

**DEFINITION, EXTENT, AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE HUNGARIAN FRONTIER  
TOWARD THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE REIGN OF KING MATTHIAS  
CORVINUS, 1458-1490**

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October 2020

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

## **Declaration**

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee

## ABSTRACT

### **Definition, Extent, and Administration of the Hungarian Frontier toward the Ottoman Empire in the Reign of King Matthias Corvinus, 1458-1490**

Davor Salihović

By reassessing the known primary sources and introducing new archival material from the archives in Hungary, Croatia, and Italy, this thesis revisits several crucial points of the history of Hungarian-Ottoman relations in the era of King Matthias Corvinus (r. 1458-1490) and raises new questions related to the social and political history of the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier. By relying on methods derived from geography and digital history, it challenges the established views about King Matthias's defensive policies and the role of the so-called 'southern defensive system' that relied on royal castles located in the kingdom's borderlands. The author carefully identifies these castles, sheds light on the chronology of the king's acquisitions, and highlights the reasoning behind them, showing that the acquisition and the upkeep of at least a third of the 'frontier castles' had very little to do with the defence of the kingdom against the Ottomans. Instead, the king tried to check the Venetian influence on his realm(s), fearful of losing primarily Croatia to the Republic. It is further suggested in the thesis that the remainder of the 'defensive system' needs to be approached through a geographical lens. After careful analysis, the author shows that rather than an unbroken line of defensive castles that stretched parallel to the boundary between the Hungarian- and Ottoman-held territories, the 'system' was a patchwork of clusters of castles grouped around specific parts of the borderland's terrain, namely valleys and other suitable paths through the Dinaric Alps, where Ottoman troops were able to gain entrance to Hungary.

The thesis is further focused on a detailed analysis of the Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations about truces and peace, as well as on questioning whether these two sides ever delineated boundaries. The analysis of all available published and archival sources suggests that a process of bordering never took place and that the territories held by either side remained vaguely defined, signalled only through the locations of frontier castles. It is suggested that the two sides probably never agreed on a long-lasting peace, but rather relied on short-term truces (regardless of the terminology used in the sources). Truces were enforced in 1478, in early 1484, the summer of 1485, and in 1488, and possibly earlier, although there is insufficient evidence to confirm this. The author argues that as the diplomacy relied primarily (if not solely)

on the Cyrillic script and the Slavonic language, the only extant copy of an Ottoman *'ahdname* addressed to King Matthias (traditionally dated to 1488 and considered a draft) is a translation of the Slavonic document into Ottoman Turkish. The document was in its entirety or majority first put to paper in 1478, and was thereafter reused in subsequent treaties. According to the extant evidence, the treaties primarily regulated very little beyond the keeping of peace between the two sides, which the Ottoman side granted throughout the late 1470s and the 1480s in exchange for one important concession by the Hungarians, namely the right to pass through Hungarian territory for incursions into the Venetian and Habsburg lands.

Lastly, the thesis touches upon several questions related to the administration of the Hungarian frontier, the recruitment of troops, and phenomena of the day-to-day life in the borderlands. It is shown that between 1464 and late 1473, a part of the Hospitaller estates in Hungary were allocated to the king's captains who governed the frontiers, in order to supply them with additional sources of revenue that was to be directed towards the maintenance of the frontier castles in Bosnia. As the Ottomans relied on various allies, primarily the Vlachs, for the recruitment of units of raiders (the *akinji*), and Venice on her *stradioti*, Matthias found ways to use the ever-changing political circumstances in the frontier to attract primarily the local Vlachs and the people of the region of Poljica and employ them for a similar purpose, the petty warfare (*Kleinkrieg*) that became a regular occurrence in these years. Most of Matthias's methods for the upkeep of the frontiers or the recruitment of manpower failed, but the king nevertheless constantly searched for new solutions, coming close to establishing a firm structure of defences in the early 1480s. This, the closest that the king had come to the model accepted in current scholarship, also failed not two years later. His methods were never identical to those accepted in historiography (primarily thanks to the work of Ferenc Szakály): built around a stable network of frontier castles, the purposefully recruited troops, and clever management of the kingdom's resources that secured the means for the upkeep of both the frontier castles and the manpower. In fact, for the majority of his reign, Matthias had very little or no control over the vast regions of the borderlands, he had to navigate through fluctuating political circumstances, the questionable loyalty of his captains, and the local politics over which he had little control in order to primarily preserve his authority in large sections of the borderlands. He similarly had to experiment and frequently come up with new solutions for the defence of Hungary against the Ottoman advance in the remaining sections of the frontier.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

More often than not, producing a piece of written work in our discipline, especially a thesis, is a solitary enterprise. A self-centred but seldom self-assured mind of an academic often relishes this eremitic life, absurdly fearful of criticism and receptive to complacency. Without guidance and aid, without a view from a different vantage point, however, not a lot of academics would be able to put on paper a meaningful string of arguments, filtered carefully from an amorphous blur of hypotheses, assumptions, ideas, beliefs, and evidence that occupies their minds.

Much of the work presented here, a compressed version of my own amorphous blur, would retain that form had it not been for the support of my supervisor, Professor Nora Berend. I am greatly indebted to her for her help and guidance. Back in 2017, she recognized the potential of my proposed PhD project, and invited me to work with her; without her support, I would have not been able to investigate these topics to the level I have been able to do so in the past three years. She read numerous drafts of chapters, papers prepared for publication, conference presentations, usually a disorganized heap of data and attempts, always providing me with invaluable insight and comments. She supported my trips to the archives, gave me plenty of time to search for the primary material. Her recommendations helped me get funding for my research. During my time in Cambridge, Professor Berend always took the time to introduce me and my work (not always the most pleasant company) to other academics. I am grateful for her recommendations, and for her advice on my future. But most of all I am grateful for the fact that she taught me how to write far better work than I had been able to write before. She has been a magnanimous teacher and a wise master.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to two of my teachers from the University of Pula, Ivan Jurković and Robert Kurelić. It was primarily their teaching and support that shaped me into the scholar that I am today. All my flaws are exclusively my own doing. Valuable parts of my work and my skills developed from roots planted during my time under their coaching. They encouraged me to step into the world of academia, to continue my studies, and widen my horizons. I remain and always will be their apprentice, regardless of what the future may bring.

I also wish to thank a number of other people who have helped me in various ways in preparing, conducting, and bringing this research project to an end. Stanko Andrić offered his insight and advice during the initial stages of the project, as well as helped me with acquiring literature. I express my deep gratitude to Dr Sándor Papp, who kindly shared his findings with

me, and without whose discoveries I would not have been able to study Hungarian-Ottoman political relations to such depths. I must also thank Dr Balázs Nagy, my supervisor during my studies at CEU in Budapest, who was always ready to help with my quest for literature. I would like to thank the staff of the Cambridge University Library for their help in getting to numerous titles that are hard to come by, usually written in languages and scripts that have far too many consonants and diacritics for a ‘westerner’s’ taste, but are of crucial importance to a scholar interested in the history of Central and Southeast Europe. My thanks equally go to the staff of the British Library in London, who were always eager to try to dig up an odd old book, often perfectly preserved, despite its age. I am also grateful to Eve Lacey, the librarian at the library of the Skilliter Centre for Ottoman Studies in Cambridge, as well as the staff of the National and University Library in Zagreb, the Research Library in Zadar, and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. I am indebted to the staff of the CEU-ELTE Medieval Library in Budapest, who kindly allowed me to scan probably a third of their holdings during my trips to Budapest. Many thanks to the staff of the State Archives of Venice, the State Archives in Dubrovnik, Zagreb, and Zadar, the Archives of the Archbishopric of Zagreb, the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Library of Malta, and the Slovak National Archives. I always felt welcome in the reading rooms of these institutions, not least because often I had the complete room for myself. I especially have to mention Dr Ante Gverić from the archives in Zadar, as well as the staff there, with whom I spent the most time during my research, and who always did their work with the utmost professionalism.

This thesis would have been written in half as much time and in half as enjoyable environment had it not been for the company of two of my dearest friends and fellow tribesmen, Vedran Sulovsky and Milan Pajić, whom I found in Cambridge against all odds and with whom I spent far too many hours tasting the delicacies around the town and discussing issues that would fill out more pages than this thesis. I am grateful for their friendship. Here I also must mention Gabriele Passabì, a fellow Cambridge student and a friend with whom I share not only a Mediterranean mentality, but also a passion for physics, as well as Petros Chatzimpaloglou, a housemate in Magdalene College, who always found time for a cup of fine coffee and conversation. Various other dear friends and colleagues helped me during my studies, not least by taking the time to find and scan literature. I need to mention here Zoran Turk, Antun Nekić, Ines Ivić, and Josip Banić. Their own work and insights have also pushed me to explore different approaches to my material, and they played a significant role in my scholarly development.

I am forever indebted to my parents. Their passion for history and their care for my scientifically wired mind are the foundations of all my scholarly endeavours. They always selflessly supported my studies, provided me with more than I could have ever wished for, and sacrificed far too much to gift me the education that resulted in this thesis. I shall strive to settle my debts, but I doubt a lifetime would be enough.

I owe my greatest debt of gratitude to my girlfriend. She has sacrificed too much time, months and years, she gave her everything to support me in my pursuit of knowledge about the time and people long gone, trivial issues that we historians deal with only to refresh our memory. There are far more important things in life. She has been my companion through them all. Without her, I would be lost as Dante without his Beatrice, 'floatin' around accidental-like on a breeze,' lost without purpose 'like tears in rain.' I am grateful that she stood with me to witness and share the excitement of new discoveries. I am grateful that she has always been there to understand my passion for contemplation of the mysteries of the universe around us, past and present. She knows well all my talents and flaws and has always encouraged me to pursue my ambitions, even when I lost all hope that the world still cherished any of the virtues that one may attribute to *humanitas*. I dedicate all my work to her.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AA SS – Acta Sanctorum

AOM - Archives of the Order of Malta

ASMi - Archivio di Stato di Milano

ASMo - Archivio di Stato di Modena

ASV - Archivio di Stato di Venezia

HR-AHAZU - Arhiv Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti

BSB - Bayerische Staatsbibliothek

BAV - Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

HR-DADU - Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku

HR-DAZD - Državni arhiv u Zadru

HDA - Hrvatski državni arhiv

MNL OL - Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, Országos Levéltára

DL - Diplomataikai levéltár

DF - Diplomataikai fényképgyűjtemény

MZK - Moravská zemská knihovna v Brně

NAZ - Nadbiskupijski arhiv u Zagrebu

ÖN - Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

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## INTRODUCTION

Nearly a century after their arrival in Europe, the Ottomans established themselves along the frontiers of the Kingdom of Hungary early in the reign of King Matthias Corvinus (r. 1458-1490). With the conquest of the Despotate of Serbia in 1459 and then the Kingdom of Bosnia in 1463, the Ottoman state of Mehmed II, more powerful and better organized than the crude ‘predatory confederacy’ that was the early Ottoman polity, thus started to directly jeopardize Hungary. Buffers that once may have protected Hungary from the Ottoman advance were no longer in place, and for the first time Hungary (oftentimes alone) had to deal with Ottoman presence in its immediate surroundings, at the forefront of the anti-Ottoman struggle.

This period of Hungarian-Ottoman conflict and coexistence, and a myriad of complex topics that pertain to it, have attracted a vast scholarly interest. One may argue that the roots of historiography on Hungarian-Ottoman relations in Matthias’s reign – historiography that remains vital to this day – date back to the late 1400s when Antonio Bonfini (c. 1427-1503) first put to paper his history of Hungary. Scholars have had time to establish a number of views about Matthias’s (anti-)Ottoman policies. Outlines and, in some cases, the most minute details of Hungarian-Ottoman conflicts have been established. Matthias’s famous defensive system, based on frontier castles scattered along the southern borderlands, has long been recognized as the cornerstone of his anti-Ottoman policies. It has long been known that the two courts maintained lively diplomatic relations. Interest in Matthias’s relations with and dependence on the papacy in his anti-Ottoman struggle has recently been revitalized; the same can be said about propaganda related to the concept of the ‘bulwark of Christendom’ that Hungary relied on more than once in its medieval history.<sup>1</sup> Peculiarities, however, that pertain to the research into (late) medieval Hungary, particularly the kaleidoscope of national historiographies (Hungarian, Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Italian, etc.), source languages, and modern languages

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<sup>1</sup> For recent works on some of these issues, see: Iulian-Mihai Damian, ‘La *Depositeria della Crociata* (1463-1490) e i sussidi dei pontefici romani a Mattia Corvino’ [The *Depositeria della Crociata* (1463-1490) and the popes’ subsidies to Matthias Corvinus], *Annuario dell'Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica di Venezia* 8 (2006): pp. 135-52; Christian Gastgeber et al., ed., *Matthias Corvinus und Seine Zeit. Europa am Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit zwischen Wien und Konstantinopel* (Vienna: ÖAW, 2011); Norman Housley, *Crusading and the Ottoman threat, 1453-1505* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Tamás Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács: A History of Ottoman-Hungarian Warfare, 1389-1526* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018); Paul Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis. Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Husum: Mathiesen, 2014), pp. 163-216; Benjamin Weber, ‘La croisade impossible. Étude sur les relations entre Sixte IV et Mathias Corvin (1471-1484)’ in *Byzance et ses périphéries. Hommages à Alain Ducellier*, ed. Christophe Picard, Bernard Doumerc (Toulouse: CNRS, Université de Toulouse, 2004), pp. 309-21.

used by scholars that rarely communicate, have hindered detailed research on many topics.<sup>2</sup> One other significant factor that influenced current views on the history of Hungarian-Ottoman relations of the time and Matthias's Ottoman politics is that investigation rarely went beyond the readily available material. While in the past the published source collections dominated the research, today scholars tend to often rely far too much on the digitized collections of the Hungarian national archives. The lack of rich and explicit primary material on various aspects of Hungarian-Ottoman relations and frontiers, comparable to those discussed in the literature that focuses on later periods (c. mid-sixteenth century onwards) or on other states (such as Venice), often leaves scholars with no other choice but to resort to generalities and accept established, and often dated interpretations. While research on a myriad of issues related to frontiers and frontier life in the early modern period has flourished (such as on migrations, ransoming, frontier ethos, frontiersmen, frontier castles, cross-border trade, collaboration, defection, warfare, etc.), our understanding of such phenomena in the earlier periods, when one would expect they first appeared and assumed their rudimentary forms, is far from ideal. Of course, the inevitable lack of sources as explicit and as voluminous as those referring to the later, Habsburg period of the frontier's history is in large part to blame for our modest knowledge of Hungarian frontiers in Matthias's era. Probably Ottoman conquest destroyed and hopefully to some extent only misplaced a great number of documents that pertained to the frontiers. Nevertheless, a large number of primary sources that have thus far been unknown, scattered in a dozen or so archives all over the Balkans and Italy, offer invaluable information.

This thesis is in large part based on such new material, sources that I have gathered from the archives of Dubrovnik, Zadar, Venice, Zagreb, Budapest, Milan, the Vatican, and Malta, from a wide variety of categories – charters, notary records, civil suits, council minutes, instructions. These sources complement the published material or the archival material that had previously been unearthed. Apart from drawing from the new material, I analysed in minute

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<sup>2</sup> As Stanko Andrić, a Croatian scholar known primarily for his work on St John od Capistrano with Gábor Klaniczay, wittily put it recently in his brief comment on language barriers that hamper research: '[...] If one approaches the term "discovery" as something relative, and one wishes to limit the spread of news on the "discovery" to the local scholarly and wider cultural public, then one can afford to avoid digging through foreign and foreign-language literature (particularly alien in the case of the Hungarian language). On the other hand, if by some chance a scholar is well-versed in Hungarian humanistic literature, he too could fall into the trap of taking something interesting from there and presenting it explicitly or implicitly to the local public as his own discovery, without much trouble. With rare exceptions that "prove the rule", an adapted post-classical *dictum* "Hungaricum est, non legitur" has always been valid in Croatian scholarship. Not to mention the general public: I believe that even today an average Croatian citizen would probably assume that the name "Hunyadi" is misspelled "Hyundai".' S. Andrić, 'Od Iloka do Rima: talijansko putovanje Nikole Iločkog' [From Ilok to Rome: the Italian journey of Nicholas Újlaki], *Hrvatska revija* 1 (2015) - <https://www.matica.hr/hr/446/od-iloka-do-rima-talijansko-putovanje-nikole-ilockoga-24404/>, accessed on 2 September 2020.

detail all available known sources, and introduce digital methods based on the historical GIS (Geographic information system) in order to offer a different view on three aspects of the Hungarian frontier that was established and maintained during the reign of King Matthias Corvinus. By taking inspiration from recently reemphasized research questions on problems of Ottoman conquest in Europe, political relations between the Ottoman Empire and its opponents in the Balkans and Southeast Europe, political-social reactions to conquest and (local) societal mechanisms of adaptation to Ottoman presence as well as the flexibility of the Ottoman ruling structures, in this thesis I reassess (largely) political aspects of the reaction and adaptation of Matthias's Hungary to Ottoman presence.<sup>3</sup> This I view as a contribution to the discussion on these questions, as well as the groundwork for further investigations on aspects of social history. In the first chapter, I focus on negotiations about truces and peace between Hungary and the Ottomans, and attempt to answer whether and in what way these negotiations addressed the demarcation of borders between the two states, given that from 1463 territories under their control bordered on each other. The second chapter is in large part dedicated to the reassessment of the established views on Matthias's anti-Ottoman defensive system. Primarily thanks to the work of Ferenc Szakály, it has long been accepted that Matthias set up and maintained a chain of frontier castles that bore the brunt of Ottoman onslaught against Hungary. These castles, according to present views, were the backbone of Matthias's defensive system, one of the most recognizable characteristics of his reign. I will offer a different view as to the reason for the king's acquisition of at least some castles in the kingdom's frontiers. Here I question whether the Ottomans were indeed the (sole) reason behind the king's acquisitions, and propose a different model for the evaluation of this defensive system. This chapter is also dedicated to a detailed discussion on the extent of territories that Hungary controlled along the frontiers, as well as changes that affected the shape of Hungary's borderlands. In the last chapter, I discuss two separate issues that further help complement our understanding of Matthias's policies regarding the administration and defence of the kingdom's frontiers. Firstly I deal with the role that the king ascribed to the estates of the Hospitaller priory of Hungary in the maintenance of the frontier castles and the administration in the borderlands. In the final paragraphs of the thesis, I discuss models through which Matthias manned the frontier, how he used the ever-changing political circumstances to adapt and improve the structure and numbers

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<sup>3</sup> These questions have recently been best summarized in two similar essays by Oliver Jens Schmitt. See O. J. Schmitt, 'Südosteuropa im Spätmittelalter: Akkulturation – Integration – Inkorporation?,' *Vorträge und Forschungen 78 - Akkulturation im Mittelalter* (2014): pp. 81-136; *idem*, 'Introduction: The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Research Questions and Interpretations,' in *The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Interpretations and Research Debates*, ed. O. J. Schmitt (Vienna: ÖAW, 2016), pp. 7-45.

of his troops, as well as what kind of troops the king employed to tackle the demands of the *Kleinkrieg*. Through this, I highlight some phenomena that characterised the day-to-day life within the frontier zone, such as collaboration between nominal enemies, the developing models of ‘petty warfare’ shared between all sides, and ever-changing and overlapping loyalties.

## NEGOTIATIONS AND BORDERING

### Introductory remarks

When in January 1479 the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II granted Venice an *'ahd-name* that marked the end of a fifteen-year war, the negotiations related to peace between the two states was far from finished.<sup>4</sup> What followed for the next two years seems to have been a series of never-ending exhausting negotiations and re-negotiations of concrete applications of the treaty's clauses, as well as matters left out of the document. The most important of these issues, and the most thoroughly discussed, was the border. On 12 June 1479 the Venetian Senate, therefore, proposed and compiled one of a number of instructions for the Republic's envoys who took part in demarcations that followed the treaty. On that day, an instruction was dispatched to Benedict Trevisan.<sup>5</sup> The Senate's wishes were for him to travel to Istria, where a fine galley would be waiting for him, and thence descend along the shores of the Adriatic and the rest of the Venetian Stato da Mar towards Constantinople, where he was to present Venetian arguments for the (re)arrangement of the border. In order to prepare himself better for this final task, Benedict was to visit a number of places along the Venetian-Ottoman frontier, write to the local Venetian rectors to collect and present, as well as possible, all evidence on the position of the border and its fluctuations before and after the war of 1463. Having, thus, visited areas around Split and Poljica, Kotor, Budva, Bar, Ulcinj, Durrës, the island of Corfu, and Venetian possessions in the Morea, in none of which he was to stay for more than two days, Benedict was to appear before the sultan and present his findings. This instruction was followed by a myriad of other instructions, reports (*dispacci*), and correspondence of all kinds that shed light not only on the administrative and diplomatic background of Venetian-Ottoman demarcation along the shores of the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean after January 1479, but on the personnel employed by both sides, on procedures, sources of legal authority on questions related to borders, on the importance of rituals, history, memory, and tradition in demarcations, on the drawing of rudimentary maps, on the institutional character of borders, on the arguments

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<sup>4</sup> For the treaty of 1479 (January 1478, *more veneto*), see: Diana Gilliland Wright, Pierre A. MacKay, 'When the *Serenissima* and the *Gran Turco* Made Love: The Peace Treaty of 1478,' *Studi Veneziani* 80 (2007): pp. 261-77; Franz Miklosich, Joseph Müller, eds., *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*. Vol. 3. *Acta et diplomata Graeca res Graecas Italasque illustrantia* (Vienna: Gerold, 1865), doc. 12, pp. 295-8. On the Venetian-Ottoman war of 1463-1479, see: Roberto Lopez, 'Il principio della guerra veneto-turca nel 1463,' *Archivio veneto* 64 (1934): pp. 45-131.

