahiyahs belonging to Branković’s lands which paid legume tax:

A precise analysis shows that in the Lab Nahiyah (210 villages), which had the largest number of settlements and inhabitants (4180 families with married men, 138 families with widows and 608 with unmarried men), 24 villages paid taxes on lentils (940 families with married men, 31 families with widows and 169 with unmarried men).⁷⁰ The largest producers of this legume were Gornji Zagul (5 *lukno*), Gornja Dubnica (3 *lukno*), Majana (3 *lukno*) and Donja Rakovica (2 *lukno*). Taxes on fava beans were recorded in ten villages (332 families with married men, five families with widows and 63 with unmarried men).⁷¹ With respect to the production of fava beans the following villages stand out – Gornja Lopaštica (1 *lukno*), Parvanica (3 *lukno* from fava beans and lentils together) and Podujevo

⁶⁸ Vetch (Latin *Lathyrus*; *Orobus*; Turkish *burçak*) is an annual legume, from the genus *Vicia*. Karadžić 1898³: 103; Simonović 1959: 546; Zirojević 2011: 471–477.

⁶⁹ Common bean (Latin *Phaseolus vulgaris*) is a legume from the *Phaseolus* genus. Karadžić 1898³: 102; Simonović 1959: 545.

⁷⁰ Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 240, 242, 245, 247, 249, 251–253, 259–263, 267, 270–280, 293, 298–299, 302–310, 321–324, 339; Hrabak 1974: 35.

⁷¹ The following villages produced fava beans: Prvanica, Podujevo, Brajino, Gornja Lopaštica, Kuniševce, Balin Potok, Borina Crkva, Sokolica, Metohija and Donji Bradaš. Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 241, 253, 262, 272–273, 275, 299–300, 344.

(2 *lukno* from fava beans and common beans).

Seven (220 households with married men, four households with widows and 15 with unmarried men) out of a total of 121 villages listed in the census in Morava (3196 households with married men, 98 families of widows and 73 with unmarried men) produced lentils.⁷² Gotovuša, Štrpce, Stuba and Slivovo (231 families with married men, three widowed families and 46 with unmarried men) paid a tax on fava beans in the amount of 110 akçe.⁷³

Duty on lentils was recorded in 18 (650 households with married men, 26 households with widows and 73 with unmarried men) out of 121 villages in the census (3196 households with married men, 98 households with widows and 178 with unmarried men) in the Vučitrn Nahiyah. They paid taxes on lentils in the amount of 7 *lukno* and 346 akçe, to which the total revenue from lentils and common beans of the village of Samobis (6 *lukno*) should be added. In addition to the aforementioned village, larger quantities were produced by Prilužje (5 *lukno*) and Donji Dobraševci (2 *lukno*).⁷⁴ Seven villages cultivated fava beans (283 families with married men, 14 families with widows and 34 with unmarried men), with the village of Čikatovo being the largest producer (2 *lukno*).⁷⁵

In the Vilayet of Kosovo (1570 families with married men, 48 widowed families and 108 with unmarried men) 5 villages (186 families with married men, six widowed families and 23 with unmarried men) paid taxes on lentils.⁷⁶ With respect to the amount that was paid Gornje Rušince (6 *lukno*) and Arhiljača (1 *lukno*) stand out. The only producer of fava beans was the village of Jasenovik (20 akçe).

Only one village north of Gnjilane (the Topolnica nahiyah) cultivated lentils and fava beans – Ovčarevo, the most populous settlement in the area (107 families with married men, two families with widows and 30 with unmarried men). It produced four types of legumes (lentils – 30 akçe, fava beans – 30 akçe, common beans – 25 akçe, vetches – 8 *lukno*) and is unique throughout the census records.⁷⁷

The population of Drenice (Dolci nahiyah) grew fava beans. The nahiyah consisted of 17 villages (592 families with married men, 50 widowed families and 92 with unmarried men).⁷⁸ The villages of Podgrađe and Dolnja Jošanica paid taxes on this legume in the total amount of 3 *lukno*.⁷⁹

In the small Nahiyah of Klopotnik – the area of Ibarski Kolašin (453 households

⁷² This crop was recorded in the following villages: Grkovo (4 *lukno*), Sićevo (2 *lukno*), Devaje (1 *lukno*), Ribnik (30 akçe), Opaštica (20 akçe), Karim (24 akçe) and Đerekar (10 akçe). *Ibid.* 131, 138, 141, 157, 173, 176, 177; Hrabak 1974: 35.