<sup>5</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 28v-31r; Davor Salihović, ed., *Monumentorum variorum pertinentium ad historiam mediaevalis Croatiae contiguarumque partium tomus primus* (Zadar: Državni arhiv u Zadru, forthcoming 2020), doc. 245, pp. 373-9.

and wishes of the two conflicting states.<sup>6</sup> In short, on all things related to borders. Not many archives, however, possess the breadth of documents comparable to that preserved at the 'Frari,' nor have all medieval states kept records as detailed as those curated by the officials of the Republic. Furthermore, even fewer archives keep sources that are as valuable for the history of the Venetian-Hungarian-Ottoman borderlands in the area of the so-called *Triplex confinium*, late medieval Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. Those few that do in most cases belonged to the Venetian Stato da Mar. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that even the instructions intended for Benedict (far from the most detailed) and his colleagues contain crucial information even on Hungarian politics along this frontier, as well as Hungarian-Ottoman relations and bordering. But nothing of the sort, nor of a similar depth, has been preserved in the archives pertaining to the medieval Kingdom of Hungary and its adjacent lands, at least not from the period of Matthias Corvinus.

Any researcher eager to tackle the medieval history of the inland (western) Balkans and Southeast Europe, in other words Hungary, Croatia, Slavonia, Serbia, Bosnia, must, therefore, glean primary material and information from quite a few places. One attempting to clarify so specific and complex a process as border-related negotiations and bordering between two states in a rather short period of the second half of the fifteenth century is destined to collect and work on hundreds (if not thousands) of documents from a dozen or so archives of Budapest, Zagreb, Zadar, Dubrovnik, Venice, Milan, and Istanbul (and there are more, I am sure, yet to be discovered), as well as published source collections. One of the main reasons for our lack of a deeper understanding of these phenomena in the age of King Matthias is, in fact, the lack of research into thousands of folia of generally inexplicit and 'low-yealding' primary material. As far as bordering between Matthias's Hungary and Mehmed's II and Bayezid's II Ottoman Empire is concerned, this material is largely epistolary in character, belonging either to the

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<sup>6</sup> Anna Calia, 'The Venetian-Ottoman Peace of 1479 in the Light of Documents from the Venice State Archives,' in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669)*, eds. Iulian Mihai Damian et al. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012), pp. 45-59; Aldo Gallotta, 'Venise et l'Empire ottoman, de la paix du 25 janvier 1479 à la mort de Mahomet II (1481),' *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 39 (1985): pp. 113-30; Ermanno Orlando, 'Tra Venezia e Impero Ottomano: paci e confini nei Balcani occidentali (secc. XV-XVI)' [Between Venice and the Ottoman Empire: treaties and borders in the Western Balkans (15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries), in *Balcani occidentali, Adriatico e Venezia fra XIII e XVIII secolo/Der westliche Balkan, der Adria-raum und Venedig (13.-18. Jahrhundert)*, eds. Gherardo Ortalli, Oliver Jens Schmitt (Venice-Vienna: ÖAW, 2009), pp. 103-78; D. G. Wright, 'Bartolomeo Minio: Venetian Administration in 15<sup>th</sup>-Century Nauplion,' *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 3/5 (2000): pp. 1-235; *eadem*, 'After the *Serenissima* and the *Grand Turk* Made Love: The Boundary Commissions of 1480 and 1482,' in *İstanbul Üniversitesi 550. yıl, Uluslararası Bizans ve Osmanlı Sempozyumu (XV. yüzyıl)*, ed. Sümer Atasoy (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2004), pp. 197-211; *eadem*, John Melville-Jones, eds., *The Greek Correspondence of Bartolomeo Minio. Vol. 1. Dispacci from Nauplion (1479-1483)* (Padua: Unipress, 2008).



group of instructions or letters of Italian spies and envoys in the area, the king's and the sultans' officials, or the king's and the sultans' correspondence. A smaller number falls in the category of diplomatic material, a handful come from codices of council minutes (of Ragusa) and both western and Ottoman narrative material. A large number of these documents has been published in various forms, usually with errors (some minor, others great), and has been available to historians for more than a century.<sup>7</sup> There are still, however, some that had either been overlooked or undiscovered, which I have consulted during my research in the archives, especially in Venice and Ragusa. But it is noteworthy that, had there been any detailed and explicit traces of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations, peacemaking, or bordering, such as those referring to the Venetian case, far less effort would be necessary to tackle what at times appears as a futile endeavour. However, not one *'ahd-name* or the Hungarian Latin equivalent referring to the concrete stipulations of Hungarian-Ottoman truces of Matthias's age has come down to us. The only direct evidence of the existence of such a document is a piece considered to be a draft or a *temessük* of the sultan's *'ahd-name* of 1488, a fairly brief document whose content, as we shall see, offers meaningful information only through comparison and contextualization.<sup>8</sup> Even with that at hand, much of the work on this problem remains speculation, especially when one exits the realm of plain, explicit factography, and dwells on issues such as the zonality and linearity of borders, the institutional nature of the border, its role, or even geographical place. There are no Hungarian 'Benedict Trevisans', nor lengthy instructions for their work with the sultan's *emins*, *sanjak-beys*, or at the Porte, during or after negotiations on truces, when borders were set, nor is there rich correspondence between the two courts similar to that published by Bombaci.<sup>9</sup> What follows, then, is a detailed analysis of all available primary material containing information on Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations during the reign of king Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490), and an introductory discussion on the chronology of negotiations, the

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<sup>7</sup> Primarily in the large collections of Šime Ljubić, *Listine o odnošajih između južnoga Slavenstva i Mletačke Republike* [Documents on relations between the South Slavs and the Republic of Venice], vol. 10 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1891); and Iván Nagy and Albert Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek Mátyás király korából, 1458-1490* [Hungarian diplomatic records from the age of king Matthias], vols. I-IV (Budapest: MTA, 1875-1878); as well as Vilmos Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei. Külügyi osztály* [The letters of king Matthias. Foreign affairs], vols. I-II (Budapest: MTA, 1893-1896).

<sup>8</sup> Published by György Hazai, 'Urkunde des Friedensvertrages zwischen könig Matthias Corvinus und dem türkischen sultan 1488,' in *Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, Volkskunde und Literaturforschung: Wolfgang Steinitz zum 60. Geburtstag am 28. Februar 1965 dargebracht*, eds. A. V. Isačenko, W. Wissman, and H. Strobach (Berlin: Akademie, 1965), pp. 141-5; cf. *idem*, 'A Topkapu Szeráj Múzeum levéltárának magyar vonatkozású török iratai' [Turkish documents in the archives of the Topkapı Palace Museum with relevance to Hungary], *Levéltári Közlemények* 26 (1955): pp. 291-5.

<sup>9</sup> Alessio Bombaci, 'Nuovi firmani greci di Maometto II,' *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47 (1954): pp. 298-319.

process of bordering, the nature, role, and elementary administrative background of the Hungarian-Ottoman border (as defined in negotiations and capitulations).

Although no study tackles the Hungarian-Ottoman border in all its complexity, or the truces that determined these borders in this period, there have been works that either address some of aspects in more or less detail, or mention them in passing. The seminal paper on Matthias's Ottoman policy remains the now out-dated and quite brief study by Gyula Rázsó, published both in Hungarian and German, in 1975 and 1986, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Although valuable largely due to its essayistic rather than scholarly quality, the study only mentions Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and truces in passing, not dedicating any space to the discussion of their nature, chronology, or consequences and applications. It lacks any meaningful analysis of the primary material on issues investigated here. Another very important study is László Fenyvesi's overview of 'Hungarian-Ottoman diplomatic relations' in the period 'before the death of king Matthias.'<sup>11</sup> Albeit confusing at times, especially with its occasionally erroneous and misleading notes on primary and secondary sources, as well as incorrect reading of the primary material, this paper represents the basis for all studies on Hungarian-Ottoman relations and diplomacy, including truces, at the time that it covers. Published in 1990, it does require an update, but the vast amount of information and material discussed by Fenyvesi has yet to be surpassed. Despite its importance and quality, however, it was not the aim of the study to tackle in detail the border or even truces as such. In recent years, Romanian historians Ioan-Aurel Pop and Alexandru Simon, especially the latter, had made several attempts at clarifying a variety of issues related to Matthias's policies towards the Ottomans, including truces.<sup>12</sup> The more productive partner in this pair (at least when it comes to Hungarian-Ottoman relations), Simon,

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<sup>10</sup> Gyula Rázsó, 'Hunyadi Mátyás török politikája' [The Turkish politics of Matthias Hunyadi] *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 22 (1975): pp. 305-48; the German version 'Die Türkenpolitik Matthias Corvinus,' *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 32 (1986): pp. 3-50.

<sup>11</sup> László Fenyvesi, 'Magyar-török diplomáciai kapcsolatok Mátyás király haláláig,' [Hungarian-Turkish diplomatic relations until the death of king Matthias], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 103 (1990): pp. 74-99.

<sup>12</sup> See: Alexandru Simon, 'The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484: Diplomacy and Warfare in Matthias's Corvinus' Local and Regional Politics,' in *Matthias and His Legacy: Cultural and Political Encounters between East and West*, eds. Attila Bányai, Attila Györkös (Debrecen: University of Debrecen, 2008), pp. 405-36; *idem*, 'Chilia și Cetatea Albă în vara anului 1484. Noi documente din arhivele italiene' [Chilia and Cetatea Albă in the summer of 1484. New documents from Italian archives], *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 26 (2008): pp. 177-96; in parts almost identical to *idem*, 'The Limits of the Moldavian Crusade (1474, 1484),' *Annuario dell'Istituto romeno di cultura e ricerca umanistica di Venezia* 9 (2007): pp. 195-246; *idem*, 'Truces and Negotiations between Bayezid II and Matthias Corvinus in the Context of the Hunyadi-Habsburg Conflict (1482-1484),' *Revista Arhivelor* 86 (2009): pp. 107-114; *idem*, 'Crusading between the Adriatic and the Black Sea: Hungary, Venice and the Ottoman Empire after the Fall of Negroponte,' *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 42 (2010): pp. 195-230; *idem*, Ioan-Aurel Pop, 'The Venetian and Wallachian Roots of the Hungarian-Ottoman Truce of Spring 1468: Notes on Documents from the State Archives of Milan,' in *Italy and Europe's Eastern Border (1204-1669)*, ed. Iulian Mihai Damian et al. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012); pp. 283-301.

had in his substantial list of works especially focused on Hungarian-Ottoman relations of the mid- to late-1480s, specifically on the ‘crisis of 1484’ that resulted in the capture of two Moldavian forts at the shores of the Danube and Dniester – Chilia/Kiliya and Cetatea Albă/Akkerman – by the troops of Bayezid II. Throughout his works, Simon warned the scholarly public of peculiar inconsistencies in the dating of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and treaties of the 1480s. He also introduced, in places, a handful of documents from Italian archives, especially the Milanese collection of *Potenze estere* of the *Carteggio Sforzesco* that remains an underused, yet immeasurably valuable source.<sup>13</sup> Although very important, I often found Simon’s work to be misleading and geographically limited in its scope. Apart from peculiar style that often conceals the author’s original ideas or pieces of new material (which, at times, seems to be done on purpose),<sup>14</sup> Simon’s work has always stubbornly relied on the Moldavian perspective. While perfectly justifiable from the viewpoint of the history of late-medieval Moldavia, Simon’s interpretations of a wide array of issues related to a much wider geographical area rarely escape the ‘Moldavian lens’. His additional focus on the wider, pan-European, and especially Italian, (geo)politics of the late fifteenth century leave no space for detailed analyses of either Hungarian-Ottoman relations or treaties. Most importantly, the lack of other available, especially far more significant Slavonic and Ottoman sources, leave Simon’s work at the stage of a chronological disputation, rather than a deeper analysis of Hungarian-Ottoman diplomatic treaties. Admittedly, Simon’s work never had any ambitions in investigating these problems in detail. His comments on the oversights of previous, primarily Hungarian scholarship, particularly in chronology, are the most valuable features of his work.

Sándor Papp, a Hungarian Ottomanist usually focusing on later periods of early modern Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, recently presented a paper on the relations between the two states in the period between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries.<sup>15</sup> Apart from summarizing political relations of the two states in general, Papp offers a detailed and

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<sup>13</sup> One only needs to glimpse at Fabio Cusin’s priceless and alluring, yet surprisingly ignored work: F. Cusin, *Il confine orientale d’Italia nella politica Europea del XIV e XV secolo* (Trieste: Lint, 1977), or *idem*, ‘Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale d’Italia nei secoli XIV e XV,’ *Archeografo Triestino*, ser. 3, 21 (1936): pp. 1-131.

<sup>14</sup> Perplexing as it is, Simon often fails to acknowledge that the majority of his material, especially from his paper with Pop, ‘The Venetian and Wallachian Roots of the Hungarian-Ottoman Truce,’ is published and available in *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, thus misleading his readers. It seems that the author is certainly aware of this publication, which leaves the reader to assume that his avoiding of this and other collections, as well as listing only archival signatures, must be a conscious decision. For whatever reason.

<sup>15</sup> Sándor Papp, ‘Magyarország és az Oszmán Birodalom (a kezdetektől 1540-ig),’ in *Közép-Európa harca a török ellen*, ed. István Zombori (Budapest: METEM), pp. 37-90; English version of the same paper: ‘Hungary and the Ottoman Empire (From the Beginnings to 1540),’ in the English version of that same publication: *Fight Against the Turk in Central-Europe in the First Half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*, published in the same year, pp. 37-89.

competent analysis of diplomatic practices that preceded treaties of Matthias's epoch (as well as that preceding and following this period). Both here and in his subsequent study on 'Stephen the Great, King Matthias and the Ottoman Empire,'<sup>16</sup> Papp dwells not only on envoys, negotiations, and chronology, but also tackles questions on the legal nature of the extant material, primarily the 'draft' of 1488. These two papers, or their sections, remain the only discussions of a considerable length dedicated (almost) solely to the diplomatic and legal background of the truces of Matthias's times, summarizing most of the relevant primary and secondary material. However, not all existing primary material, published or archival, was utilized by Papp. But more importantly, he too refrained from going into details about concrete stipulations of the treaties and their application, particularly on the question of borders.

With a few remarks on the chronology of Hungarian-Ottoman treaties in the above works, especially in Simon's studies on the situation of the mid-1480s, a standard, albeit vague list of alleged Hungarian-Ottoman truces or peace treaties has been accepted for decades. Truces/peace/treaties of 1465, 1468, sometimes 1473, 1478/1479/1480, and especially 1483 and 1488, with the alleged regular interval of two or maybe three (and a maximum of five) years, are either mentioned in passing or dealt with in some detail in almost every publication on Matthias and/or his dealings with the Ottomans, from Fraknói's influential biography of Matthias onwards.<sup>17</sup> Already the nineteenth-century monumental publications of oriental (Ottoman) studies by Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall and Gabriel Noradunkyan, and the (in)famous collection of Matthias's correspondence attributed to Imre Kelcz, wrote of the treaties of 1483 and 1488, dates which have been largely accepted ever since.<sup>18</sup> Other dates, especially those of the 1460s, have all primarily been based on reports of Italian or other envoys, ambassadors, and spies, largely published in at least two collections, or the king's

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<sup>16</sup> S. Papp, 'Ştefan cel Mare, le roi Matthias et l'Empire ottoman,' in *Enjeux politiques, économiques et militaires en Mer noire (XIVe-XXIe siècles): Études à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu*, eds. Faruk Bilici et al. (Braïla: Éditions Istros, 2007), pp. 363-90.

<sup>17</sup> For reference, see: Vilmos Fraknói, *Mátyás király 1440-1490* (Budapest: MTT, 1890), cf. Pál Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen: A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2001); Borislav Grgin, *Počeci rasapa: Kralj Matijaš Korvin i srednjovjekovna Hrvatska* [The Beginning of the disintegration: King Matthias Corvinus and medieval Croatia] (Zagreb: Ibis grafika-Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 2002); Vjekoslav Klaić, *Povjest Hrvata od najstarijih vremena do svršetka XIX. stoljeća* [History of the Croats from the earliest period to the end of the nineteenth century], vol. 2, pt. 3 (Zagreb: Hartman, 1904); András Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex* (Budapest: Balassi kiadó, 2008); Tamás Pálosfalvi's, *From Nicopolis to Mohács: A History of Ottoman-Hungarian Warfare, 1389-1526* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018), etc.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph von Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, vol. 4 (Paris, 1836); Gabriel Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'Empire Ottoman*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1897. Cf. Imre Kelcz, ed., *Epistolae Matthiae Corvini regis Hungariae ad pontifices, imperatores, reges, principes, aliosque viros illustres datae* (Košice: Academia Societatis Iesu, 1743).

correspondence, also published either *in extenso* or *regesto*.<sup>19</sup> Even this published material has not yet been investigated in detail.

Previous scholarship proved, beyond any doubt, that Matthias's Hungary not only established diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire, but that the two states regularly entered agreements that governed their political relations. What remains a complicated issue, one that scholars rarely focused on, is chronology, as suggested by Simon's recent work. The other question that has rarely been asked pertains to the series of problems listed at the beginning of the chapter, namely the content of these agreements. Their legal nature (truce/peace) is also something that requires further attention. A separate issue is the fact that our current understanding of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and treaties relies on many erroneous interpretations of the known sources. In order to expand our understanding of these problems, one needs to critically return to existing views, as well as highlight important information that scholars failed to notice. Lastly, and most importantly, additional archival material complements the known sources, both with regard to chronology and the application of agreements between the two sides.

In order to arrive at a better understanding of Hungarian-Ottoman treaties of Matthias's times, let us then first analyse in more detail all available primary material on their negotiation and composition, very much in the manner of László Fenyvesi. I shall attempt to clarify the chronology of negotiations, and will discuss the content and applications of the treaties with respect to the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier. The latter will primarily be based on Slavonic and Ottoman material from the archives of Istanbul and the Vatican which, although published, remained under the radar for the majority of authors. A few previously unknown documents from the archives of Venice and Milan will be added to the lot, thus complementing the information already available. While I shall focus in the first part of the following section on information about negotiations and their chronology, my primary aim is to gain insight into the content and discern whether Matthias's Kingdom of Hungary experienced the same diplomatic effort as Venice did in 1479. I shall look for the Hungarian equivalent of Venetian-Ottoman instruments of border demarcations and the appertaining diplomatic-administrative practice.

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<sup>19</sup> See note 7. Also: Karl Nehring, 'Quellen zur ungarischen Außenpolitik in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts,' pts. 1 and 2, *Levéltári közlemények* 47 (1976): pp. 87-120, 247-68.

## Negotiations and bordering, c. 1460 – 1490

As early as the autumn of 1461, members of the Venetian Senate must have either heard rumours of Matthias's cordial dealings with the Ottomans or considered them a possibility. On 26 October they made a decision to instruct, with an encrypted letter, their secretary in Hungary to inform the king of their efforts to warn Europe (through the pope and subsequently France) of Mehmed's successes in the east, particularly against Trebizond, as well as to present to Matthias these very news. The Senate warned their man in Hungary, however, not to disclose any of the information sent to him should he learn that the king had 'come to an agreement' with the 'Turk' (*si sentires... Regem ad concordiam devenisse cum Turco*).<sup>20</sup> Whether this early information on Matthias's 'concord' with the sultan were true or not remains a matter of speculation, but it seems that similar news may have reached Venice and other places from more than one source. Merely a few folia further, the register of the Venetian Senate records the Senate's response of 1 December to supplications presented by Duke Stephen Kosača (of Herzegovina). Further still, the register contains the list of the duke's supplications, i.e. a copy of his letter (written in Veneto), including several introductory passages with news from his surroundings. Among other things, the duke, although he believed the Senate must have already had this information, wrote that 'after the *Gran Turcho* had acquired the whole of Serbia and Trebizond and Sinope, he made peace with the king of Hungary,' according to what he had heard.<sup>21</sup> Although Šime Ljubić dated the letter of supplications to 1 December 1461,<sup>22</sup> the original register dates only the Senate's response to that day. In fact, the response was made to *spectabilibus oratoribus Illustrissimi ducis Stefani*, who relayed the duke's wishes and news both in writing and orally.<sup>23</sup> It is hard to imagine that the Senate granted audience to the duke's envoys, listened to their requests, and managed to compile a response, all in one day. It may well be, although hardly believable, that the duke was the sole source of information on the king's arrangements with the sultan, and that indeed his envoys reached Venice before the end

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<sup>20</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 63, pp. 92-3, with minor errors from the original ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni Segrete, reg. 21, fol. 66r. Indeed the Venetians have initiated a diplomatic campaign of informing Europe of the Ottoman's successes in the east. See the preceding folia of the same *registro*.

<sup>21</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni Segrete, reg. 21, fol. 71r-72r. A transcription found in I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 67, pp. 101-3 is not only lacking in significant parts, but suffers from abysmal errors in places. The transcription in Ljubić's *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 192 and 194, pp. 192-3, 196-8 is far superior.

<sup>22</sup> But in another publication, his valuable and completely ignored overview of the history of Croatia, he claimed, relying purely on reason, that supplications must have arrived in November. See: S. Ljubić, *Ogledalo književne poviesti jugoslavjanske* [The mirror of the history of literature of the South Slavs], vol. 2 (Rijeka, 1869), p. 61.

<sup>23</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni Segrete, reg. 21, fol. 71r.

of October. If indeed this was so, news on Matthias's dealings with Mehmed must be taken with a grain of salt. Stephen's introductory claims, in fact, were used to justify a request that followed. In the very next section of the letter, Stephen wrote that he 'cannot, at the moment, think differently, but that he [i.e. Mehmed] aims to come against' him, now that Mehmed 'pacified' Matthias. Stephen then proceeds with requests for weapons for his fortresses. But while Stephen's claims about Mehmed's intentions remained only assumptions, both now and then, there was another conflict he was involved in that was very much a fact, namely his quarrel against Matthias's *ban* of Croatia over the castle of Klis and the remainder of the 'Tallóci inheritance' in the region.<sup>24</sup> Even this letter of late 1461, and a number of other supplications of the time, ends with the duke's justifications for his assault on the castle of Klis and against the *ban*. This matter was a complicated issue at the time (in fact, the problem would continue well into the 1470s),<sup>25</sup> as Venice considered the castle her own unlawfully taken possession. The Republic strongly disagreed with Stephen's attempts against Klis, although not with those against the *ban*, in late 1461.<sup>26</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the Duke resorted to the language of friendship, loyalty, and submission, writing that the *ban* was both his and the Republic's common enemy, that, in fact, all his castles, including Klis, should the Republic allow him to take it, also belong to Venice.<sup>27</sup> Bearing all this in mind, it would seem that Stephen's claims about Matthias's treaty with the Ottomans may well have also been merely a tool of persuasion, an additional argument for the justification of his assault on Matthias's *ban* and his castles at the moment when Venice (still) saw Matthias as a natural ally against the Ottomans.<sup>28</sup> Whatever the case, there is no other evidence that would support the duke's claims.

A little more than a year after Matthias's successful assault on Ottoman-occupied areas in Bosnia, and a little less after his largely unsuccessful assault on the Ottoman Zvornik and its

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<sup>24</sup> On the Tallóci and conflicts around their inheritance, see: Vlatka Dugački, Krešimir Regan, 'Rod Talovaca ili Talovačkih i njihova ostavština u Bjelovarsko-bilogorskoj županiji' [The family of Tallóci and their legacy in the Bjelovar-Bilogora County], *Radovi Zavoda za znanstvenoistraživački i umjetnički rad u Bjelovaru* 12 (2018): pp. 139-57; Elemér Mályusz, 'A négy Tallóci fivér' [The four Tallóci brothers], *Történelmi Szemle* 23 (1980): pp. 531-76; Marko Perojević, 'Talovci - cetinski i kliški knezovi' [The Tallóci - counts of Cetina and Klis], *Napredak* (1937): pp. 171-86. Also: [Sima Ćirković] Сима Ћирковић, *Херцег Стефан Вукчић-Косача и његово доба* [Herzog Stephen Vukčić-Kosača and his time] (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1964), pp. 245ff; V. Klaić, *Povjest Hrvata*, pp. 30-2.

<sup>25</sup> This will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

<sup>26</sup> See, e.g., Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 193 and 194, pp. 193-8.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 192, pp. 192-3.

<sup>28</sup> Briefly on Matthias's and the Republic's early relations, see: Zsuzsa Teke, 'Az itáliai államok és Mátyás' [Italian states and Matthias], in *Hunyadi Mátyás: Emlékkönyv Mátyás király halálának 500. évfordulójára*, eds. G. Rázsó, László Molnár (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1990), pp. 245-61.

surroundings,<sup>29</sup> on 29 January 1465 the Senate wrote to their representative at Matthias's court on peace with the Turk.<sup>30</sup> A few days earlier they had written to him, they claim, that 'in many ways' Venice was exhorted to accept peace, especially through Skanderbeg.<sup>31</sup> Now, they want the envoy to appear before the king and inform him that lately similar suggestions came *per viam orientis*, primarily from Leonardo Tocco, the Despot of Santa Maura. In his response from a few days later, Matthias soothed the Doge, sharing the Republic's view that nothing but Ottoman trickery was behind these offers, aimed at weakening the alliance.<sup>32</sup> More importantly, the king claimed that he too had been approached with similar requests from all sides and in various ways, especially since the Hungarian-Venetian alliance initiated the war in 1463. In fact, complained the king, he was 'harassed,' with requests for peace or offers for mediation coming through and from the voivode of Moldavia, the Despot of Serbia, through Bosnia. Several of his barons holding offices along the frontier were approached, through peculiar channels, with requests for their endorsement of a treaty and lobbying at the court. He, however, did not cave in. Half a year later, in the summer of 1465, there was further information exchanged between Venice and Milan on Matthias's relations with the sultan, asserting that an Ottoman legation offered both Bosnia and Serbia in exchange for peace, but the king rejected the proposal.<sup>33</sup>

Surprisingly quickly, however, both Venice's and Matthias's views on truce or peace with the Ottomans seem to have changed. Having learned from their envoy in Hungary that the bishop of Pécs (Janus Pannonius) spoke about a Hungarian-Ottoman truce in the making, the Venetian Senate instructed him in March 1466 to work on the Venetian truce with the sultan. Believing that the king would petition for a treaty that would improve his position in Bosnia

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<sup>29</sup> On king Matthias's actions in Bosnia in 1463 and 1464 see: József Bánlaky, 'Az 1463. évi délvidéki és boszniai hadjárat. Az ugyanezen évi tolnai országgyűlés határozatai' [Southern and Bosnian campaign of 1463. Decisions of the Diet of Tolna in the same year]; 'Az 1464. évi boszniai hadjárat' [The campaign in Bosnia of 1464], in *idem*, *A magyar nemzet hadtörténelme*, accessed 7 January 2018, <https://www.arcanum.hu/hu/online-kiadvanyok/Banlaky-banlaky-jozsef-a-magyar-nemzet-hadtortenelme-2/>; Emir Filipović, '*Minor est Turchorum potentia, quam fama feratur...* Contributions to the History of Bosnia in the Second Half of 1463; [Aleksandar Jakovljević] Александар Јаковљевић, 'Између османског и угарског крајишта: османско запоседање Подриња и угарска опсада Зворника 1464. Године' [Between the Ottoman and Hungarian march: the Ottoman capture of Podrinje and the Hungarian siege of Zvornik in 1464], in *Пад Босанског краљевства 1463. године*, ed. Neven Isailović (Belgrade-Sarajevo-Banja Luka: Istorijski institut Beograd-Filozofski fakultet u Sarajevu-Filozofski fakultet u Banjoj Luci, 2015), pp. 195-226; 227-57; Lajos Thallóczy, *Povijest (banovine, grada i varoši) Jajca 1450.-1527*. [History of the (banate, castle, and town) of Jajce 1450-1527] (Zagreb: Kraljevska zemaljska tiskara, 1916), pp. 75-85; T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 208-21.

<sup>30</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 187, pp. 307-8.

<sup>31</sup> For a detailed study on Skanderbeg's career and role in the Venetian-Ottoman borderlands, see: Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Skanderbeg. Der neue Alexander auf dem Balkan* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2009).

<sup>32</sup> V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 59, pp. 77-9.

<sup>33</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 215, 351-2.



and elsewhere, the Senate ordered their envoy to consider and demand similar clauses benefiting the Republic's territorial stability in the east.<sup>34</sup> Things drastically changed only at the very end of 1467, it seems. Already in September there were news of Matthias's envoys travelling to the sultan to conclude 'either peace or truce' (*ho pace ho tregua*),<sup>35</sup> and by late October Venice expressed her wish to be included in the king's arrangements with the Ottomans.<sup>36</sup> A pair of the Senate's instructions for their man at Matthias's court show that in October the Republic wanted him to arrange a treaty at least similar to the one that was expected to be reached by Matthias's negotiations.<sup>37</sup> More importantly, a later instruction explicitly states that Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations were completed by the middle of November (according to the Venetian envoy's claims and a letter by the provost of Pécs), and that a certain Ottoman 'voivode' is expected to come before the king to seal the truce.<sup>38</sup> A Venetian contemporary chronicle, attributed apparently erroneously to Domenico Malipiero,<sup>39</sup> whose true author seems to have been very well informed on these proceedings, notes that on 4 December 1467 news reached Venice from their envoy that a three-year truce had been concluded between the king and the sultan. There remained a matter of the treaty's ratification, so a certain voivode of (Ottoman) Serbia had arrived to Nagyvárad to seal the agreement, and the king was expected to return from his campaign in Moldavia to confirm it.<sup>40</sup> Late in December an envoy of the Duke of Calabria in Florence wrote to his lord about his meeting with a Hungarian representative, *Giorgio Policarpo*, a very learned man.<sup>41</sup> This *Policarpo* was in fact George Kosztolányi, a man educated in the spirit of the Renaissance and versed in Italian diplomacy,<sup>42</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 367, pp. 360-2.

<sup>35</sup> O. J. Schmitt, 'Skanderbegs letzte Jahre – West-östliches Wechselspiel von Diplomatie und Krieg im Zeitalter der osmanischen Eroberung Albaniens (1464–1468),' *Südost-Forschungen* 63-64 (2004-2005): doc. 53, p. 120.

<sup>36</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 415, pp. 397-8.

<sup>37</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 415, pp. 397-8; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 42, pp. 71-2.

<sup>38</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 42, pp. 71-2.

<sup>39</sup> On the authorship of the so-called Malipiero's *Annali*, that has recently and quite successfully been questioned by Neerfeld, see: Christiane Neerfeld, "'Historia per forma di Diaria.'" Venezianische Gegenwartschronistik um 1500,' PhD dissertation (Bonn: University of Bonn, 2001), pp. 66-92, recently published as *Historia per forma di diaria. La cronachistica veneziana contemporanea a cavallo tra il Quattro e il Cinquecento* (Venice: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2006); C. Neerfeld, Anja Wolkenhauer, 'Pietro Dolfino di Giorgio: Ein venezianischer Humanist und seine Bibliothek,' *Mittelalterliches Jahrbuch* 39 (2004): pp. 407-40. For the sake of simplicity, I shall continue to refer to the work as *Annali*.

<sup>40</sup> Domenico Malipiero, *Annali veneti dall'anno 1457 al 1500* (Florence, 1843), p. 43.

<sup>41</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 232, pp. 336-8, erroneously dated to 1476. See: Vilmos Fraknói, 'Mátyás király magyar diplomatái' [King Matthias's Hungarian diplomats], *Századok* 32 (1898): p. 12, fn. 3.

<sup>42</sup> On Kosztolányi in detail see: V. Fraknói, 'Mátyás király magyar diplomatái,' pp. 2ff. On the characteristics of Renaissance diplomacy, a developing field of intricate networks of political influence and 'intelligence' at the time, see: Catherine Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome: The Rise of the Resident Ambassador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) and the literature presented there. Refer also to the 'classic' study by Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (New York: Dover Publications, 1988).

who had spoken to the envoy of Alfonso II about domestic issues in the Kingdom of Hungary. Among other things, he allegedly said that the agreement with the Turks had not yet been reached, but that an Ottoman ambassador had been waiting for an audience with the king for twenty days, and that he was instructed to meet the king in Buda. There, after a discussion with the king and his barons, the truce would probably be enacted. Another contemporary document, this time issued by the king's chancery, contains important information on the issue, all the more so as this is the first in the list of the primary material to come directly from the Hungarian court. On 16 October 1467, King Matthias issued a charter whereby Nicholas Újlaki, one of his fiercest opponents in 1458/1459, the incumbent *ban* of Macsó and the count of Teočak,<sup>43</sup> was granted the right to establish a marketplace in *Apayoch* (today Opojevci in Serbia)<sup>44</sup> on the Sava.<sup>45</sup> According to the charter, this place on the Hungarian-Ottoman border was intended to become a market for Hungarian and Ottoman subjects following the conclusion of either 'peace or truce' between the king and the 'Turks'. Moreover, it was not merely one of such meeting points. The king granted Nicholas an exclusive right, allowing him to establish the only such market.

Another set of primary material, reports sent by a Milanese envoy in Venice to his lord, a second-rate source at best, sheds some light on the proceedings of the winter of 1467/1468. In January and February 1468 Girardo dei Colli dedicated several passages to Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations in his reports.<sup>46</sup> According to his findings and rumours that circulated Venetian governmental buildings, Hungarian barons were dissatisfied with the king's wishes to seek truce with the Ottomans, and that this was, or so it was rumoured, behind the rebellion in the kingdom.<sup>47</sup> The envoy of the 'captain of Smederevo' (probably identical to the 'voivode' mentioned in the sources above) who travelled to Hungary to seek truce, however, returned having achieved nothing, according to Girardo, as the king was nowhere to be found, absent due to the campaign in Transylvania against the rebels. Finally, Girardo informed Milan of the

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<sup>43</sup> I shall discuss Nicholas in more detail further below.

<sup>44</sup> Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában* [Hungarian historical geography in the Hunyadi period], accessed January 8, 2018, [https://www.arcanum.hu/en/online-kiadvanyok/Csanki-csanki-dezso-magyarorszag-tortenelmi-foldrajza-a-hunyadiak-koraban-1/ii-kotet-32A7/valkovarmegye-426B/helysegei-42DC/?list=eyJmaWx0ZXJzIjoeyJNVSI6IFsiTkZPXP0tPTllfQ3NhbmtuXzEiXX0sICJxdWVyeSI6ICJvcG9qZXZjKiJ9, s.v. Apajóc; Opoj\(-favla\).](https://www.arcanum.hu/en/online-kiadvanyok/Csanki-csanki-dezso-magyarorszag-tortenelmi-foldrajza-a-hunyadiak-koraban-1/ii-kotet-32A7/valkovarmegye-426B/helysegei-42DC/?list=eyJmaWx0ZXJzIjoeyJNVSI6IFsiTkZPXP0tPTllfQ3NhbmtuXzEiXX0sICJxdWVyeSI6ICJvcG9qZXZjKiJ9, s.v. Apajóc; Opoj(-favla).)

<sup>45</sup> L. Thallóczy, Antal Áldásy, eds., *Magyarország és Szerbia közti összeköttetések oklevéltára 1198-1526* [Diplomas on Hungarian-Serbian relations], (Budapest: MTA, 1907), doc. 356, 257-8.

<sup>46</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, docs. 58, 59, 60, pp. 91-5; I. Pop, A. Simon, 'The Venetian and Wallachian Roots,' doc. 3, pp. 290-1.

<sup>47</sup> On the rebellion in Transylvania of 1467, see: A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, 73-93.

pope's dissatisfaction with Matthias's endeavours. Having returned from his campaign, the king found Paul II's letter that criticised his policies and instructed him not to continue with negotiations about the truce, as the pope would soon pacify Italy and aid him in his war with the Ottomans. The king responded harshly and asked Venice to remind the pope that should he give up this opportunity, he would lose his kingdom. Girardo added, however, that at the time (18 February 1468) no truce was in force, as even during the negotiations Hungarians slaughtered two hundred Turks near Smederevo. On 27 March, furthermore, Girardo sent his most detailed report on news and rumours about the whole issue, claiming that he had heard (from witnesses) that both Hungary and Venice negotiated with Ottoman representatives in Nagyvárad, as well as that Matthias himself was there.<sup>48</sup> The Hungarian-Ottoman truce, however, was not (yet) arranged, as Ottoman requests were far too great. They wanted Matthias to surrender Jajce. On 2 May still the Venetian Senate wrote to their envoy in Hungary about the ongoing negotiations between the Hungarian and Ottoman side, which did not seem to have run smoothly.<sup>49</sup>

Commenting on Girardo's reports and entries in the *Annali*, Tamás Pálosfalvi has recently concurred with the Milanese spy in Venice, who suggested in one of the above letters that the sultan merely attempted to ruin the Hungarian-Venetian alliance by initiating talks of peace.<sup>50</sup> Although Pálosfalvi refrained from presenting any definitive answers on the conclusion of these talks, this does not mean that a truce between either of the two allies and the Ottoman empire was not reached. Instructions sent by the Venetian Senate to their representative in Hungary in December 1467, based on the information about an agreed, but not ratified truce, that came not only from the latter's reports but also from a letter written by the provost of Pécs that he included, are far more reliable source than rumours heard by a Milanese envoy eavesdropping around Venice. On the other hand, while Pop and Simon confidently argued (almost in passing) that the treaty of 1468 was a fact<sup>51</sup> (without providing any concrete evidence), there is no evidence to support such strong claims. Having reviewed all available material, I can only conclude that the truce of 1467/1468 was a 'close call,' but cannot claim that it ever took effect. Nor can I completely agree with Pálosfalvi, who relied on little else apart from Girardo's musings. That material alone is far from sufficient for an

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<sup>48</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 47, pp. 78-81.

<sup>49</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 425, 406-7. The instruction is erroneously dated to 2 March. The original entry, ASV, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 23, fol. 110r, is dated to 2 May 1468.

<sup>50</sup> T. Pálosfalvi's, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 235f.

<sup>51</sup> In I. Pop, A. Simon, 'The Venetian and Wallachian Roots.'

informed conclusion, and attaches a far greater importance to the agency of the Ottomans in this whole endeavour.

Regardless of the result, little may be deduced about the border or bordering itself from this, but there are several pieces of information which will prove beneficial to the further discussion. Firstly, it is the fact that Nicholas Újlaki's marketplace at Opojevci played a certain role in these arrangements, showing that the (re)introduction of 'porous' points of exchange along a border was a part of negotiations early on. Secondly, the scarce material suggests that not only princes from neighbouring territories in-between Hungary and the Ottoman state figured as mediators (who may have had their own goals), but that Matthias's own barons, particularly those governing the borderlands (as the king himself highlighted), may have had a similar role. This is further suggested by two peculiar pieces of information, both pertaining to Újlaki. A man of significant wealth and power who would go on to become the king of the Hungarian-controlled parts of Bosnia by the end of 1471,<sup>52</sup> Nicholas Újlaki was made the 'perpetual count of Teočak,' the easternmost part of the Hungarian frontier in Bosnia, by the spring of 1465.<sup>53</sup> Simultaneously, as the *ban* of Macsó, he governed the southernmost regions of the Kingdom of Hungary adjacent to the Ottoman-controlled areas, where his family's eponymous and most important estates were located.<sup>54</sup> Most important to the current discussion, however, is that he established relations with the contemporary Ottoman sanjak-bey of Bosnia, Isa-bey Ishaković. A series of traditionally brief but valuable entries in the records of the Ragusan Senate note for the 30 May 1468 that Nicholas not only petitioned for the release of men of a Croatian nobleman John (Kurjaković) of Krbava from their Ottoman captivity, but that he sent a letter to Isa-bey via Ragusa.<sup>55</sup> The content of the letter,

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<sup>52</sup> On Nicholas's kingship, see: A. Kubinyi, 'Die Frage des bosnischen Königtums von Nikolaus Újlaky,' *Studia Slavica Academiae Scientiarum Hungariae* 4 (1958): pp. 373-84; D. Salihović, 'An Interesting Episode: Nicholas of Ilok's Kingship in Bosnia, 1471-1477,' unpublished MA thesis (Budapest: CEU, 2016); *idem*, 'Exploiting the Frontier - A Case Study: the Common Endeavour of Matthias Corvinus and Nicholas of Ilok in Late Medieval Bosnia,' in *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations: Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, ed. Dženan Dautović et al. (Amsterdam-Leeds: Amsterdam University Press-Arc Humanities Press, 2019), pp. 97-111.