⁷³ Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 40–42, 119, 131.

⁷⁴ With respect to the production of lentils, the following villages should be highlighted: Mokruman (50 akçe), Loviša (48 akçe), Krunatica (30 akçe) and Ivdoševci (24 akçe). Eight villages paid taxes on this crop in the amount of 20 akçe. Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 44, 70, 76, 91, 95, 115–116.

⁷⁵ These are: Mokruman, Čikatovo, Dolnji Brgari, Vrani Dol, Ivdoševci, Belo Polje and Loviša. *Ibid.* 44, 79, 82, 85, 95, 110, 115–116; Čikatovo was bequeathed to the monastery of Banjska. Božanić 2006: 142, 249, 260–263.

⁷⁶ 40 villages in the Vilayet of Kosovo were recorded in the census. The lentil was cultivated in: Gornja Obrnica, Uljari (Ugljari), Gornje Rušince, Jasenovik and Arhiljača. Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 77–78, 213, 226, 233, 235.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* 192–193.

⁷⁸ Hrabak 1974: 35.

⁷⁹ Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 21, 26.

with married men, 41 households with widows and 31 with unmarried men), three (78 households with married men, six households with widows and 14 with unmarried men) out of 29 villages paid their dues on lentils.⁸⁰ The relatively small village of Brnjak (30 houses, two widowed, five unmarried) was the largest producer of lentils in the Brankovićs' District. It paid tithing in the amount of 28 *lukno*.

Of particular importance for understanding the economy of northeastern Serbia is the defter of Braničevo from 1467. In addition to cereals, the population also cultivated legumes, the most prevalent being lentils. Common beans were cultivated to a lesser extent, while fava beans were recorded in three villages.

For a smaller number of settlements that produced legumes it is possible to confirm a topographic-toponymic continuity since the time of Prince Lazar and Despot Stefan Lazarević. The cultivation of lentils and fava beans in their time cannot be confirmed factually, but in mid 15th century these cultures were certainly present in the area under observation. Hereinafter, we will pay special attention to the aforementioned villages due to their chronological closeness to the time of the creation of the defter.

Number	Nahiyah	Lentils	Fava beans	Common beans
1	Lučica	36	1	2
2	Ždrelo	29	1	4
3	Pek	18	/	/
4	Resava	7	1	5
5	Ravanica	1	/	1
6	Homolje	5	/	1
7	Zvižd	/	/	/

Table 2. The number of villages that paid taxes on legumes in the nahiyahs of the district of Braničevo (1467)

In Lučica, the largest nahiyah of the Braničevo district, lentils were cultivated in 36 villages (954 households with married men and three households with widows).⁸¹ Part of the settlements that cultivated this culture belonged to medieval estates: Kostolac – to the Monastery of Ždrelo, Kobiljevo – to Drenča, Marjani, Kličevac – to Tismena and Vodice, Kurjače, Oklopci – to palatine Radič.⁸² In addition to lentils, the residents of the village of

⁸⁰ These were: Akovac, Brnjak and Zubin Potok. Hadžibegić, Handžić i Kovačević 1972: 8–9, 12.

⁸¹ The nahiyah included 81 villages. The following villages produced lentils: Poljana, Penkele/Ponikle, Bregovo, Zaplan, Semihovo/Samočeva, Kličevac, Klenička/Klepečka, Bihotince, Cmi Bratinac, Požarevac, Biskupac, Makovci, Peščanica, Novac, Koštnica, Jošvance, Kobiljevo, Oklopci, Dolnje Brestje, Mogila, Babušnica, Kurjače, Marjani, Zobilj, Tešikovo, Repehe, Gornje Brestje, Brajani, Poljedruž. Stojaković 1987: 63–64, 67–68, 70, 76–77, 81, 98–101, 108–109, 125–126, 129, 131–136, 143–147, 149–152, 165–166, 174, 180, 187–188, 196–196, 223–224, 232–233, 244; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 122–141.

⁸² Škrivanić 1970: 247; Mladenović 2003: 29–30, 53, 61, 181, 185; Veselinović 2009: 194, 198; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 128, 131, 134, 137.

Beranje/Brajani (14 houses) also grew fava beans.⁸³ It is the only mention of this legume in the territory of Lučica.

The tax on lentils was registered in 29 villages (619 households with married men and four widowed households) in the Nahiyah of Ždrelo.⁸⁴ In the territory of the entire district of Braničevo, the greatest amount of yield was recorded in the village of Veliko Selo (19 houses), on which 10 *lukno* in duties were paid. The most populous village in the district of Braničevo – Topolnica (109 houses) was also situated in the nahiyah, paying 10 akçe as a tax on this culture. The village of Vojšanovac (23 houses), which, according to the defter, cultivated lentils (a tithe – 10 akçe), is mentioned in the charters of the monasteries of Ždrelo and Ravanica.⁸⁵ The inhabitants of Dubnica (7 houses) produced fava beans (tax – 10 akçe). Prince Lazar donated the village to his endowment.⁸⁶

The lentil is the only taxed and recorded legume in the territory of the Pek Nahiyah. Of the total of 57 settlements, a levy on this culture was recorded for 18 (321 households with married men and two households with widows), amounting to 160 akçe.⁸⁷ The highest payments were recorded in the following places: Trstenik (51 houses) – 25 akçe, Hrabrovac (34 houses with male households and two widows) – 20 akçe and Klenje (54 houses) – 15 akçe. For a number of the census settlements that produced the aforementioned culture, it is possible to confirm continuity from the 14th century onward. Prince Lazar annexed the villages of Ljubinja, Kamijevo, Vojilovo (Vojilovce) and Potočac (Potočica) to the estate of the monastery of Ravanica.⁸⁸ Despot Stefan Lazarević upheld the inclusion of the village of Barič in the estates of Wallachian monasteries of Tisman and Vodica in northeastern Serbia in 1406, in which the cultivation of lentils was confirmed six decades later.⁸⁹ Taking into account

⁸³ The village is mentioned in the Ravanica Charter by Prince Lazar. Mladenović 2003: 53; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 139.

⁸⁴ The nahiyah had 79 villages. The tax on this crop was paid by the following villages: Bučine, Čatreše/Četereze, Izvar/Izvor, Kamenovo, Kruševica, Zagradani, Radinac, Ilijevac, Vrbnica, Prsdina/Presedna, Gornji Popovac, Pihaljevo (Behaljevo), Uvrta/Vrelo, Zdravna, Sremac, Topolnica, Starci, Svinje/Svine, Vezičevo, Rašanica/Rašanac, Veliko Selo, Vrbnica, Mirijevo, Orašica, Vojšanovac/Vojšanovci, Bajić, Draženov Plet/Draženovo Blato, Kalište and Parložica. Stojaković 1987: 54–55, 89, 96, 101–103, 109–113, 116, 119–122, 124–125, 153, 160, 166–167, 187, 189–190, 193, 214, 227–229, 240–242; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 141, 145–146, 148–154, 156–158.

⁸⁵ Purković 1939–1940: 74; Mladenović 2003: 29, 32, 35, 53, 60, 86, 93, 100; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 154; the village of Izvor (one tenth on lentils – 5 akçe) no longer exists; it can be, however, related to the river by the same name in the territory of the village of Bistrica, in the charter of the monastery of Ždrelo. Mladenović 2003: 29–30, 32, 35; this was already indicated in historical science. Miljković, Krstić 2007: 157–158.

⁸⁶ Purković 1939–1940: 91; Stojaković 1987: 116; Mladenović 2003: 60, 75, 86; Škrivanić 1970: 245; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 158.

⁸⁷ These were the following villages: Trstenik, Hudojevac/Kudojevac, Klenje, Hrabrovac, Srednje, Ljubinja, Kamijevo, Crljine/Čeljine, Stene, Vojilovce/Vojilovo, Prodan/Brodar(ac), Pomenovci/Čumiovcе, Bariče/Barič, Banovce, Potočica/Potočac, Dolnji Popovac, Belotino and Mišljenovac. Stojaković 1987: 38–41, 140, 142, 148–149, 155, 181, 188–189, 198, 200, 206, 209, 219–220, 240; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 100–103, 107–111, 113.