<sup>53</sup> Nicholas's first mention in this honor, in May 1465: MNL OL DL 100746.

<sup>54</sup> Norbert Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1458-1526*. Vol. 1. *Főpapok és bárók* [Secular archontology of Hungary 1458-1526. Prelates and Barons] (Budapest: MTA, 2016), p. 103. On Nicholas's estates, see: A. Kubinyi, 'A kaposújtári uradalom és a Somogy megyei familiárisok szerepe Újlaki Miklós birtokpolitikájában: adatok a XV. századi feudális nagybirtok hatalmi politikájához' [The role of the estate of Kaposújtár and the familiars of County Somogy in the estate policy of Miklós Újlaki], *Somogy megye múltjából: Levéltári Évkönyv* 4 (1973): pp. 3-44.

<sup>55</sup> HR-DADU, *Acta Consilii rogatorum*, vol. 20, fol. 59v: *Prima pars est de impediendo se pro hominibus Ivani Churiacovich captis per Turcos pro quibus scribit Ilozchi [...] Prima pars est de mittendo voyvode Exebeigh litteras Nicolai de Iloch per manus oratorum nostrorum [...] Secunda pars est per manus alterius personarum (!)*. The latter proposal was chosen by the Senate. Cf. [Ivan Božić] Иван Божић, *Дубровник и Турска у XIV и XV веку* [Dubrovnik and Turkey in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries] (Belgrade: SANU, 1963), p. 332.

unfortunately, remains unknown. Although it may well be that it primarily referred to Kurjaković's abducted subjects, this cannot be definitely asserted on the basis of vague notes from the register. Admittedly, the fact that Nicholas used Ragusa as a mediator may suggest that his relations with the Bosnian sanjak-bey may not have been regular or firm at the time, but a later note from 1472, albeit not related to the negotiations of 1467/1468 directly, explicitly states that the Ottomans wished to discuss peace with Matthias through the exclusive mediation of none other than Nicholas.<sup>56</sup> Combined with the information on the market at Opojevci, this data suggests that Nicholas may have had a significant role in the negotiations of the mid-1460s. He was certainly one of Matthias's barons approached by the Ottomans mentioned in the king's letter to the doge in 1465.

Tamás Pálosfalvi also noted, relaying (almost verbatim) information from another of Girardo's reports from Venice, that in September 1468 'Ottoman raiders plundered Venetian territory but abstained from doing damage to the neighbouring Croatian territories' (and thus rumours of a Hungarian-Ottoman separate peace were reinvigorated).<sup>57</sup> While indeed Ottoman troops plundered Venetian Dalmatia in 1468,<sup>58</sup> Venetians, and consequently Girardo and Pálosfalvi, interestingly misjudged the situation. It is important to note here that Girardo's information came directly from Venice, where he was stationed, and where he learned that 'it is thought [by the Venetians]' that the Ottomans avoided Matthias's territories 'because *Re de Ungaria* had *tregua* with the Turk.' However, it was precisely Venetians who, in an effort to establish an effective defence in Croatia of their own possessions, wrote a myriad of instructions and letters throughout 1468 and early 1469 for their envoys in Rome, the Frankapan Senj, and at the court of Frederick III that testify to incursions committed by Ottoman troops against the Frankapans' estates.<sup>59</sup> Ottoman incursions against the Frankapans in 1468 and 1469 were the kernel of a larger conflict that would eventually result in Matthias's capture of the Frankapan Senj in 1469, which I shall deal with in more detail later. It is far more important to note here the discrepancies between the concurrent information from Venice. To

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<sup>56</sup> Adolf Bachmann, ed., *Fontes rerum Austriacarum. Diplomataria et Acta*. Vol. 46. *Urkundliche Nachträge zur österreichisch-deutschen Geschichte im Zeitalter Kaiser Friedrich III* (Vienna: F. Tempsky-Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1892), doc. 167, pp. 179-80.

<sup>57</sup> T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 235-6. Cf. the document he commented: I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziái emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 53, pp. 86-7.

<sup>58</sup> A useful 'handbook' on Ottoman incursions into Dalmatia, with relevant primary and secondary material, is found in the *addenda* to Klement Pust's PhD dissertation, 'Vpliv vojaških spopadov med Beneško republiko in Osmanskim cesarstvom na migracije na območju zgornjega Jadrana v 16. stoletju' [The influence of armed conflicts between the Republic of Venice and the Ottoman Empire on migrations in the area of Upper Adriatic in the sixteenth century] (Koper: Univerza na Primorskem, 2009).

<sup>59</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 431, 434, 435, 446, 449, 451, 453, 461, etc., pp. 411-35.

make things even more complicated, the Venetian Senate, aiming to secure the pope's support against the Ottomans, wrote to him on 15 September 1468 that merely days ago 'many thousands of Turks sallied forth all the way to Senj and Zadar, the gates of Italy [...] and took away an incredible booty of cattle and people.'<sup>60</sup> Girardo's letter is dated to 16 September 1468. The difference between the two Venetian claims, when they speak of Ottoman incursions into Croatia, one of Matthias's kingdoms, for the whole of 1468, is indeed perplexing. An interesting interpretation put forward by Vjekoslav Klaić in his 1901 monograph on the Frankapan family of an instruction given by the Venetian Senate to their representative at Matthias's court opens further space for intriguing speculations on this problem.<sup>61</sup> The instruction, that Klaić also discussed in a brief paper published six years earlier,<sup>62</sup> talks of the willingness of the Venetian government to aid Matthias in maintaining troops 'at those two passes, where they would prevent the Turks from coming into Dalmatia, *Croatiam inferiorem sue maiestatis et Croatiam superiorem serenissimi imperatoris*.'<sup>63</sup> Klaić understood that northern Croatia, where the Frankapans' possessions were located, at the time belonged to or was allied with Frederick III, and introduced further evidence to suggest that the Frankapans had cordial relations with the emperor, Matthias's long-standing opponent. Although other scholars too argued that the family may have had some connection with the emperor during the crisis around Senj,<sup>64</sup> Borislav Grgin dismissed Klaić's ideas on 'Croatia superior,' claiming, with very weak evidence, that, if anything, this must have represented southern, rather than northern Croatia, and that no further evidence suggests the emperor's control over northern Croatia.<sup>65</sup> However, both Klaić and Grgin failed to read the Venetian instruction more carefully. Issued on 25 September 1469, in the midst of Matthias's conflict with the Frankapans, the instruction reads precisely that 'we [i.e. the Venetian Senate] have learned [from the envoy's letters of 22 and 28 August, and 5 September], as you write, that the king talked to you about troops which are to be stationed at those two passes [...].' The information that the Senate had at their disposal, therefore, came from letters of the envoy who personally

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<sup>60</sup> *ibid.*, doc. 434, p. 413-4.

<sup>61</sup> V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani* [The Frankapan Counts of Krk] (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1901), p. 258.

<sup>62</sup> *idem*, 'Croatia superior et inferior,' *Vjesnik Hrvatskog arheološkog društva* 1 (1895): pp. 137-8.

<sup>63</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 482, pp. 457-8.

<sup>64</sup> See: F. Cusin, *Il confine orientale*, pp. 425ff; B. Grgin, 'Senj i Vinodol između kralja Matijaša Korvina, Frankapana i Venecije (1465-1471)' [Senj and Vinodol between king Matthias Corvinus, the Frankapans, and Venice (1465-1471)], *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 28 (1995): p. 66; *idem*, *Počeci rasapa*, pp. 91-2; *idem*, 'Modruš između kneževa Frankapana, Osmanlija i kraljevskih vlasti, 1458-1526' [Modruš between the Frankapans, Ottomans, and royal rule, 1458-1526], *Modruški zbornik* 3 (2009): p. 44; Gizella Nemeth, Adriano Papo, 'Mattia Corvino e i Frangipane, conti di Veglia, Modrussa, e Segna' [Matthias Corvinus and the Frankapans, the Counts of Krk, Modruš, and Senj], *Studia historica Adriatica ac Danubiana* 2 (2009): p. 69.

<sup>65</sup> B. Grgin, 'Senj i Vinodol,' p. 66, fn. 31.

talked with the king, in fact spoke to him about troops that were to stop Ottomans from sallying into Dalmatia, and upper and lower Croatia. It is difficult to imagine that either the king or the Senate, who only knew what the envoy reported, would make such a great mistake and wrongly identify territories when discussing such a delicate matter, especially at a time when relations between Matthias, Venice, and Frederick were problematic. This discussion seems to have only been a continuation of negotiations between these three on the construction of a defensive system in this very region of northern Croatia that seems to have been initiated in the summer of 1469, when a strong Ottoman incursion struck the emperor's lands in Carniola and endangered Venetian possessions in the northern Adriatic for the first time.<sup>66</sup> In fact, all available evidence on these incursions of the summer of 1469 show that the Ottomans' primary objective was Carniola, and that Croatia, and specifically the area around the Frankapans' estates, was a path towards the north.<sup>67</sup> This is completely in line with a number of contemporary writings on pathways used by Ottoman intruders to enter the imperial and Venetian territories. These, of which the most detailed is a manuscript from the Ambrosiana dated to 1475, mention the road leading from the Ottoman Kamengrad, over the river Una, towards the Kvarner, specifically via Brinje and Ledenice towards Vinodol and Carniola and Istria.<sup>68</sup> Brinje, Ledenice, and the whole of Vinodol were in the hands of the Frankapans. Furthermore, it is worth noting that it was precisely in this summer of 1469 that Frederick III first accused Matthias of aiding, or at least letting the Ottomans pass through his lands unhindered towards the southern Habsburg territories. An envoy of Milan at the court of Frederick III in Graz wrote on 1 July 1469 that the emperor was quite baffled how the Ottomans were able to reach his lands so easily, when Matthias controlled parts of Bosnia. The only explanation that the emperor came up with was that the Ottomans could not have come had they not been allowed to pass by Matthias, who must have had some kind of an agreement with them.<sup>69</sup> It is also worth noting that Grgin's critique of Klaić's musings on Frederick's control

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<sup>66</sup> On these incursions, see: Carlo Buttazzoni, 'Incursioni turchesche nel secolo XV' [Turkish incursions in the fifteenth century], *Archeografo triestino* 2 (1870-1871): p. 393; Stanko Jug, 'Turški napadi na Kranjsko in Primorsko do prve tretjine 16. stoletja' [Ottoman attacks on Carniola and Littoral until the first third of the sixteenth century], *Glasnik Muzejskega društva za Slovenijo* 24 (1943): pp. 10-12; Giuseppe Loschi, 'Le incursioni dei Turchi nella Carniola e nell'Istria' [Turkish incursions into Carniola and Istria], *Archeografo triestino* 18 (1892): pp. 492-3.

<sup>67</sup> Especially I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziak emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 79, pp. 122-4, where a Milanese envoy at the emperor's court in Graz writes that the Turks [...] *con tanta velocita passati per la Croacia, che el pare siano volati per aere* [...] [passed through Croatia very quickly, as if they flew over it].

<sup>68</sup> F. Cusin, 'Le vie d'invasione dei turchi in Italia nel secolo XV' [The roads used by Turks in incursions into Italy in the fifteenth century], *Archeografo triestino* ser. 3, 19 (1934): pp. 154-5; C. Buttazzoni, ed., 'Luoghi per li quali passarono già i Turchi partendosi dalla Bossina per la Patria del Friuli' [Places through which the Turks passed departing for Friuli from Bosnia], *Archeografo triestino* 2 (1870-1871): pp. 399-402.

<sup>69</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziak emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 80, pp. 125-6.

over northern Croatia seems misplaced not only due to the his inability to produce further evidence, but his poor reading of Klaić's works and sources. Grgin's claim that 'One needs to be careful with this Venetian information [i.e. on 'upper Croatia' being in Frederick's possession], because there is no other evidence that an imperial rule controlled a part of Croatian political territory at this time,' is not completely correct.<sup>70</sup> An anonymous report (certainly by a Milanese spy or envoy in Venice) dated to 12 July 1469 that responds to requests for detailed information on the progress of Ottoman troops towards Italy and Carniola, published in 1882 by Makušev, proves this. The report, compiled during the incursions of the summer of 1469, contains detailed information on this matter, and states that the Turks and others 'of Bosnia' crossed into Croatia and arrived before the lands of the Counts of Senj (i.e. the Frankapans). Having departed from there, 'they went to Modruš, *prima terra del Imperatore*.'<sup>71</sup>

I will return to these problems, which were crowned with Matthias's move against the Frankapans in the latter half of 1469 and his capture of Senj, further below. In the context of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and the truce of 1467/1468, one can draw several conclusions from this material. The areas ravaged by Ottoman troops in 1468 and 1469 in Croatia, i.e. the possessions of the Frankapans, may indeed have not been considered a part of Matthias's realm at the time, although this seems highly unlikely. Secondly, Matthias may well have had an agreement with the Ottomans, a separate truce that even may have allowed them to cross his territories unhindered, a stipulation that would certainly enter later Hungarian-Ottoman arrangements. Matthias may have even used this to support his own cause against Frederick III or the Frankapans. Leaving these speculations aside for the moment, I can only repeat that there is not enough concrete evidence to claim that a truce was introduced in 1467 or 1468, but it certainly remains a possibility.

In June 1471 Girardo again reported to Milan that there were rumours that the king of Hungary had an 'agreement' with the 'Turk,'<sup>72</sup> and Tursun Beg, a contemporary Ottoman historian, mentions in his 'Life of Mehmed II' that in the year of the fall of Negroponte (1470-

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<sup>70</sup> B. Grgin, 'Senj i Vinodol,' p. 66, fn. 31.

<sup>71</sup> Vičentije Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium vicinorumque populorum*, vol. 2 (Belgrade, 1882), pp. 172-3.

<sup>72</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 163, pp. 225-6. Another similar report, writing about a possibility of Matthias's (future) arrangement with the Turks, came from another Milanese envoy in December 1471: L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relativi alla storia dei paesi situati all'Adria' [Fragments related to the history of countries along the Adriatic], *Archeografo triestino* ser. 3, 6 (1911): pp. 40-1.



1471), envoys ‘came from far and near,’ including Hungary.<sup>73</sup> The papal letter intended for the bishop of Ferrara that mentions Újlaki as the broker of a deal between the sultan and Matthias introduces a new series of negotiations that seem to have taken place in the early 1470s. It contains information that Matthias, on Újlaki’s counsel, elected two envoys to travel to the ‘Turk,’ a certain fr. Andrew, a Franciscan from a monastery near Buda, and John *Hunischi* ‘of Bosnian origins.’<sup>74</sup> It goes on to say that the two crossed the Danube on 16 April (1473) with the king’s offer to the sultan. Matthias, allegedly, offered peace in exchange for Bosnia and Serbia (or one of the two), as well as aid against Uzun Hassan in exchange for money. Similar information (almost verbatim, lacking only Újlaki’s role) is present in the pope’s letter to the king himself from the early spring of 1473, preserved in copies both in the Vatican and Buda, where Sixtus IV claimed that news on these arrangements had reached him and that Matthias offered Mehmed ‘treaty and peace’ (*Pacem te Turcae foedusque offerre, si ille Bosnam Serviamque aut harum alteram tibi permittat*).<sup>75</sup> Whether true or not, similar rumours seem to have flooded Italy at the time. The *Annali* again mention Hungarian-Ottoman dealings, dating them to 1472 and 1473, narrating events that in part correspond to what the pope claimed to have heard about these negotiations. According to this entry, the sultan sent an ambassador to Matthias to conclude peace between the two states who, unable to discuss it with the king in person, exhorted the ‘castellan of Belgrade’ to mediate, offering hostages, and Bosnia and a part of Serbia in exchange for peace.<sup>76</sup> The author, who puts this story in the context of Mehmed’s conflict with Uzun Hassan, continues that the sultan did this ‘not to make peace, but to plant mistrust between Uzun Hassan and the princes of the League’ (i.e. his allies in the west).<sup>77</sup> For the next year, he wrote that it was Matthias who sent two ambassadors to the Porte, but that these talks too were motivated by Mehmed’s intent to cause jealousy between Christian princes and Uzun Hassan.<sup>78</sup> While these assumptions on the sultan’s true intentions may well be true, there is further evidence, and far more trustworthy, on this problem. Fraknói had

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<sup>73</sup> Tursun Beg, *The History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, eds. Halil İnalcık, Rhoads Murphey (Minneapolis-Chicago: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1978), p. 58; cf. the same paragraph in József Thúry, *Török történetírók* [Turkish historians] vol. I (Budapest: MTA, 1893), p. 92.

<sup>74</sup> The letter is preserved in a copy present in the 1614 edition of Pius’s II ‘Commentaries,’ among the correspondence of Giacomo Piccolomini, the bishop of Pavia (1460-1479) and Pius’s relative: Pius II, *Commentarii* (Frankfurt, 1614), pp. 801-2. Cf. the abovementioned edition in A. Bachmann, *Fontes rerum Austriacarum*, doc. 167, pp. 179-80 who edited it from a copy in the Vatican archives.

<sup>75</sup> Edited in at least three publications: Gyula Schönherr, ed., *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae regis epistolae ad Romanos pontifices datae et ab eis acceptae* (Budapest, 1891), doc. 49, pp. 89-93; Pius II, *Commentarii*, pp. 802-4; Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum seu Trium Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, vol. XIV (Rome: Rocco Bernabò, 1735), pp. 69-72.

<sup>76</sup> D. Malipiero, *Annali veneti*, p. 81.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

already noticed that a Milanese envoy in Venice wrote to Milan on 14 November 1473 that the *Signoria* accused Matthias of inactivity along the southern frontier and condemned his ‘two-faced’ policies of keeping ambassadors both at the Porte and at the court of Uzun Hassan for the whole of 1473.<sup>79</sup> Most importantly, the king’s invitation to the kingdom’s Diet from around the same time, dated precisely to 19 November and addressed to the nobility of the county of Körös, states as the reason for this gathering the return of envoys that he had sent in ‘previous months’ to the sultan.<sup>80</sup>

In his (in)famous monograph on Mehmed the Conqueror, Franz Babinger relays a lengthy story about Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations at this time. Instructed by his source, which he does not cite, Babinger relates that the sultan sent a certain ‘Hasan-bey’ to Matthias to request envoys to negotiate peace between the two countries, but that the whole endeavour, which lasted for months, failed due to Mehmed’s dishonest intentions. He, Babinger claims, merely wanted to stall any attacks from the north during his clash with Uzun Hassan.<sup>81</sup> An experienced eye will notice that Babinger’s story is a summary of the account of these events narrated in the *Historia turchesca*. It begins the account of ‘how the *Gran Turco* had tricked the king of Hungary’ with a claim that indeed a certain *Hassan* was sent to Hungary to discuss peace and request Matthias’s envoys. Matthias, allegedly, did send a certain unnamed baron who was welcomed with gifts and lavish provisions during his sojourn in the Ottoman territories, spent months there, witnessed Ottoman celebrations after their victory against Uzun Hassan, and achieved nothing. When he was eventually granted audience with the viziers, he requested that the Ottomans either abandon or demolish two fortresses near Belgrade which the *Historia* calls *Cavalla* and *Guivercin* (apparently Avala and ‘Güvercin[lik],’ i.e. Golubac; the words are of the same meaning in Turkish and South Slavic languages). The Ottoman side not only rejected this proposal, but requested several fortresses held at the time by Matthias, most important among which was Jajce (with the rest of Hungarian-controlled Bosnia) which the Ottomans claimed belonged to the sultan because he had defeated and killed the king of Bosnia. Matthias, on the other hand, held it undeservedly.<sup>82</sup> A similar narrative - of a Hungarian envoy

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<sup>79</sup> V. Fraknói, ‘Mátyás király magyar diplomatái’ [King Matthias’s Hungarian diplomats], *Századok* 33 (1899): p. 870, fn. 3; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 171, pp. 245-6.

<sup>80</sup> MNL OL DF 268093; cf. *regesta* in Jakov Stipišić, Miljen Šamšalović, ‘Isprave u Arhivu Jugoslavenske akademije’ [Documents in the Archives of the Yugoslav Academy], *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 3 (1960): doc. 2767, p. 615.

<sup>81</sup> [Franz Babinger] Франц Бабингер, *Мехмед Освајач и његово доба* [Mehmed the Conqueror and his time] (Belgrade: Algoritam, 2010), pp. 281-2.

<sup>82</sup> Donado da Lezze, *Historia Turchesca*, ed. Ion Ursu (Bucharest: Institutul de Arte Grafice Carol Göbl, 1910), pp. 59-61.

who arrived in Ottoman lands on the request of the sultan, but was tricked due to Mehmed's surreptitious 'tactical' intentions and eventually dismissed after his victory over Uzun Hassan – is also present in Caterino Zeno's comments on his sojourn in 'Persia' at the time.<sup>83</sup> Pierre Mackay showed that these parts of the *Historia turchesca* (and consequently other texts) come directly from Giovanni Maria Angiolello, a Vicentine who was captured at the fall of Negroponte in 1470 and thereafter served the sultan and his family throughout his adult life, reaching high posts in the Ottoman state administration.<sup>84</sup> A witness to most of the events he wrote about,<sup>85</sup> Angiolello may well be a trustworthy source on these Hungarian-Ottoman proceedings. Negotiations, however, are not specifically dated in his narrative, but we may find several clues in the text. It is clear that these events took place during Mehmed's campaign against Uzun Hassan in the summer of 1473, and that the Hungarian ambassador presented his requests after the Ottoman victory at the Battle of Otluk Beli in August 1473. The ambassador is said to have visited Constantinople, Angora (Ankara), and Sivas in his pursuit of the sultan and his retinue, who had left for their campaign; to have arrived in Constantinople eight days after the sultan's crossing of the straits, and to have waited for around three months for their return in Sivas. With the end of Mehmed's campaign in August,<sup>86</sup> he was granted audience and dismissed. It is known that Mehmed crossed the straits sometime in April<sup>87</sup> and, if the correspondence between Matthias, the bishop of Ferrara, and the pope is correct, Matthias's envoys simultaneously crossed the Danube near Belgrade. It may be that all of this information refer to the mission of John 'from Bosnia' and his colleague, friar Andrew, who would have, according to this, left Hungary in mid-April, discuss their offers in late August/early September, and be back home by November 1473. The account of the 1473 negotiations found in the *Annali* also corresponds to this. As I have noted above, the chronicle's author writes that 'the king of Hungary sent two ambassadors to Constantinople' which were well welcomed by

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<sup>83</sup> Niccoló Zeno, ed., *Dei commentarii del viaggio in Persia di M. Caterino Zeno* (Venice: Marcolini, 1558), fol. 21r-v; Charles Grey, ed., *A Narrative of Italian Travels in Persia (in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries)* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1873; and a digital 'reprint' by Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 30.

<sup>84</sup> On the authorship of these sections, see: Pierre MacKay, 'The Content and Authorship of the *Historia Turchesca*' in *İstanbul Üniversitesi 550. yıl, Uluslararası Bizans ve Osmanlı Sempozyumu (XV. yüzyıl)*, ed. Sümer Atasoy (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2004), pp. 213-22. On Angiolello's career and life: F. Babinger, 'Angiolello, Giovanni Maria,' in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 3 (1961): available at [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-maria-angiolello\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-maria-angiolello_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed on 19 January 2020.

<sup>85</sup> P. MacKay, ed., *A Fifteenth-Century Venetian's Adventures in Ottoman Lands: The Memoir of Gian-Maria Angiolello* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989); cf. Andrea Capparozzo, *Di Gio. Maria Angiolello e di un suo inedito manoscritto* (Vicenza, 1881).

<sup>86</sup> On Mehmed's campaign(s) and war in general against Uzun Hassan, see: John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999), 87 ff.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

the sultan, who feigned willingness to discuss any proposition, but only wished to separate Uzun Hassan from his christian allies.

Although the motif of Mehmed's trickery is repeated in several accounts, and may thus suggest that all of these accounts (i.e. Zeno's and 'Malipiero's') come from the same source (i.e. Angiolello), there is a significant difference in the version found in the *Annali*. The author explicitly states that there were two ambassadors that Matthias sent to Constantinople. He obviously heard of these events from rumours that were present, as it seems, throughout Italy at the time, at least in Rome, Ferrara, and Venice. But there is another testimony to Hungarian-Ottoman dealings of the time in the *Annali*. For the year 1474, the chronicle notes that Venice had heard of Matthias's envoy's travels to the sultan, to Constantinople, where he stayed for three months only to be dismissed by Mehmed following his return to the city.<sup>88</sup> The Venetian chronicler, however, puts this into a different context. He notes this 'disruption' in Hungarian-Ottoman relations as a reason for Venice to beseech Matthias to attack Ottoman territories and thus divert their attack on the Venetian Shkodër. Indeed, registers of the Venetian Senate show that on 15 June 1474 they instructed Sebastian Badoer to seek aid from the kings of Hungary and Poland against Ottoman troops besieging the city.<sup>89</sup> It is not certain, therefore, that the *Annali* narrate a different set of negotiations in 1474. It seems that the author was, in fact, referring to the failed negotiations of 1473, the same that were described by Angiolello, the same that were apparently characterized by the three-month gap between the Hungarian envoy's arrival and his discussion with the sultan (or his viziers).

Regardless of whether all of these accounts speak of Andrew and John, it is beyond doubt that Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations indeed took place. Not only is a (fairly) large amount of information from at least three sources quite convincing, but the king's convocation of a Diet reserved for the discussion of news received from envoys sent to the sultan proves that relations existed. As with previous negotiations, very little can be said about their content. Letters from Italy, Angiolello's account, as well as the narrative of the *Annali* all speak of either Hungarian requests or Ottoman offers for the exchange of territories in Bosnia and Serbia, or Hungarian requests for the destruction of certain castles. As we shall see, the latter point would reemerge in later negotiations, but with reversed roles. Offers related to the surrender of the whole or partial territories of Bosnia and Serbia were not a novelty in 1473. We have already discussed rumours about the negotiations in 1465, when it was told that the Ottoman side

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<sup>88</sup> D. Malipiero, *Annali veneti*, p. 93.

<sup>89</sup> D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 147, pp. 219-21.

offered both Serbia and Bosnia in exchange for peace. None of the sources, importantly, contain any information that negotiations were fruitful.

During the ‘crisis’ of the winter of 1475/1476 that ended with the Hungarian capture of the Ottoman fort of Šabac,<sup>90</sup> Ottoman envoys allegedly visited the king with a certain proposal. This information, and no further data, is relayed by a Venetian ambassador in Hungary in his report dated to 5 December 1475, where he claims he learned this from a trustworthy source.<sup>91</sup> Around the same time Matthias threatened Italy with an arrangement with the sultan, should subsidies from the west not be sent to him, or so it was believed in Venice.<sup>92</sup> The latter information seems to have been correct, as in his letter from January 1476 addressed to Pope Sixtus IV the king discusses similar issues.<sup>93</sup> Again, it seems, just like in 1473, rumours of Matthias’s dealings reached Italy. Having been warned by the pope not to ‘occupy himself with persuasions and promises of the Turks’ ([...] *nec Turcorum suasioni vel promissioni acquiescam* [...]), who merely do this to ‘ridicule and distract’ him, Matthias responded harshly, with a famous claim that subsidies granted by Rome would barely be enough to sustain ten *armigeri* for a year. Further below, Matthias (or his chancellors) continued in a dramatic tone: ‘For who would strive to devote [himself] to the Apostolic See, if I am forsaken by the Apostolic See? Who is the one who would obey the mandates of the Apostolic See, if I do not deserve to be heard in the least? Who is the one who would send arms against the Turks, if I myself am disregarded by the Apostolic see? It is indeed Matthias who was and is the one who served the Apostolic See to the best of his abilities, and will never cease to obey it, if only he is not forsaken by his mother.’<sup>94</sup>

The king certainly was frustrated with the pope’s warnings, but still lent his ear to Ottoman proposals. A few months earlier, already in October 1475, the same Venetian envoy who compiled the report of 5 December claimed that he had received information about Ottoman offers from none other than the archbishops of Esztergom and Bari, and the bishop of Transylvania. They allegedly told him how the king and his barons rejected an offer of a twelve- or seven-year truce that included an Ottoman request for a free, unhindered passage

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<sup>90</sup> On the siege of Šabac see: László Veszprémy, ‘Szabács ostroma (1475-1476)’ [The siege of Šabac] *Hadtörténeti Közlemények* 122 (2009): pp. 36-61; [Sima Ćirković] Сима Ћирковић, “Средњи век” [The medieval period], in *Šabac у прошлости* [The history of Šabac], ed. [Stanoje Filipović] Станоје Филиповић (Šabac: Istorijski arhiv, 1970), 93-101.

<sup>91</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 201, pp. 288-91.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 210, pp. 303-4.

<sup>93</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 229, pp. 325-30; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 4, doc. 16, pp. 312-16; G. Schönherr, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae regis epistolae*, doc. 81, pp. 104-8.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

through Dalmatia and Croatia for their armies.<sup>95</sup> No further news of these negotiations exist, but the Venetians certainly carefully observed Matthias's policies in this respect. Not long after these news reached the Republic, the Senate instructed their new envoy at Matthias's court on 14 June 1476 to pay close attention to talks about peace or truce with the Turks.<sup>96</sup> A year and a half later, the councilors were certain the king finally struck a deal.

On 29 December 1477 they compiled a mandate for the Venetian representative in Rome, instructing him to inform the pope that they were completely sure Matthias had agreed to a six-year truce or peace *cum Turco*. They also sent him parts of letters sent by the Venetian secretary in Buda containing more detailed information about this truce.<sup>97</sup> News again spread throughout the city of Venice. On 6 April 1478, a Milanese envoy and spy stationed in the city wrote about news concerning both Venetian and Hungarian negotiations in Constantinople. He claimed that he had heard from trustworthy sources that the 'ambassadors of the king of Hungary had concluded a five-year peace between the said Turk and their king [...]; they left Constantinople on 15 March and took with them one ambassador of the said Turk.'<sup>98</sup> These two documents and the information they convey introduce a specific series of primary material, dating from the period between late 1477 and the early 1480s, that seem to refer to a unique set of negotiations that took place in these years. Not only is this one of the richest sets of documents on Hungarian-Ottoman relations in Matthias's period, but contains the greatest number of documents produced in Hungarian chanceries, either royal or baronial. Apart from the two documents already discussed (from 1467 and 1473), this is also the first time that there is any meaningful evidence coming directly from either of the two sides that were involved. This and the material related to later Hungarian-Ottoman relations is also the richest with regard to questions that I am trying to tackle in this chapter – the legal-administrative background of the border between the two states. While nearly nothing can be deduced about this from the material discussed thus far, documents belonging to the period between 1478 and 1488 offer incomparably more data.

The Milanese spy in Venice seems to have been completely right in his letter dated 6 April. In May a splendid Ottoman legation reached Matthias, with whom they discussed the

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<sup>95</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 195, pp. 279-82.

<sup>96</sup> D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 177, pp. 267-9.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 210, p. 322.

<sup>98</sup> L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relativi alla storia dei paesi situati all'Adria,' *Archeografo Triestino* ser. 3, 7 (1914): pp. 85-6; see also: Victor Louis Ménage, 'Seven Ottoman Documents from the Reign of Mehemmed II,' in *Documents from Islamic Chanceries: First Series*, ed. Samuel M. Stern (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), pp. 81-118.

introduction of peace or only a prolongation of the existing truce.<sup>99</sup> Thus wrote the envoy of the marquess of Montferrat in Graz, who added that it was rumoured that the king would certainly agree to one of the two options. What is certain is that Matthias at least agreed to negotiate. This is confirmed by a series of letters and legations that seem to have been exchanged in the summer of 1478, evidence of which is preserved in the material of both Hungarian and (indirectly) Ottoman provenance. The set starts chronologically with a letter issued by Matthias and addressed to Mehmed II, sent in July 1478. Preserved in two copies in later *epistolaria* kept today at the Széchényi Library in Budapest and the Moravian Library in Brno, the letter was published by Vilmos Fraknói in his collection of Matthias's correspondence and dated to 3 July 1478.<sup>100</sup> His version comes from a seventeenth-century manuscript in the Széchényi, where the document is dated to 3 July 1458, rather than 1478.<sup>101</sup> Having considered information gathered from the report sent from Graz in May 1478 as well as the letter's content, Fraknói, however, dated the letter to 1478. That his dating was correct is confirmed by the copy of the letter found in the manuscript from Brno, as well as additional contemporary correspondence that I shall discuss further below. The Brno codex was described in detail by Karl Nehring in a series of papers dedicated to Matthias's diplomacy, although he failed both to recognize that a number of letters from the codex had already been published, and to date some of them correctly.<sup>102</sup> Nehring noted that in the manuscript from Brno (which he dated to the end of the sixteenth century) the first of Matthias's letters is not dated to 3, but rather 12 July 1478.<sup>103</sup> While there is no doubt that the letter is dated to 1478, which is explicitly noted at the bottom, the exact date is somewhat vague. The *datatio* notes that it was *datum Bude in mense Julii ante festum Margharete, anno 1478*. There are several problems with this *datatio*, the most important of which is the phrase *ante festum Margharete* that Nehring interpreted as 12 July. If indeed this was so, one would expect something similar to *in vigilia festi*, rather than this peculiar term that seems to be incomplete. It seems improbable, furthermore, that the letter was issued as early as 3 July, as there is a far more important feast celebrated on the day before, Mary's Visitation, which one would expect would enter the *datatio*. Whatever the case, this correspondence can certainly be dated to the beginning of July. It is also important to note that both copies (which do not seem to be directly related as

<sup>99</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 255, pp. 368-9.

<sup>100</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 259, pp. 381-2; MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 210r.

<sup>101</sup> See note in V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 259, p. 382.

<sup>102</sup> K. Nehring, 'Quellen zur ungarischen Außenpolitik'; *idem*, 'Angaben zu einer unveröffentlichten Kopie eines Registers aus der Kanzlei von Matthias Corvinus,' *Levéltári Közlemények* 43 (1972): pp. 85-95.

<sup>103</sup> K. Nehring, 'Angaben,' p. 87, fn. 11.

there are significant differences in dating and lesser in text) contain almost identical texts, which is certainly encouraging with regard to the reliability of the copies. Epistolaries similar to these are not a rarity even in Matthias's case,<sup>104</sup> but they rarely contain anything more than undated drafts. This also seems to be the case here, as other letters included in these two codices do not contain any dates, they rarely begin with a full address, and letters that Matthias's chancery eventually dispatched were probably not written in Latin. This is suggested by a number of contemporary letters exchanged between Matthias (or his barons) and Bayezid (or his sanjak-beys), all composed in the Cyrillic script and Slavonic (South Slavic) language, found in the archives of the Topkapı Palace. This script and this language were the official *lingua franca* of the Ottoman-Southeast European diplomacy, just as Greek figured as the official diplomatic language of Ottoman-Venetian relations.<sup>105</sup> In his important publication that presented 'raw' transcriptions of a number of letters exchanged between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire in the 1480s (almost completely ignored by both older and current Hungarian historiography), Nikola Radojčić suggested that there is a possibility that even these letters of 1478 may have been written in the Cyrillic script and Slavonic language.<sup>106</sup> Unfortunately, there have been no projects aimed at a more comprehensive search for such documents in the archives of Istanbul, but I am certain that similar correspondance (and other material from regions that by the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century became a part of the Ottoman state) can still be found. Without inventories or any preparatory work, one would need to spend months reading through thousands of folia kept in the archives of the Topkapı Palace Museum and the Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi.

For now, we can only work with the material at hand and hope that drafts correspond to the content of letters that were eventually sent from Matthias's court. In his letter from July

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<sup>104</sup> See: Gyula Mayer, 'King Matthias Corvinus's Epistolaria,' in *Infima Aetas Panonica: Studies in Late Medieval Hungarian History*, eds. Péter E. Kovács, Kornél Szovák (Budapest: Corvina, 2009), pp. 226-36, and sources listed there. Mayer briefly comments on the Brno manuscript, as well.

<sup>105</sup> See: György Hazai 'Zur Rolle des Serbischen im Verkehr des Osmanischen Reiches mit Osteuropa im 15.-16. Jahrhundert,' *Ural-Altäische Jahrbücher* 48 (1976): pp. 82-8; [Neven Isailović, Aleksandar Krstić] Невен Исаиловић, Александар Крстић, 'Спрски језик и ћирилично писмо у југоисточној Европи XV у XVI и веку' [Serbian language and the Cyrillic script in Southeast Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries], *Prevodilac* 37 (2018): pp. 43-52; *eadem*, 'Serbian Language and Cyrillic Script as Means of Diplomatic Literacy in South-eastern Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries,' *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie 'George Barițiu'* 54 (2015): pp. 185-95. Also: Hans Theunissen, 'Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: the 'Ahd-names. The Historical Background and the Development of a Category of Political-Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents,' *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 1 (1998): pp. 328-9.

<sup>106</sup> [Nikola Radojčić] Никола Радојчић, 'Пет писама с краја XV. века' [Five letters from the end of the fifteenth century], *Јужнословенски филолог* 20 (1953-1954): p. 356, fn. 1.



1478, the king wrote to Mehmed II that a certain Gelbeg (or Hedbeg)<sup>107</sup> had arrived at his court to discuss ‘peace and friendship’ between the two states. Having welcomed the proposition, Matthias intended to send his negotiator, who, however, fell ill. Now recuperated, the negotiator would soon depart. The king’s letter contains several important notes and semantic indications that further clarify both the legal background of Ottoman-Hungarian dealings of the time and events that surrounded them. Towards the end of the letter, Matthias highlights that Ottoman *finitimi viziri* have continued to harass Hungarian territories *post c(o)eptas treugas* (with the truce introduced), and insists that Mehmed instructs them to *continuo[que] illata nocumenta resarciant, et ab inferendis de cetero conquiescant* (immediately repair the harm they had brought, and in future restrain from inflicting further damage).<sup>108</sup> Another letter from 1478 (but not dated precisely) related to this legation further clarifies some of the issues.<sup>109</sup> In it, Matthias calls the sanjak-bey of Smederevo to respect his arrangements with Mehmed, agreed in the *dispositio pacis* between the two sides. This *dispositio* does not mean that negotiations were brought to an end and peace was introduced, but rather represents a preliminary framework that allows negotiations to continue. This is clear from the rest of the letter, where Matthias specifies that, according to the *dispositio*, the sanjak-bey of Smederevo and the Hungarian captain in Belgrade were supposed to conduct envoys to either Buda or Constantinople and ensure their safety, as no special *salvus conductus* was required. Presumably at roughly the same time Matthias issued credentials for this negotiator, as the king wrote that he had sent him *again* to the sultan to convey messages related to ‘peace and friendship,’ and that the sultan should believe everything this envoy *nostro nomine ad confirmationem pacis et amicitie mutue diceret* (has to say, in our name, about the confirmation of peace and mutual friendship).<sup>110</sup>

Having considered the content of these credentials and another (undated) letter sent by Matthias to Mehmed, and under the influence of the phrase *nonnulla intimavimus [...] ad pacem inter nos **ceptam** [...] pertinentia*, Fraknói asserted that the envoy returned to Constantinople to finally arrange the peace between the two sides following minor disagreements.<sup>111</sup> These disagreements were noted in Matthias’s undated letter, present also in

<sup>107</sup> Gelbeg in V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 259, pp. 381-2; Helbeg in MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 210r.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 260, pp. 382-3; MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 210v.

<sup>110</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 281, p. 419; MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 210v.

<sup>111</sup> V. Fraknói, ‘Mátyás király magyar diplomái,’ pp. 870-1.

the Brno manuscript unknown to Fraknói.<sup>112</sup> The king speaks there of a specific request presented by the sultan to his envoys, namely that the king should destroy two unnamed fortresses within forty-five days, unless he wanted this ‘truce’ to end and negotiations to fail. Matthias, however, responded that there was merely a week left to fulfill this request when his envoys returned with letters from Constantinople. More importantly, he claimed that, even if he were willing to abide by the sultan’s wishes, he had to disobey due to overwhelming incursions committed in Croatia by ‘almost all’ of the sultan’s subjects. The king was willing to reconsider the destruction of those two castles if and only if the sultan’s captains compensated the victims for all the harm brought upon them *sub tempore treugarum*. He ends with a request that the sultan should inform him if *pacem nobiscum amplius servare non vellet*. There are several things in this letter that require further analysis. Firstly, the author of the letter oscillates between the terms *treuga* and *pax*; between phrases *sub tempore treugarum*, *treuge nobis minime servarentur*, and *pacem [...] servare non vellet*. Secondly, the letter explicitly states that the destruction of these two castles was *iuxta conventa inter nos* (in accordance with our agreement). It was the deadline proposed by the sultan that was the main problem highlighted by Matthias, not their destruction as such.