⁸⁸ Purković 1939–1940: 74, 101, 115, 131; Mladenović 2003: 53, 61, 87, 93, 100, 112, 119; Škrivanić 1970: 248–249; in the Ravanica chrysobull in the territory of the village of Srpci the borderlines of the “Klen Plateau” and “Mišljen’s Watermill” were recorded. They can be connected with the villages of Klenje and Mišljenovac, which, according to the defter, grew lentils. Mladenović 2003: 61; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 100, 111.

⁸⁹ Veselinović 2009: 187, 189, 202.

the prevalence of this culture, the continuity of the villages and their affiliation with the monastic estates, it is possible to assume that the lentil was cultivated here in mid 15th century.

In the area of the small and sparsely populated Nahiyah of Ravanica, only Dolnja Sena (38 houses) produced lentils.⁹⁰ It paid a tax of 10 akçe. This village on the Ravanica River, in the immediate vicinity of the present-day Ćuprija, was annexed by Prince Lazar to the estate of the monastery of Ravanica.⁹¹ It was owned by the monastery until 1477.⁹²

Five villages (76 houses in total) in the area of Homolje gave one tenth of the yield of lentils.⁹³ Among villages with overall modest yields, Milatovac (40 akçe) and Peščanica (30 akçe) stand out. The village of Labljan (20 houses) paid a combined tax on lentils and common beans (10 akçe).

According to the data from the defter, the most common legume in the area around the River Resava was the lentil, followed by common beans and fava beans. Seven villages (141 houses) grew lentils. Three gave one-tenth of the yield (Crkvenica, Orašje and Dobreševo), whereas four gave one tenth of the lentils and common beans combined (Gumije, Hrastić, Poljadina and Kudince).⁹⁴ Only one settlement grew fava beans. Vojska (32 houses) on the River Morava gave 10 akçe in combined duties on fava beans and common beans.⁹⁵

Based on the census data of the Sanjak of Vidin from 1478/1481 it is possible to form an idea of agricultural production in southeastern Serbia, that is, in Banja and Svrljig. In addition to the duties on cereals (wheat, barley, millet), the population gave one-tenth of the total yield of fruits and nuts, industrial plants (flax) and vegetable crops (onions and garlic). With respect to legumes, the census provides information only on the lentils. The settlements of Banje are located at an altitude of 380 to 570 m. Of the twelve villages included in the census, as many as nine (a total of 262 individuals) paid taxes on lentils,⁹⁶ paying a total of 202 akçe.⁹⁷ In the area of Svrljig, 26 villages (a total of 1488 individuals) paid taxes on lentils in the amount of 1370 akçe.⁹⁸ They were located at an altitude of up to 800 m above sea level. The village of Zidna, which was a *timar*⁹⁹ held by Hamza and Musa, was the largest producer of this culture (360 akçe).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁰ The Nahiyah contained 13 villages at the time of the census. Stojaković 1987: 175–176.

⁹¹ Škrivanić, 1970: 238; Mladenović 2003: 52, 59, 85, 92, 98, 110, 117.

⁹² Miljković, Krstić 2007: 182.

⁹³ 27 settlements were recorded in this nahiyah. The following settlements gave one-tenth of the lentils: Suhodol, Gospodince, Peščanica, Milatovac and Labljan. Stojaković 1987: 49–51, 224–225; most of these villages no longer exist and cannot be precisely positioned in the field. Miljković, Krstić 2007: 116–117, 119–120.

⁹⁴ The nahiyah included 42 villages. Stojaković 1987: 159, 171, 216–218, 222, 230–232; Miljković, Krstić 2007: 160, 166–169, 174.

⁹⁵ Stojaković 1987: 218; Miljković, Krstić, 2007: 169.

⁹⁶ Bojanić 1973: 165–176.

⁹⁷ Three villages gave 30 akçe of duties each (Mužnice, Orahovica, Kruševo), one paid 22 akçe (Prest/Brest), whereas the remaining villages paid 15 akçe each.

⁹⁸ Bojanić 1973: 119–163.

⁹⁹ Timar (Turkish) – a feudal land in the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁰⁰ In addition, the following villages also paid taxes on lentils, listed here in decending order of the amounts paid: Beli Potok (90 akçe), Kali Baba (75 akçe) and Lalince (75 akçe).