What this *conventum* between the two sides represented is difficult to specify. It is nearly impossible to discern whether it represented a truce, peace, specific charters; capitulations, ‘*ahd-name*’, drafts, *temessük*. Further epistolary evidence, coming from the chanceries of King Matthias and his voivode of Transylvania and judge royal, Stephen Bátori, however, offer clues about the chronology and character of negotiations in the period around 1478. In his often cited study on Matthias’s diplomats, Fraknói noted that negotiations continued in 1480, but were quickly aborted due to the disobedience and fraudulence of the sultan’s official in Bosnia that eventually resulted in Matthias’s Bosnian and Serbian offensives of 1480.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, in another undated letter that Fraknói dated to 1480 on the basis of information provided by its content (Matthias’s warning of an impending attack against Ottoman Bosnia), the king writes to Mehmed about the fraudulence of his sanjak-bey of Bosnia, Davud, and the attempts at negotiations that preceded the letter. It is important to emphasize that Matthias writes about negotiating peace *que olim inter nos tractabatur*. According to Matthias’s account, Davud, who initiated these talks, allegedly claimed to have

<sup>112</sup> MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 225r-v; V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 263, pp. 387-8.

<sup>113</sup> V. Fraknói, ‘Mátyás király magyar diplomatái,’ pp. 870-1; on Matthias’s actions against Ottoman Bosnia in Serbia, see: T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Móhacs*, pp. 274-5.

received a mandate from Mehmed to attack Frederick III's provinces without disturbing any Hungarian possessions. Having received these promises, the king willingly allowed Davud and his troops to cross his lands towards the emperor's domains. In fact, Matthias claimed to have ordered his own men not to disturb Davud in his task. Davud, however, did not keep his word and plundered Matthias's lands, but afterwards pleaded for another set of negotiations, promising to compensate the affected population for the damage. Although Matthias still expected Davud's concrete response (as he gave all sorts of excuses and failed to show any willingness to initiate concrete discussions), the king warned the sultan that his patience has run out and that he must punish Davud for his misdeeds. The king finishes the letter, however, with a rather overly polite, almost submissive call for further, sincere negotiations.<sup>114</sup>

It is difficult to date precisely these 'Bosnian' talks between the two sides. According to Kemalpaşazâde's account of Davud's *akins* (incursions into enemy territory) and other (near-)contemporary sources,<sup>115</sup> he conducted them between the spring of 1479 and the summer of 1480. Matthias's orders to Stephen Szapolyai, to the *ban* of Croatia and Slavonia, and the nobility of south-western Hungary to move against Ottomans who plundered Hungarian territories were issued at the beginning of August 1480,<sup>116</sup> while the king's troops skirmished with Ottoman plunderers between September and November 1480.<sup>117</sup> In his undated letter to Gabriel Rangoni, the bishop of Eger, that was probably compiled around the same time as his orders to his captains, the king mentions that he had given these orders so that Ottomans who had recently invaded Frederick's lands may be punished.<sup>118</sup> An Ottoman incursion indeed struck Frederick's Carniola, Carinthia, and Styria at the beginning of August 1480.<sup>119</sup> In the same letter, Matthias claimed that Ottoman troops had openly promised not to disturb Hungarian lands in their transit towards north, and they kept their promise (which they clearly did not). He also notes they crossed Croatia to reach their destination.<sup>120</sup> Incursions and all subsequent events that Matthias described in his letter to Mehmed, therefore, seem to have

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<sup>114</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 247, pp. 388-90.

<sup>115</sup> İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman* [The chronicles of the House of Osman], vol. 7., ed. Şerafettin Turan (Ankara, 1957), pp. 473-88; Jakob Unrest, *Österreichische Chronik*, ed. Karl Grossmann (Weimar, 1957), pp. 100-1; cf. S. Jug, 'Turški napadi na Kranjsko in Primorsko,' pp. 26-7; Wilhelm Neumann, 'Die Türkeneinfälle nach Kärnten,' *Südost-Forschungen* 14 (1955): pp. 84-109.

<sup>116</sup> MNL OL DF 253244.

<sup>117</sup> T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, p. 274.

<sup>118</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 30, pp. 42-5.

<sup>119</sup> S. Jug, 'Turški napadi na Kranjsko in Primorsko,' pp. 26-7.

<sup>120</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 30, p. 43-4; also: Árpád Károlyi, 'Adalék Frigyes császár és Mátyás király viszonyai történetéhez' [Addenda to the history of relations between Emperor Frederick and King Matthias], *Magyar Történelmi Társulat* 15 (1892): docs. 16, 17, pp. 242-5.

occurred in the summer of 1480. Similarities between Matthias's two accounts (in his letters to Mehmed and Gabriel), specifically his claims about the unhindered transit towards imperial domains and Ottoman promises not to plunder the king's lands, allow us to assume that in both cases Matthias wrote about one and the same issue.

Ottoman troops hit Frederick's lands in the spring and in August 1479, as well.<sup>121</sup> According to Unrest and Kemalpaşazâde, it was in the summer of 1479 that Davud's *akinji* also attacked the southwestern regions of Hungary bordering Styria.<sup>122</sup> Davud's *akins*, however, were not the single cause of disruption in Hungarian-Ottoman relations, nor the single cause of upheaval in the whole region. In October 1479, following several earlier incursions throughout the same year, Ottoman troops launched an attack against Hungary that eventually ended with the great Hungarian victory at Kenyérmező.<sup>123</sup> In the west, Matthias's captains launched an assault against the Frankapan island of Krk and other Croatian lords (for reasons I shall discuss later), effectively entering into direct confrontation with Venice, and his conflict against Frederick was in progress. Matthias's negotiations with Davud, therefore, could have taken place anytime between the beginning of 1479 and July 1480. In his letter to Mehmed, Matthias vaguely notes that he had not yet initiated his assault on Davud, but that his troops are in the southern regions, ready to strike, thus dating the letter to the period between September and November 1480, when the king himself dwelled in Slavonia.<sup>124</sup> He further testifies that the second set of negotiations that followed Davud's incursions had been going on for nearly two months (six weeks his man has been staying in Jajce, awaiting Davud's reaction). Depending on the datation of Matthias's letter, this would put Davud's assault on Hungarian (and Frederick's) territories somewhere between July and September 1480. In other words, it is quite possible (but not probable) that Davud approached Matthias's men in Bosnia sometime between the Battle at Kenyérmező and August 1480. I shall discuss the datation in further detail below.

All in all, it seems that this was at least briefly perceived both in Hungary and the Ottoman Empire as the continuation or reopening of discussions about peace that seem to have stopped after 1478. Not only Matthias confirms this with his phrase: *maiestatem vestram* [...]

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<sup>121</sup> S. Jug, 'Turški napadi na Kranjsko in Primorsko,' pp. 26.

<sup>122</sup> İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, pp. 477-8; J. Unrest, *Österreichische Chronik*, p. 100.

<sup>123</sup> On the battle on Kenyérmező in detail, as well as events preceding it, see: Ferenc Szakály, Pál Fodor, 'A kenyérmezei csata (1479. Október 13.)' [The Battle of Kenyérmező (13 October 1479)], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 111 (1998): pp. 309-48.

<sup>124</sup> On Matthias's whereabouts at the time, see: Richárd Horváth, *Itineraria regis Matthiae Corvini et reginae Beatricis de Aragonia (1458-[1476]-1490)* (Budapest: MTA, 2011), pp. 112-3.

*intellexisse, nos desiderare pacem illam que olim inter nos tractabatur*, but also the Cyrillic correspondence between Stephen Bátori and the legendary Mihaloğlu Ali Bey offers further, richer, and far more stimulating content that reveals clues about both the chronology and background of the 1478 and later negotiations.

According to Nikola Radojčić, this letter was discovered in 1933 in the ‘türbe of Sinan Pasha, in a pile of documents that all date from the 1480s.’<sup>125</sup> In 1953 Franz Babinger sent photographs of the letter, which is allegedly kept in the Topkapı Palace, to Radojčić, who then transcribed and published it the following year. The letter, however, was actually discovered a year earlier, in 1932, when Adolf Deissmann also found another set of Cyrillic correspondence that was published the same year by Gošev and Stanojević, and eventually by Deissmann and Ljubomir Stojanović, in 1933 and 1934, respectively.<sup>126</sup> All of these letters are related and seem to have been issued around the same time. The most instructive, for the moment at least, is Bátori’s letter to Ali Bey.

Indicating the place, day, and month of the letter’s compilation, it does not contain any information of the year when it was issued. Already Radojčić suggested that this letter must have been written during Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations that ‘preceded the conclusion of the five-year truce between Bayezid II and Matthias Corvinus in 1483,’ and that it could not have been compiled before 1 May 1482.<sup>127</sup> His reasoning, based in part on the letter’s content, was good. In the *intitulatio* Bátori styles himself *ôdva(r) biro(v) sv(e)tlosti kraljeve(i), i voevo(d)a ardel(s)ki* (the udvarbiró of His Royal Majesty and the voivode of Erdély),<sup>128</sup> which narrows it down to the period after May 1479, when he was installed in the office.<sup>129</sup> Far more importantly, however, he mentions the *silnoga, i pokoinoga sulta(n) Meheme(d) bega* (mighty and late sultan Mehmed-bey), thus narrowing it further down to the period after May 1481, when Mehmed II died. The letter, therefore, must have been written on any May 1 between 1482 and 1489, as Radojčić already noted. However, since it deals with previous negotiations in very specific details that prove that the discussions of 1478 were in its focus, and does not

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<sup>125</sup> Н. Радодјичић, ‘Пет писама,’ р. 355.

<sup>126</sup> Adolf Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai, mit einem Verzeichnis der nichtislamischen Handschriften im Topkapu Serai zu Istanbul* (Berlin-Boston-Leipzig: De Gruyter, 1933/2019); [Ljubomir Stojanović] Љубомир Стојановић, ed., *Старе српске повеље и писма*, vol. 1. *Дубровник и суседи његови*, pt. 2 [Old Serbian charters and letters. Dubrovnik and its neighbours] (Belgrade-Sremski Karlovci: Srpska manastirska štamparija, 1934); cf. [Katarina Mitrović], К. Митровић, ‘Пет писама деспота Вука Гргуровића’ [Five letters by despot Vuk Grgurević], *Браничевски гласник* 3-4 (2004-2005): 65-6; Н. Радодјичић, ‘Пет писама,’ pp. 349-50, 355.

<sup>127</sup> Н. Радодјичић, ‘Пет писама,’ pp. 357-8.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p. 362. Transliteration from the Cyrillic original is mine.

<sup>129</sup> N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 87.

mention the truces of the 1480s, it must have been issued on either 1 May 1482 or 1483. We know, furthermore, that the letter was issued in Buda, where, according to the itinerary of the judge royal and voivode, he spent the spring of 1483 (together with the king)<sup>130</sup>, possibly exactly because his presence was needed during negotiations that would end with the truce of 1483/1484.<sup>131</sup>

The letter<sup>132</sup> discusses two separate issues, of which only the first is relevant for the present discussion. The voivode informed his Ottoman counterpart that he had received his letters and presented them to Matthias who understood well what the sanjak-bey asserted. And he claimed:

da e bilo za vrêmena silnoga, i pokoinoga sulta(n) Meheme(d) bega, nekoliko kra(t) za mi(r) i za priatel(s)tvo, poklisari našega silnoga i s(v)tloga kralja k caru na Portu dohodili, i utskmili š nêgovêm cr(s)tvomъ, kako da bi se gra(d) Zaslonъ čo je s oni strane uzetъ ôd vas, da se razbije. I tako i pravite da e toi bilo s kraljeve strane ôbekjano prê(d) creve(m) poklisaro(m), i u kletovne liste zapisano, koi su li(s)ti megû cremъ i kralje(m) zapisani. I pa(k) takoi govorite da je to s kraljeve strane nesъvršeno, i da se zato mi(r) raskinu.

[that in the times of the mighty and late sultan Mehmed-bey several times the envoys of our mighty and majestic king had travelled to the emperor at the Porte, and arranged with him that the castle of Zaslon (i.e. Šabac), that was taken from you on the other side, would be destroyed. And so you say that the king promised this before the emperor's envoy, and that it was written in the *charters of oath* that were exchanged between the emperor and the king. And also you say that the king did not respect this, and so peace was broken.]

The king, and therefore Bátori, disagreed, claiming further that:

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<sup>130</sup> R. Horváth, Tibor Neumann, *Ecsedi Bátori István. Egy katonabáró életpályája 1458–1493* [Stephen Bátori of Ecsed. A career of a soldier-baron 1458-1493] (Budapest: MTA, 2012), pp. 62-3, 147.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., pp. 64; cf. R. Horváth, 'Voievodul transilvănean Ștefan Bátori și frontul turcesc între 1479 și pacea din anul 1483' [The Voivode of Transylvania Stephen Bátori and the Turkish front between 1479 and peace of 1483], *Banatica* 24 (2014): pp. 300-7.

<sup>132</sup> Н. Радойчић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 1, pp. 362-3.

I mi toi uzna(h)mo i razumesmo, da ne zatoi mi(r) rasnkinu(t), nego e bila svêtló(s) kraljeva gotova i pripravna sŕsvê(m) da gra(d) Zaslo(n) razbije, i sve svoje ôbetovanĭe da sŕvrši, da da znaš, kako e za ôvai uzro(k) mi(r) raskinu(t) ka(d) naiposlê i Dolci Petŕŕ hodi k creve svtlo(s)ti, ta(d) i pokoini sulta(n) Me(h)me(d) begŕ bêše iska(l) kako da bi njegova voiska ka(d) je bilo njemu drago da hodi skrozê zemlû i gp(s)tvo svtlosti kraljevje, s volo(m) kraljevo(m), ili i bez volje. Tomui svtlo(s) kraljeva nehtê, ere toi ne beše govoreno u prvŕvo(m) govor(u), čo pre beše sregjenŕ mi(r) i pot(v)rŕgjenŕ. I toi znai jere (s) za tai uzro(k) mi(r) raskide, da za sve za toi niča(r) ne manje.

[But we see it differently, that the peace was not broken for these reasons. His Majesty was entirely willing and ready to destroy the castle of Zaslon, and to fulfill his promise. But you should know that this was the reason the peace was broken: When eventually Peter Dóci arrived before the emperor, then the late sultan Mehmed-bey requested that his army be allowed to cross the land and lordship of His Royal Majesty whenever he wishes, with or without the approval of the king. The king did not want this, because this was not discussed in negotiations according to which peace was arranged and confirmed. And this, you should know, is the reason why the peace was broken.]

There are several important details that link these descriptions to the negotiations of 1478. Firstly, in all of the king's correspondence noted above, his negotiator was identified as none other than Peter Dóci. It seems that at least one of the castles mentioned in Matthias's earlier letter that Mehmed wanted destroyed was Šabac. Both this letter and Matthias's complaint to Mehmed mention that this was in accordance with arrangements between the two sides. However, while this letter states that it was Mehmed's request for an unhindered transit of his troops that eventually brought negotiations to an end and annuled earlier agreements, Matthias's complaint indicates that the reason may have been the unreasonable deadline imposed by Mehmed for the demolition of the castles.

Another undated letter by Matthias brings information that shed further light on these issues. As it was addressed to Ruprecht of the Palatinate, the archbishop and prince-elect of

Cologne, who died before mid-July 1480,<sup>133</sup> and since it discusses the recent Venetian-Ottoman peace of January 1479, it was probably issued in late 1479. Karl Nehring put this (and other similar letters) in the context of Matthias's struggle against Frederick and the preparations of the Diet of Nuremberg that was to take place in December 1479. According to him, Matthias's intention was to thwart the emperor's manoeuvres that were aimed at weakening the Hungarian king's position in the struggle for the archbishopric of Salzburg and its possessions. He did this by accepting what turned out to be an insincere offer by Frederick to unite his forces with those of Matthias against the Turks. By emphasizing both Venetian and Frederick's dishonest dealings with the Ottomans, and his own struggle against them, Matthias wished to further undermine Frederick's status in the Empire and secure support from the imperial princes, both against the Ottomans and Frederick.<sup>134</sup> The whole letter is an attack against Venetian and Frederick's amiable policies towards the Ottomans, against which Matthias weighs his own anti-Ottoman stance in a discourse filled with empty themes of the defence of Christendom. It was his care for the rest of Christian lands that made him reject proposals for peace recently and 'spontaneously' presented by the Ottoman side, claims the king. And what they offered was help against all his enemies if *nos transitum illis per nostra dominia ad ceteros Christianos concederemus* (we grant them passage through our lands towards other Christians).<sup>135</sup> That this letter was indeed issued in late 1479, specifically in November 1479, and probably intended for purposes highlighted by Nehring, is suggested by another entry from the registers of the Venetian Senate. Before 10 November 1479 *Gregorius*, the provost of Pozsony (i.e. György Schomberg),<sup>136</sup> Matthias's envoy both in Italy and among the Swiss and at Frederick's court, addressed the Senate with a *sermo* similar to what the king sent to the archbishop of Cologne. George claimed that his lord had multiple opportunities to arrange peace with the Ottomans, and that an offer reached him recently, but that his accepting of a deal would require him to grant them *securum [...] transitum [...] ad invadendas alias christianas provincias* (safe passage, so they could invade other Christian lands). Matthias, George continues, was 'unwilling to make such a peace', and still does not wish to enter such an arrangement.<sup>137</sup> He goes on to describe recent Ottoman incursions into Hungary. Not only does this important

<sup>133</sup> On his life and career, see: Ellen Widder, 'Karriere im Windschatten: Zur Biographie Erzbischof Ruprechts von Köln (1427–1478),' in *Vestigia Monasteriensia: Westfalen-Rheinland-Niederlande*, eds. Ellen Widder et al. (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 1995), pp. 29-72.

<sup>134</sup> Karl Nehring, *Matthias Corvinus, Kaiser Friedrich III. und das Reich. Zum Hunyadisch-habsburgischen Gegensatz im Donauraum* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1975), pp. 114-7.

<sup>135</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 320, pp. 471-4.

<sup>136</sup> N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 61; cf. József Köblös, *Az egyházi középréteg Mátyás és a Jagellók korában* [The ecclesiastical middle layer in Matthias's and Jagiello period] (Budapest: MTA, 1994).

<sup>137</sup> ASV, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 62r-63v.



source shed further light on details of Ottoman-Hungarian negotiations of 1478/1479, but the following narrative offers additional clues about the chronology of negotiations, particularly Davud Pasha's actions. George said that Ottoman troops had recently invaded areas deep in Hungary that no one believed they would be able to reach, and that this probably happened due to a dry spell that made both the Drava and Sava rivers crossable.<sup>138</sup> Importantly, he also reported that the king had already sent a portion of his army to Zagreb to fight off these incursions, as well as that he would soon personally follow it to Slavonia and Croatia. Although George in his address to the Senate does not specify where exactly Ottoman *akinji* struck, his mention of the river Drava indicates that these were actually the incursions that ravaged southwestern territories of Hungary (i.e. the county of Zala). Both İbn Kemal and Unrest date them to the summer of 1479.<sup>139</sup> Furthermore, even Antonio Bonfini, in his own account of these incursions that eventually motivated Matthias to engage in the punitive expedition against Davud, dates them to the month of August following the *conventum Olmuci*, that is after the festivities in Olomouc where the Peace of Olomouc between Matthias and Vladislaus II was ratified. In other words, after 21 July 1479.<sup>140</sup> Bonfini, unlike George, does speak of lands invaded by Ottoman *ankinji*; they went across the dry Sava and Drava, as far as the county of Vasvár, adjacent to Zala.<sup>141</sup> Lastly, in the oration by Hungarian representatives at the failed Diet of Nuremberg in the winter of 1479, they depicted these events very similarly to the narrative presented to the Venetian Senate. In August 1479, they claimed, the *gens Turcorum* invaded the 'frontiers of upper Hungary,' entering its territory through Styria, and attacking areas where no-one had expected them.<sup>142</sup> More importantly, in the oration prepared for the envoys in Nuremberg, preserved in at least two manuscripts kept today at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, they were also to give the context and reasons behind these incursions:

Pacem cum Thurco Maiestas Regia si voluisset prius quam Veneti aut  
alius habere potuisset, et eam cum utilitate suae maiestatis, et non sicut  
Veneti, qui sua bona ut pacem haberent a se alienarunt. Turcus enim

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<sup>138</sup> Bonfini too, in his account of these incursions and subsequent Hungarian attack against Ottoman Bosnia, mentions the drought of 1479; Antonio Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, eds. József Fögel, Béla Iványi, László Juhász (Budapest, 1941), 4/5, pp. 100-1.