Number	Nahiyah	Number of villages	Tax in akçe
1	Banja	12	202
2	Svrljig	26	1370

Table 3. Income from lentils in Banja and Svrljig according to the census of the Sanjak of Vidin (1478/1481)

Of all Serbian countries, Herzegovina is best known for its fava bean production. Favourable geo-climatic conditions for its cultivation contributed to this. With respect to a wider area, from the rivers Neretva to Drim, there are references to cereals and legumes in the trade agreements between Ancona and Dubrovnik from the late 13th century.¹⁰¹ According to the defter of 1475/1477 the population of Herzegovina intensely grew fava beans, which were recorded in the census independently or along with black beans.¹⁰² Only two places in the Sokol Nahiyah (Pljevlja and Dragočevo) gave one tenth of the total yield of lentils.¹⁰³

The census shows that the fava beans were mostly produced by the village of Govzi (83 houses) in the Osanica Nahiyah, which paid three *lukno* (180 akçe).¹⁰⁴ In the Nevesinje Nahiyah, the small village of Drežanj (12 houses) paid two *lukno* from the yield of fava beans.¹⁰⁵ In addition to *lukno* as the unit of measure, for the villages of Parpatna (60 houses) and Zajelje (six houses) in the Sokol Nahiyah the monetary value of fava beans, totaling 111 akçe, was also introduced.¹⁰⁶

This starchy plant was grown in almost all of the nahiyahs in the Sanjak of Herzegovina. Due to the abundance of material, we will especially highlight the most characteristic examples with reference to the total number of villages in a nahiyah and the number of villages that produced this culture therein. The fava bean was mostly grown in the karst field of Nevesinje, the nahiyahs of Sokol, Popovo and Samobor. The Nahiyah of Popovo can serve as an example of extensive cultivation of fava beans. Of the 24 villages (219 houses), 15 produced fava beans (131 houses) totaling 143 akçe in taxes.¹⁰⁷

This is followed by the nahiyahs of Osaonica (six villages – 227 akçe), Zagorje (eight villages – 87 akçe and one on fava beans and black beans – 50 akçe), Goražde (five villages –

¹⁰¹ Radonić 1934: 71–79, 425; Hrabak 1963: 130.

¹⁰² One tenth of the total yield of fava beans and black beans was paid by the villages Čavaš in Popovo, Crna Njiva in Sokol, Seličani in Zagorje and a section of the village of Papratno. Aličić 1985: 266, 284, 397, 485.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 165, 242.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 196–197.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* 435.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 181–182, 224–225.

¹⁰⁷ These were: Kotezi, Priminje and Čajrovina, Čavaš, Mišljen, Kijevdol, Orašje, Jasenica, Zavala, Kaćun, Zapolje, Čvaljina, Sedlari, Ravno, Stenica, Rahov Dol and Velja Međa. *Ibid.* 484–491, 497, 519–520; Mišić 1994: 170–171; in the Nahiyah of Nevesinje 12 out of 24 villages paid taxes on fava beans in the amount of 200 akçe. In the area of the Sokol Nahiyah, 14 villages out of 117 paid 268 akçe in tax on fava beans and 63 akçe on fava beans and black beans. Out of the 58 villages in the Samobor Nahiyah, 17 grew fava beans, paying 214 akçe in taxes, whereas 9 out of 42 villages in Neretva paid 179 akçe.

93 akçe), Kukanj (five villages – 65 akçe), Bistrica and Trebinje. Of around forty villages in the Nahiyah of Trebinje (212 houses), fava beans were cultivated in nine (52 houses), inducing a tax duty of 29 akçe.¹⁰⁸ Đuro Tošić points out that the toponyms Bobovište and Bobova Ljut additionally indicate the presence of this plant in the Trebinje region.¹⁰⁹ In Bistrica, eight (141 houses) out of 70 villages (1005 houses) paid 132 akçe of taxes on fava beans.¹¹⁰

Fava beans could also be found on the fields in the nahiyahs of Mileševa (three villages – 32 akçe), Dubštica (three villages – 40 akçe), Borovac (three villages – 64 akçe), Konac Polje (two villages – 47 akçe), Blagaj (two villages – 13 akçe), Viduška (two villages – 14 akçe), Dabar (two villages – 36 akçe), Ljubinja (one village – 10 akçe), Mostar (one village – 16 akçe), Kom (one village – 10 akçe), Viševa (one village – 6 akçe) and Kava (one village – 10 akçe).¹¹¹