<sup>139</sup> İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, pp. 477-8; J. Unrest, *Österreichische Chronik*, p. 100; cf. Anton Adalbert Klein, 'Zur Geschichte der Türkeneinfälle in Steiermark während der Regierung Friedrichs III.,' *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereines für Steiermark* 19 (1924): p. 117.

<sup>140</sup> A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, p. 97.

<sup>141</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/5, pp. 100-1.

<sup>142</sup> BSB, MS Clm 26604, fol. 9r; cf. an *in extracto* transcription in Nicolae Iorga, *Acte și fragmente cu privire la istoria românilor* [Acts and fragments pertaining to the history of the Romanians] (Bucharest, 1897), p. 103, with wrong pagination!

per triennium magna cum instancia a sua Maiestate pacem quesivit, et usque Budam per ea extorquenda solemnes tandem oratores misit Regie maiestati, Regnum Bosne et alia multa offerendo; subsidiaque etiam de propria persona, ubi opus fuisset, Thurcus pollicebatur, dummodo sua maiestas eidem et suis sine sue maiestatis et suorum damno transitum per Regnum suum ad alios christianos permitteret. Hec omnia Regia maiestas recusavit, existimans, ut bonus christianus, alios similiter facturos.<sup>143</sup>

[Had he so wished, the King could have had peace with the Turk before the Venetians or someone else, and to his own benefit, not like the Venetians who gave up their own goods for peace. With great perseverance the Turk requested peace for three years, and eventually sent solemn envoys to the king, offering the Kingdom of Bosnia and many other things; and the Turk promised subsidies, when need be, as long as the King allows him and his [men] to go across his Kingdom against other Christians without harm to the King or his [subjects]. All this the King rejected, believing, as a good Christian, that others would do the same.]

This interpretation does not correspond to the chronology presented above, based on Matthias's undated letter to Mehmed about Davud's misdeeds. What I left out from the earlier discussion is that this letter was issued in Buda, at least according to the copy that Fraknói used. It, therefore, could not have been sent in either September, October, or November 1480, as Fraknói asserted, as the king had already left Buda and reached Slavonia by then.<sup>144</sup> On the other hand, Matthias spent almost the whole autumn and winter of 1479/1480 in Buda, and he was certainly there in November 1479.<sup>145</sup> It was then, and not in 1480, therefore, that he already sent his troops to Slavonia. He followed them later, as he clearly promised through his mission to Venice, in the summer of 1480, when he arrived in Slavonia via Zala.<sup>146</sup> His complaint to Mehmed was, therefore, probably not issued in 1480, but already in the autumn of 1479,

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<sup>143</sup> BSB, MS Clm 26604, fol. 9r; MS Clm 443, fol. 177r; cf. a fairly good transcription of (the draft of) the oration in: Marquard Freher, *Rerum Germanicarum scriptores varii*, vol. 2 (Strasbourg, 1717), pp. 315-8, and in I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 9/16, pp. 293-303. Photographs of relevant folia of the MS 443 are also available as MNL OL DF 293277.

<sup>144</sup> R. Horváth, *Itineraria*, pp. 112-3.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110-3.

possibly even before the clash at Kenyérmező in October. George does not specify when exactly Matthias sent his troops to Zagreb, and he addressed the Senate at some point before 10 November.

Considering all evidence presented here, from news that reached Italy in late 1477 and early 1478, expressed in the instructions and reports of the Venetian Senate and a Milanese envoy, to Stephen Bátori's correspondence with Ali Bey from (probably) 1483, it seems clear that no Hungarian-Ottoman peace was ratified in these years, at least not one that lasted for very long. Even if Matthias's own testimonies cannot be completely trusted, certainly Bátori's letter can, for it clearly shows that whatever agreements the two sides may have had were quickly abandoned. It seems, nevertheless, that negotiations were initially successful, but during the period when clauses of the contract had to be ratified and eventually applied in practice, problems arose that brought the whole process to an abrupt halt. Whereas Matthias's letters, with their lexical variety, do not offer substantial 'semantic' evidence, the choice of words in Bátori's letter does help in clarifying the character of the Hungarian-Ottoman *conventum* that was accepted by both sides before the rupture in relations. There, the voivode speaks of a 'peace' (*mir*) that was 'terminated' (*raskinut*), but was previously 'defined/agreed' (*sregjenb*) and 'confirmed' (*potvrbgjenb*). However, while Ali Bey apparently spoke of *kletovne liste* (lit. 'oath-charters') that contained stipulations of the agreement, Bátori speaks only of *naregjenie* (meaning 'decision/order/command') that had been initially 'written down' (i.e. before Mehmed came up with requests for free passage through Matthias's dominion). This *naregjenie* was what Matthias was willing to reintroduce and what he wanted Bayezid now (in 1483) to accept as the basis of a new peace. Matthias was willing to abide by this *naregjenie*, and if Bayezid accepts to respect it, there would be *megû nami mirb, i istino priatel(s)tvo* (peace and true friendship between us). It is clear, then, that there were certain differences in the interpretation of the 'legal' characteristics of this contract, but there certainly existed a written document that regulated the agreement between the two sides that Matthias wanted to use as a template for his treaty with Bayezid in 1483. In other words, he merely wanted the same agreement renewed. What exactly this document seems to have been is a contract (capitulations and an '*ahd-name*') that remained unratified. This is hinted at by Bátori in his letter, where he claims that Mehmed presented his new requests *ka(d) naiposlê i Dolci Petrb hodi k creve svtlo(s)ti* (when at last Dóci Peter went to the emperor). Here the adverb of time *naiposlê* (*najposl(i)je*), meaning 'at last/finally/lastly/after all' bears the crucial meaning, showing that Dóci visited Mehmed after all other things had already been arranged. When one

thinks of the usual process of negotiations within the Ottoman diplomatic practice, where negotiations were usually conducted through envoys and by the exchange of *temessük* or provisional drafts, until an agreement was reached and the princes issued capitulations or an '*ahdname*, confirming their content by swearing an oath, one can interpret this evidence in only one way.<sup>147</sup> It seems that Dóci visited Mehmed to hear his oath and receive the *name*. Further phrases from Bátori's letter are instructive as to the nature of the document, and show that it was precisely this that caused disagreements about its character. Ali Bey claimed that Matthias failed to respect clauses that were written in *kletovne liste* (a phrase that has the same meaning as the Ottoman '*ahdname* – 'bill/charter/lit. letter of oath')<sup>148</sup>, while Bátori, on the other hand, claimed that this was not the case, but that the king had every right not to respect them, since *kletovne liste*/*'ahdname* were never exchanged as Mehmed never issued one because he suddenly came up with new conditions. Whether or not the final contracts were eventually exchanged is not overly important, but it is clear that such a document, albeit unratified, existed.

Bátori's letter, compiled in Buda on (probably) 1 May 1483 introduces us to the chaos that is the truce of 1483. As I have already mentioned, the traditional dating of this truce to 1483, still present in largely Hungarian historiography,<sup>149</sup> had already been questioned by Simon on the basis of a number of Italian sources.<sup>150</sup> However, both Simon and a myriad of other scholars who have written about it share a common faulty approach to the primary material. Since at least the nineteenth century and Fraknói's biography of King Matthias,<sup>151</sup> the central material upon which interpretations and dating of these truces have been based were the four letters from the notorious eighteenth-century Jesuit Košice edition of Matthias's correspondence, attributed to Imre Kelcz.<sup>152</sup> The four letters contain information on the Ottoman request for a five-year truce with Hungary, Matthias's positive response, and the subsequent correspondence related to Matthias's complaint (and Ottoman response) about the Ottoman capture of Moldavian forts of Chilia/Kiliya and Cetatea Albă/Akkerman in what

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<sup>147</sup> On the diplomatic practice of the Ottoman state, see: Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th-18th Century). An Annotated Edition of 'Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill, 2000); S. Papp, 'Hungary and the Ottoman Empire,' pp. 37-89; H. Theunissen, 'Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats.'

<sup>148</sup> Cf. the above literature and: Jan Reychman, Ananiasz Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomats* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1968), pp. 135-9.

<sup>149</sup> See, e.g., claims by S. Papp in his paper on 'Ştefan cel Mare, le roi Mattias et l'Empire ottoman' where he accepts 1483 without any discussion, although he dedicated more space to the truce of 1488 in 'Magyarország és az Oszmán Birodalom' already cited above.

<sup>150</sup> See note 12.

<sup>151</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király 1440-1490* (Budapest: MTT, 1890).

<sup>152</sup> I. Kelcz, *Epistolae Matthiae Corvini*.

appeared to be (at least to Matthias) a clear violation of the contract. On the basis of the *regesta* presented in the Košice collection, and notes on the Ottoman assault on Moldavian castles, these documents have been dated to the period between 1483/1484 (truce) and 1485 (disagreement about the castles).<sup>153</sup> Ottoman letters from this collection have been attributed to Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512). The edited letters are not explicitly dated. Moreover, until 1974 no-one could with any certainty discern where these letters had come from. The source, probably a codex, from which the compiler of the Jesuit edition of 1743 transcribed them remains unknown. Still, in 1974, Sándor Kovács discovered and described an eighteenth-century manuscript from the library of the archbishop of Eger that contains several copies of Matthias's correspondence, including the four letters from the Jesuit edition.<sup>154</sup> The importance of Kovács's feat, however, stems not so much from the discovery of the letters themselves, but from the discovery of an interpolated narrative that functions as an introduction, lends context to this correspondence, and explains some of confusing *regesta* found in the 1743 edition. Apart from describing the circumstances of the Hungarian-Ottoman truce, this text explains the (still largely mysterious) incarceration of Peter Váradi, the archbishop of Kalocsa and Matthias's chief chancellor in the early 1480s.<sup>155</sup> According to this narrative, following the conclusion of the truce and Bayezid's wrongful attack on Moldavian castles, it was discovered that Peter, 'through error or for another reason,' had failed to include the two castles *in literis* (!) of the agreement. Matthias, then, sent him to prison.

Apart from the Eger codex, at least four other (sixteenth-century or later) codices contain the same letters and the same 'linking' narrative. One of them is the aforementioned manuscript from the Moravian Library in Brno,<sup>156</sup> the other a codex from the Austrian National

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<sup>153</sup> See Fraknói's arbitrary dating in his *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, docs. 169, 174, pp. 286, 293-4. See the same dating in: Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, ed., *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor* [Documents pertaining to History of the Romanians], vol. 2, pt. 1 (Bucharest, 1891), docs. 18, 19, pp. 15-6; and N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente*, pp. 63-5.

<sup>154</sup> Sándor Kovács, 'Mátyás király leveleskönyvének egri töredéke (Adatok Váradi Péter kancelláriai éveihöz)' [Fragment of King Matthias's epistolary in Eger (Data for the period of chancellor Peter Váradi)], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 90 (1974): pp. 115-8.

<sup>155</sup> For a recent assessment of Váradi's career and fall see János Véber, 'Két korszak határán, Váradi Péter pályaképe és írói életműve' [At the turn of two eras – Peter Váradi's career and literary oeuvre], PhD dissertation (Budapest: PPKE, 2009), published as *Két korszak határán. Váradi Péter humanista főpap, kalocsai érsek pályaképe* (Pécs-Budapest: Kronosz-MTT, 2016), especially pp. 57-72.

<sup>156</sup> MZK, Mk-0000.009.

Library,<sup>157</sup> the third a codex from the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich,<sup>158</sup> and lastly the well-known first Kollár codex (*Decreta regum Hungariae*)<sup>159</sup>. With several, but not significant differences in orthography, grammar, and lexicon, all four manuscripts relay the same story of Peter's downfall. There are further, more important differences between the three codices. While the Brno codex contains other letters related to the negotiations from 1478, some of which are explicitly dated in the manuscript, neither the manuscript from Vienna, Eger, nor the Kollár codex contain this, earlier correspondence. Furthermore, letters that were allegedly exchanged between Bayezid and Matthias (in 1483 or 1484 or later) are in the manuscript from Eger dated to 1478. None of the letters from the Viennese codex contain any *datatio*, but all four manuscripts, importantly, do contain a hint as to the period when all of this allegedly took place. It is precisely the additional narration that recounts that 'while Bayezid ruled the empire of the Turks, and Matthias over Hungarians, *accidit autem circiter 1478 ut uterque horum principium, in diversis orbis partibus ingenita bella gerere cogentur* (it so happened that around 1478 both of these princes had to wage wars on various sides of the world). The burden presented by these conflicts – Matthias's engagement against Frederick, and Bayezid's against the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt and Syria – motivated the two princes to negotiate a truce. It is clear that the four letters and the narrative belong together, that neither would be able to stand alone and convey the message the author intended. And the message the author (or the compiler) intended to relate is clearly the story of Peter's downfall, rather than the Hungarian-Ottoman truce. The latter seems to be merely the backdrop of the former. These peculiarities frustrated both Kovács and more recently Kornél Szovák, who even doubted that the letters, albeit corresponding to the events of the period, contain genuine correspondence.<sup>160</sup> Without further detailed analyses of the four (and probably more) manuscripts, both codicological and palaeographical – the first task would certainly have to be to create a reliable *stemmata* – which

<sup>157</sup> ÖN, MS, ser. n., 1912, fol. 42r-45r. For a detailed description of the codex, see: Otto Mazal, Franz Unterkircher, *Katalog der abendländischen Handschriften der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek: "Series nova" (Neuerwerbungen)* (Vienna: Georg Prachner, 1963), pp. 130-1.

<sup>158</sup> BSB, MS Clm 13192, fol. 451ff; cf. Karl Halm et al., eds., *Catalogus codicum latinorum Bibliothecae Regiae Monacensis*, vol. 4, pt. 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1968), n. 940, p. 108; N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente*, pp. 63-5.

<sup>159</sup> MNL OL I szekció (Bécsi levéltárból kiszolgáltatott iratok [Documents acquired from the Archives of Vienna]), 7 (Kollár), *Decreta regum Hungariae*; cf. Monika Jánosi, 'A Szent István törvényeit tartalmazó kódexek' [Codices containing St Stephen's laws], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 94 (1978): pp. 225-54, esp. 232-4.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Kornél Szovák, 'Egy kódex két tanulsága [Two lessons from one codex]' in *ΓΕΝΕΣΙΑ. Tanulmányok Bollók János emlékére* [Studies in honour of János Bollók], eds. László Horváth et al. (Budapest, 2004), pp. 145-67, esp. 157-67. See also: G. Mayer, 'King Matthias Corvinus's Epistolaria.' Further on collections of Matthias's correspondence, published and unpublished: Attila Bárány, 'King Matthias of Hungary,' in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History*, vol. 5 (1350-1500), eds. David Thomas et al. (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 578-88.

still remains to be done, these letters have to be handled extremely cautiously. Although other contemporary primary material, both Hungarian, Italian, and Ottoman, speak of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and truces/peace of the time, one cannot, at least for now, take the content of these letters for granted. Although they may well relate the summary of Hungarian-Ottoman relations of the period, or at least the general atmosphere, as they are – undated (or incorrectly dated) obviously not original, copied from an unknown source, and coupled with a story that casts further doubt on their veracity – they are nearly worthless for a study on Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and truces of that period.

In their detailed and long-awaited biography of Stephen Bátori,<sup>161</sup> Richárd Horváth and Tibor Neumann have recently offered their own view on the (vague) date of the conclusion of the Ottoman-Hungarian truce (or peace) of ‘1483.’<sup>162</sup> Having pointed to the lack of any information about the conclusion of a truce in the detailed report of Bartolomeo Maraschi, bishop of Città di Castello, whom Sixtus IV had sent to Central Europe to assess the situation and preach war against the Ottomans (who discussed with Matthias privately in mid-October 1483),<sup>163</sup> and having consulted Bátori’s itinerary, Horváth and Neumann suggested that the truce must have been arranged between the late autumn 1483 and spring 1484. However, their assessment of the situation, just as Simon’s, stands on unstable foundations – on, in other words, the fixation to the year 1483. An example of these inconsistencies, especially in Simon’s work,<sup>164</sup> is the alleged truce of 1482. Information about that year’s Hungarian-Ottoman agreements comes from two letters found in the Vatican Archives and published in 2004 in the Vatican *Collectanea* on Hungary of the Pázmány Péter University.<sup>165</sup> Editor(s) of the volume had connected the two letters, assuming they refer to the same problem, and dated them to 1482. However, the first letter is dated on the basis of the *datatio* of the second, and the second is dated with reference to the truce of 1483, which the editors claim took place in 1483 with references to Fraknói’s monograph on Peter Váradi from 1884<sup>166</sup> and the overview of

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<sup>161</sup> Horváth, T. Neumann, *Ecsedi Bátori István*, see note 126.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-4. Followed by Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, p. 281.

<sup>163</sup> Kenneth Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1978, 1997), pp. 377-9; cf. I. Katona, *Historia critica regum Hungariae*, vol. 9/16 (Buda, 1793), pp. 500ff; Antonín Kalous, *Plenitudo potestatis in partibus? Papežští legáti a nunciové ve střední Evropě na konci středověku (1450–1526)* [Papal legates and nuncios in late medieval Central Europe] (Brno: Matice moravská, 2010), pp. 314ff.

<sup>164</sup> See the list in note 9.

<sup>165</sup> Edgár Artner et al., eds., *Magyarország mint a nyugati keresztény művelődés védőbástyája/Hungary as Propugnaculum of Western Christianity*, (Budapest-Rome: PPKE, 2004), docs. 110, 111, pp. 130-3.

<sup>166</sup> V. Fraknói, *Váradi Péter kalocsai érsek élete, 1483-1511* [The life of Peter Váradi, the archbishop of Kalocsa] (Budapest, 1884).

Hungarian medieval history by Engel, Kristó, and Kubinyi from 1998.<sup>167</sup> Claims about chronology are based on correspondence from Kelcz's collection and on generally accepted views in Hungarian historiography. Furthermore, both letters come from copies dated to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Why, then, does Simon doubt the datation of 1483, but not 1482, is quite perplexing. In fact, it is startling that any of this has been taken for granted. To support his argument, Simon cites sources that do not contain a single word about Matthias's dealings with the Ottomans in 1482, and later claims that in each of the following years, 1484, 1486, and 1488 a two-year truce between the two sides may have been concluded, as sources (that he cites) note agreements from all of these years, which, in fact, is not the case.<sup>168</sup> A careful reading of the primary material used by Simon shows that none speak of concluded treaties.

Let us, then, (re)examine the evidence about Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations throughout the 1480s, and try to gain new insights drawing on unpublished sources and the material that has not yet been discussed. Almost all works that either focus on Matthias's truce with Bayezid in 1483 or mention it in passing rely (also) on one of the king's letters that Fraknói dated to 1483.<sup>169</sup> Transcribed from a yet another manuscript of the National Széchényi Library (Fol. Lat. 1656), the letter was allegedly sent to *ad principes imperii*, and discusses the king's positive stance towards peace with the Ottomans. It does not contain a full address, nor does it contain any dates, only the said address in the title. In the letter the king, nevertheless, speaks about an Ottoman legation that arrived at his court following a certain Ottoman incursion into Frederick's lands, during which the king's men engaged Ottoman troops and freed the people that they had captured during the assault. Left without any concrete dates, one can only assume what, it seems, Fraknói himself assumed when he dated the letter; the clash between Hungarian and Ottoman troops mentioned by the king may well have been the battle that the king had described in another letter to the pope, dated (explicitly) to 6 November 1483, as having taken place on 29 October.<sup>170</sup> Led by the *ban* of Croatia and Slavonia, Matthias Geréb, Hungarian troops defeated the Ottomans somewhere in the vicinity of the river Una in one of the last serious skirmishes between the two sides before Matthias's death. The clash is mentioned in a

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<sup>167</sup> Pál Engel, Gyla Kristó, A. Kubinyi, *Magyarország története 1301–1526* [The history of Hungary 1301-1526] (Budapest: Osiris, 1998), p. 260.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. A. Simon, 'The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484,' and especially 'Truces and Negotiations.'

<sup>169</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 162, pp. 273-5.

<sup>170</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 4, doc. 42, pp. 363-6; G. Schönherr, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae regis epistolae*, doc. 166, pp. 210-2; cf. V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 156, pp. 267-70.



number of other contemporary sources, including the works of Bonfini<sup>171</sup> and Unrest,<sup>172</sup> and local Croatian chroniclers.<sup>173</sup> Without getting too deep into the discussion about the veracity and dating of Matthias's (first) letter, it is important to note that he speaks about negotiations that had started with the arrival of these envoys, and about his readiness to accept a deal should conditions prove to be acceptable.