6. Conclusion

Based on all of the above, it is possible to conclude that legumes were used in the diet of people from the earliest history. Serbian medieval sources (typikons, charters) particularly indicated that lentils were an obligatory part of monastic meals. The data on fava beans are scarce, but it can be concluded that, in Serbia, they were used in the diet of the poorest. Turkish census records (defterler), taken immediately after the Ottoman conquest of Serbian lands, illustrate the economic circumstances of the time and the representation of legumes in overall cultivation. Among different Serbian countries, Herzegovina is most famous for the cultivation of fava beans. According to the defterler, lentils, and, to a lesser extent, fava beans were grown in the territory of Kosovo and northeastern Serbia in mid 15th century.

ABBREVIATIONS:

Gen. – *The First Book of Moses: Genesis*
2 Sam. – *The Second Book of Samuel*
Ezek. – *Ezekiel*

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¹⁰⁸ These were: Zapolje, Kučići, Strganice, Kom and Cicina (registered together in the census), Poljice, Stolac, Sparožići with Korjenić (registered together in the census). Aličić 1985: 489, 494, 499, 501.

¹⁰⁹ Tošić 1998: 158.

¹¹⁰ Aličić 1985: 291, 311, 348, 376, 378, 507, 510, 525.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 251, 277, 313, 334, 388, 403, 406–7, 410–11, 451, 473, 475, 574; Pekić 2005: 93–94.

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СНЕЖАНА БОЖАНИЋ

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ИЗ АГРАРНЕ ИСТОРИЈЕ: О СОЧИВУ И БОБУ У СРЕДЊОВЕКОВНОЈ СРБИЈИ ДО КРАЈА XV ВЕКА

Резиме

Због високог садржаја беланчевина, легуминозе су интензивно коришћене у исхрани људи од праисторије. Сочиво је изузетно цењена средњовековна махунарка, која се нарочито користила током поста.

У гл. 10 *Хиландарског типика* детаљно се говори о употреби „квашеног сочива“ током поста. Људима у невољи и гладнима Хиландарци су давали „хлеб, вино и сочиво“, од њихове претекле хране (гл. 38). Одредбе о посту и употреби квашеног сочива у исхрани монаха поновљене су у *Студеничком типик*у. Неколико повеља из времена краља Милутина и унука му краља Душана, речито сведоче о важности сочива за живот светогорских калуђера. Како би испосници у келији Св. Саве Јерусалимског у Кареји неометано проводили дане и ноћи у посту и молитвама, хиландарски игуман и братство су били у обавези да им осигурају одећу и обућу, а од животних намирница „хлеб, уље и сочиво“. Краљ Милутин је откупио три аделфата за издржавање и опскрбу житеља у келији Вазнесења и Св. Тројице у Светој Гори (1317-1321). У документу је наглашена неопходност прибављања „хлеба, вина, масла, сочива, одеће и обуће“ за испоснике. На подручју „Вукове земље“ о чему сведочи *Дефтер за Вукову област* из 1455. године, сочиво је најзаступљенија легуминоза у лапској нахији, приштинском вилајету, нахијама Клопотник и Морава. На основу турског пописа из 1467. године може се рећи да је сочиво најдоминантнија култура Браничевске области и једина забележена опорезована легуминоза у Сврљигу и Бањи, према попису Видинског санцака (1478-1481).

Боб је „најстарија врста словенског варива“. По свему судећи, Јужни Словени су знали за њега у прадомовини. На ширем простору Медитерана, у Византији и Србији, боб је првенствено употребљаван у исхрани најсиромашнијих слојева друштва. О томе сведочи и *Повест о блаженом Гроздију (Мука блаженог Гроздија)*. Подаци о овој махунарки за период средњовековне Србије су веома оскудни. Дефтери указују да је боб гајен на Косову и североисточној Србији у време доласка Турака на власт. Од свих српских земаља, Херцеговина је најпознатија по производњи боба.

Ове махунарке имају важно место у српској традиционалној култури.

Кључне речи: Србија, средњи век, привреда, земљорадња, сочиво, боб, исхрана, дефтери.

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