Around the same time, in mid-December 1483, the aforementioned legate of Sixtus IV, Bartolomeo Maraschi, noted his own observations about Ottoman ambassadors at Matthias's court in one of his reports to Rome.<sup>174</sup> Having returned to the king from Frederick III (during his mission to reconcile them), Bartolomeo learned that one of Matthias's envoys had returned with several Ottoman representatives, who arrived to ratify a five-year truce that both sides had agreed on. When and whether this indeed took place eventually is a matter of debate. However, in February 1484, the rector of Ragusa sent a letter to King Ferrante of Naples writing, among other things, that news from Srebrenica and Jajce claimed a five-year peace had been introduced between Matthias and Bayezid.<sup>175</sup> A Florentine ambassador in Naples wrote in one of his reports, dated to 7 January 1484, that a certain trustworthy Ragusan had informed King Ferrante that a three-year peace had recently been introduced between Matthias and Bayezid, although the Ottoman side wished a ten-year peace.<sup>176</sup> Moreover, Pálosfalvi noted that during Matthias's military preparations for a response to Bayezid's assault on Moldavia in 1484, the king's chancery used a phrase '*contra federa pacis nobiscum inita*' when describing the Ottoman assault to the nobility of the county of Temes on 18 June 1484.<sup>177</sup> There seems to be little left to the imagination, but there are further problems with this. Pálosfalvi failed to emphasize that in this letter to the county nobility the king noted that what the Ottomans had done *contra foedera pacis* was not their attack as such, but very specifically their assault on Moldavia and Wallachia, against the two castles, and against voivode Stephen.<sup>178</sup> This takes us back to Simon's doubts about the date of the conclusion of the truce, which are very much

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<sup>171</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/6, p. 123.

<sup>172</sup> J. Unrest, *Österreichische Chronik*, pp. 141-2.

<sup>173</sup> Ivan Kukuljević-Sakcinski, ed., 'Chronicon breve Regni Croatiae Ioannis Tomasich minoritae,' *Arkiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku* 9 (1868): p. 22; *idem*, *Acta Croatica* (Zagreb, 1863), doc. 16, p. 321; cf. Đuro Šurmin, ed., *Monumenta historico-juridica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 6, *Acta Croatica* (Zagreb: JAZU, 1898), doc. 193, p. 291.

<sup>174</sup> György Pray, *Annales regum Hungariae*, vol. 4 (Vienna, 1767), pp. 171-3; cf. I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 9/16, pp. 529-34.

<sup>175</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 21, pp. 54-6.

<sup>176</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 1, doc. 9, p. 550.

<sup>177</sup> MNL OL DL 102629; T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Móhacs*, p. 282.

<sup>178</sup> MNL OL DL 102629.

based on the assumption that Bayezid's move against Moldavia broke all deals that the two princes may have established earlier, and that negotiations that followed the 'crisis of 1484' eventually led to a truce in late 1484. Certainly, all was not well in that period. As Pilat and Cristea recently noted, Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations seem to have continued in the spring of 1484, and possibly later.<sup>179</sup> In late March 1484 two letters were sent from Ragusa to Florence and the count of Policastro (thus probably Giovanni Antonio Petrucci) that claim negotiations about peace were in progress.<sup>180</sup> The letter compiled on 25 March contains information that the 'king of Hungary has peace with the Turk,' that it is being (re)negotiated, and that the sender, a certain Bartho de Luchari (Bartholomew Luccari/Lukarević), doubted the peace between the two would be undone (*dubitamo che sera sconclusa la dicta pace*).<sup>181</sup> An interesting report to the Venetian government by the count of Split, dated to 7 July 1484, kept at the archives in Zadar, states that the Turks had recently attacked *zente ungariche* in Croatia in such a manner that it is said 'that there is war between' the two.<sup>182</sup> Simon, furthermore, discovered two documents in the archives of Milan that shed some light on these problems, but not as much, however, as he would have it.<sup>183</sup> The later of the two documents, a report from Ragusa sent to Milan on 31 December 1484, notes that Matthias *ha fatto pace con el Turcho, che dice per anni duy, che dice per anni tre [...]* (made pace with the Turk, some say for two, others for three years).<sup>184</sup> Simon could not read the name of the author of the report, and was convinced this letter was the crucial evidence that by the end of the year the two sides finally came to an agreement and peace/truce was introduced.<sup>185</sup> However, another contemporary document from the archives of Milan that he failed to notice further clarifies (or complicates) the issue. This document is a copy (*exemplum*) of another letter from Ragusa, written in Latin, dated to 12 April 1485, and authored by a certain Bartholomew de Sfondratis.<sup>186</sup> This Bartholomew from Ragusa can be none other than Bartolomeo Sfondrati, (probably) the son of Guglielmo of Cremona of the famous Cremonese family of Sfondrati, who settled in Ragusa around 1450, and eventually entered the Republic's service.<sup>187</sup> Precisely in 1484, after several years of

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<sup>179</sup> Liviu Piat, Ovidiu Cristea, *The Ottoman Threat and Crusading on the Eastern Border of Christendom during the 15<sup>th</sup> Century* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018), pp. 192-218.

<sup>180</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 1, doc. 12, 13, pp. 552-4.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 12, pp. 552-3.

<sup>182</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 19, 1.2, fol. 11v.

<sup>183</sup> A. Simon, 'Chilia și Cetatea Albă,' pp. 184-5, 189-90; the same documents reprinted in *idem*, 'The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484,' pp. 416-17, 423-4.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>185</sup> Especially in 'The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484,' p. 424.

<sup>186</sup> ASMi, Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco, Potenze estere, 650 (Ungheria), 15, 1.

<sup>187</sup> Stjepan Ćosić, 'Dubrovački rod Radulovića i njihov grbovnik' [The Radulović kindred of Dubrovnik and their armorial], *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Dubrovniku* 55 (2017): pp. 112-3, *passim*; Francesco

service in the state's administration, his position as the 'secretary of the Republic' (previously also held by his uncle) was confirmed by the Ragusan Senate.<sup>188</sup> In this way Bartolomeo became one of the most important figures in the Republic's administrative apparatus, in principle overlooking the work of all of the state's three councils, recording their decisions and all state correspondence, curating the codices of the councils' minutes, etc.<sup>189</sup> If anyone among the Ragusans, therefore, was to be trusted about news on international politics, it was certainly Bartolomeo. The addressee was a certain *comes Brochardus*, an individual who was more difficult to identify. Still, the only Brocardo of some standing at the time, and the only who might have had connections with either Ragusa, Bartolomeo, or Milan, was Brocardo da' Persico, an interesting figure who had served Jacopo (Giacomo) Piccinino, the (in)famous *condottiere*, before his assassination in the summer of 1465, and later entered the service of King Ferrante of Naples in early 1471.<sup>190</sup> He eventually became the chancellor of the Neapolitan kingdom, but his connections with Milan, both personal and, more importantly, diplomatic, did not cease.<sup>191</sup> The original letter, therefore, initially reached Brocardo and then (probably) Milan through Milanese envoys in the south, or through Ippolita Sforza (Ferrante's daughter-in-law), or Brocardo himself. Although he devoted just over a half of the letter to the movements of the Ottoman fleet, Bartolomeo reserved the latter half for news about Matthias and the arrival of Ottoman envoys before him. There he claimed that the king had recently captured the suburbs of Vienna and that it was the common opinion that the city itself would

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Bettarini, 'Sfondrati, Bartolomeo,' in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 92 (2018), available at: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-sfondrati\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bartolomeo-sfondrati_(Dizionario-Biografico)), accessed on 31 February 2020. See also: Jeroen De Keyser, 'Dalmatia and Dalmatian Connections in the *Epistolarium* of Francesco Filelfo,' *Colloquia Maruliana* 27 (2018): pp. 76-100.

<sup>188</sup> S. Čosić, 'Prinos poznavanju tajništva i arhiva Dubrovačke Republike' [A contribution to the issue of the office of secretary and the archives of the Republic of Ragusa], *Arhivski vjesnik* 37 (1994): pp. 125-6.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Giancarlo Andenna, 'Una valutazione di Ferrante I d'Aragona sulla politica Milanese (1450-1479)' [The evaluation of Ferrante I upon the Milanese politics (1450-1479)], in *Studi in onore di Giosuè Musca*, eds. Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, Vito Sivo (Bari: Università degli studi di Bari-Dedalo, 2000), pp. 1-20; Serena Ferente, 'La confessione di Brocardo da Persico, cancelliere di Jacopo Piccinino, e il partito braccesco a Firenze' [The confession of Brocardo da Persico, the chancellor of Jacopo Piccinino, and the 'bracceschi' party in Florence], *Archivio storico italiano* 161 (2003): pp. 249-60; *eadem*, 'Piccinino, Jacopo,' in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 83 (2015), available at: [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/jacopo-piccinino\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/jacopo-piccinino_(Dizionario-Biografico)), accessed on 31 February 2020.

<sup>191</sup> Roberto Delle Donne, *Burocrazia e fisco a Napoli tra XV e XVI secolo* [Bureaucracy and fisc in Naples between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries] (Florence: Firenze University Press, 2012), pp. 81-2; Vincent Ilardi, 'Towards the Tragedia d'Italia: Ferrante and Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Friendly Enemies and Hostile Allies,' in *The French Descent into Renaissance Italy 1494-95: Antecedents and Effects*, ed. David Abulafia (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1995), pp. 111-12; Veronica Mele, 'Meccanismi di patronage e strategie familiari alla corte di Ippolita Maria Sforza, duchessa di Calabria (1465-69)' [Mechanisms of patronage and family strategies at the court of Ippolita Maria Sforza, duchess of Calabria (1465-89)], in *Poteri, relazioni, guerra nel regno di Ferrante d'Aragona*, eds. Francesco Senatore, Francesco Storti (Naples: ClíoPress, 2011), pp. 193-4.

soon fall into his hands.<sup>192</sup> He had also long been giving hopes of peace to Ottoman envoys. Bartolomeo was of an opinion (*arbitror*) that the king would soon give them ‘word’; that negotiations would come to nothing if Matthias was successful in his siege of the city, but that should ‘his efforts prove worthless’ (*si conatus sui inanes erunt*), peace with the Turks would follow (*pacem cum turcis sequuturam*!) [*arbitror*]). Matthias’s troops entered the city in June.

It may well be that the author of both the report of December 1484 and this letter was Bartolomeo Sfondrati. It may be, however, that he was at least the source of information that was conveyed in the earlier letter. In any case, Bartolomeo was certainly well informed about Hungarian-Ottoman dealings as the Ragusan secretary, since the Republic had close ties with both Buda (or Vienna) and Constantinople, functioning as a sort of Hungarian-Ottoman *condominium*, with almost permanent presence at the two courts.<sup>193</sup> He was certainly far better informed about these things than any Italian envoy may have been. Information provided in his letter seems to correspond to information shared by Matthias himself in, apparently, November 1485. In a copy of the king’s letter published by Iorga, and explicitly dated to 17 November 1485, Matthias described to imperial princes the circumstances that surrounded his acceptance of a treaty with the Ottomans, especially regarding the behaviour of voivode Stephen of Moldavia.<sup>194</sup> The king there openly spoke of a truce that had been ratified before the Ottoman assault on the two Moldavian castles in the summer of 1484. The truce, however, was broken with the Ottoman attack, which is why he had to re-negotiate and enter a new agreement during ‘the summer.’ The summer Matthias referred to is thus probably the summer of 1485. This is suggested both by the chronology of events narrated by the king, as well as other contextual information. All this, according to the letter, occurred at the time when voivode Stephen abandoned Matthias and approached Casimir IV, apparently due to his dissatisfaction with Matthias’s behaviour during and after the loss of Chilia and Akkerman.<sup>195</sup>

Bearing all this in mind, it seems probable that the ‘crisis’ of 1484 indeed prolonged Matthias’s negotiations with Bayezid, as Simon suggests, and that (more permanent) peace

<sup>192</sup> ASMi, Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco, Potenze estere, 650 (Ungheria), 15, 1.

<sup>193</sup> For Ragusan relations with the Porte and Hungary in this period see: Иван Божић, *Дубровник и Турска*; [Dušanka Dinić-Knežević] Душанка Динић-Кнежевић, *Дубровник и Угарска у средњем веку* [Dubrovnik and Hungary in the middle ages] (Novi Sad: Filozofski fakultet u Novom Sadu-VANU, 1986).

<sup>194</sup> N. Iorga, N. Iorga, *Acte și fragmente*, pp. 103-6.

<sup>195</sup> On the Hungarian-Moldavian-Polish political context of the time, see: Ștefan Gorovei, Maria Magdalene Székely, *Princeps omni laude maior. O istorie a lui Ștefan cel Mare* [A History of Stephen the Great] (Putna, 2005), pp. 222ff; Ș. Gorovei, ‘Pacea moldo-otomană din 1486. Observații pe marginea unor texte’ [The Moldavian-Ottoman peace of 1486. Observations on some texts] in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie* (Putna, 2003), pp. 496-515. On details of conquest of the two fortresses, see: Nicoară Beldiceanu, ‘La conquête des cités marchandes de Kilia et de Cetatea Albă par Bayezid II,’ *Südost-Forschungen* 23 (1964): pp. 36-90.

only arrived much later, even later than December 1484. But this does not automatically deem the truce of 1483/1484 inexistent, incomplete, or ill-negotiated. The king's letter to the nobility of the county of Temes (and probably letters to many other counties, which have not come to us) proves beyond any reasonable doubt that there was truce/peace. This peace must have been well-known among the Hungarian nobility of all classes, since the king proclaims the Ottoman disrespect towards it as the only reason for preparations for war. Certainly a proclamation followed the agreement between the two sides. This peace must have been based on an instrument of some sort; capitulation, *conventum*, *kletovne knjige*, '*ahdname*'. This too is proven by the same letter. The king specifically speaks there of *foedera pacis* (treaties, contracts, pacts of peace). The existence of a previous agreement that needed further adaptations is also supported by information provided by Bartholomew Luccari, who confidently speaks of an agreement he suspected would not be annulled.

But when exactly this peace (or truce) was renewed remains unknown. It is certain, however, that peaceful relations between the two states were re-established and based either on a new or 'recycled' treaty. This is again confirmed by a number of reports by Italian envoys dated to 1486 and 1487 that Simon understood as indications of a new set of negotiations and a new treaty.<sup>196</sup> All, however, speak of the existing truce (*tregua*) between Matthias and the Ottomans, not of a new one. But by far the most instructive material about it are the Cyrillic letters exchanged between Matthias and Bayezid in the immediate aftermath of the events discussed above, the negotiations of 1483/1484-1485. Apart from one letter published by Ivan Biliarsky,<sup>197</sup> which also went rather unnoticed, original Slavonic correspondence between the two princes has been unjustly ignored. It may be that the reason behind this is the scholars' inability to read languages used in different national scholarships that, however, deal with one and the same territory. It is this peculiarity that, it seems, contributed to a rather strange tradition of this correspondence in modern scholarship. One letter from Matthias to Bayezid is primarily known from György Hazai's Hungarian translation of the letter's Ottoman Turkish version.<sup>198</sup> This version, however, is a rather poor Ottoman translation, as Gökbilgin himself suspected,<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 3, docs. 90, 145, pp. 121-3, 239-41. Transcriptions in this edition are far from perfect, and can at times be misleading. Messages that the authors of these reports intended to convey are much clearer from original documents: ASMo, ASE, Cancelleria, Carteggio ambasciatori, Ungheria b. 1, 13/4; 14/2.

<sup>197</sup> Ivan Biliarsky, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes vers la fin du XVe siècle,' *Turcica* 23 (2000): pp. 291-305.

<sup>198</sup> G. Hazai, 'A Topkapu Szeráj,' doc. 8, p. 292.

<sup>199</sup> Tayyib Gökbilgin, 'Korvin Mathias (Mátyás) in Bayezit II.e Mektupları Tercümeleri ve 1503 (909) Osmanlı-Macar Muahedesinin Türkçe Metni' [Translation of letters of Matthias Corvinus and Bayezid II, and the text of the Ottoman-Hungarian treaty of 1503 (909)], *Belleten* 22 (1958): pp. 369-90.

of the Cyrillic original.<sup>200</sup> As I have mentioned above, probably most (if not all) Hungarian-Ottoman correspondence of the period was written in Slavonic and with the use of the Cyrillic script, but only some of the few letters that have come down to us have been found in their original form. What further complicates the problem is that these documents (altogether six) have been published in eight different publications and in five different languages – Slavonic (or Serbo-Croatian), Ottoman, Hungarian, German, and French. Thankfully, all translations to modern languages are accompanied by original Slavonic and Ottoman texts.

An undated letter that one must, therefore, approach with caution – dated by György Hazai to the period between 1486 and 1488 – seems to have been one in a series of correspondence that the two princes exchanged following the peace of 1483/1484/1485, all of which indirectly deal with the application of the peace treaty in practice, and explicitly discuss problems along the frontier. Allegedly a response of Bayezid to Matthias (there is no mention of an addressee – apart from ‘Hungarian king’ – or author in the letter), the letter states that the sultan, just as the king, was ready to abide by the ‘treaty (oath) and friendship’ (*‘ahdum ve dostliġum*) that had been established between the two sides for nothing less than *sulh*, i.e. *peace*.<sup>201</sup> Similar terminology is used in another, apparently poor Ottoman translation of the original Cyrillic letter (as of yet unknown) that was allegedly sent by Matthias on 8 June 1487 from Sopron,<sup>202</sup> where, according to the king’s detailed itinerary, he indeed stayed on that date.<sup>203</sup> Following several complaints about the behaviour of Bayezid’s captains along the frontier, the king used similar terms, referring to ‘friendship’ (*dostluġ*) between the two princes that needed to be preserved. As one would expect, however, it is the original Cyrillic correspondence, rather than vague Ottoman translations, that offers the clearest information on both the type of relations nurtured by the two parties in this period and the type of treaties that governed it. Two Cyrillic letters issued in 1486 and 1487, by Matthias and Bayezid’s courts, respectively, best demonstrate this. Matthias’s letter, compiled on 25 June *u taboru voiske naše u ôbsedenû Novoga Mesta* (in the camp of our army in the siege of Wiener Neustadt), was also, as I have mentioned above, translated into Ottoman. This, Ottoman version was published *in extenso* by Gökbilgin in 1958,<sup>204</sup> and was used by Hazai for his Hungarian summary, published

<sup>200</sup> Н. Радојчић, ‘Пет писама,’ doc. 2, pp. 363-6.

<sup>201</sup> G. Hazai, ‘Eine türkische Urkunde zur Geschichte der ungarisch- türkischen Beziehungen im XV. Jh.,’ *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 36 (1964): pp. 336-9.

<sup>202</sup> T. Gökbilgin, ‘Korvin Mathias,’ doc. 2, pp. 379-80.

<sup>203</sup> R. Horváth, *Itineraria*, p. 126.

<sup>204</sup> T. Gökbilgin, ‘Korvin Mathias,’ doc. 3, pp. 380-1.

in 1955.<sup>205</sup> Since the two versions contain the same datation, both Hazai and Gökbilgin have correctly assumed that the letter was sent in 1487, during Matthias's siege of Wiener Neustadt. However, neither apparently consulted the original, although both cite Radojčić's edition from 1954. Gökbilgin briefly mentions it in his paper, while Hazai occasionally cites it in a number of his other (but not this) publications. Nowhere do they, however, discuss it. This omission by these two authors that probably stemmed from the lack of skills in Cyrillic palaeography and South Slavic languages has led to the complete disregard of the transcription of the original, so much so, in fact, that more recent scholarship does not know of its existence. Neither Biliarsky, the editor of Bayezid's Cyrillic letter of 1487,<sup>206</sup> nor Işıksel were aware of it. In fact, the latter confidently asserted in 2011 that 'the original of this letter [...], probably in Slavonic, has not been found. We only have its contemporaneous Turkish translation prepared by the imperial chancellery.'<sup>207</sup>

This letter that Matthias addressed to *Prêsvetlomu poglavû i uzmôžnomu gdiu sultan Bajazid hanu velikomu caru turskomu i inem mnozem zemlam gdiu bratu i prêjatelû i rodu našemu predragomu* (to the majestic and powerful lord Sultan Bayezid Han, the great emperor of Turkey and lord of many other lands, our brother and friend and dearest kin), he begins with words about the arrival of the sultan's envoy (lit. slave) Alija (*kulu Ali* in the Ottoman translation).<sup>208</sup> This envoy brought news of Hungarian captains' misdeeds along the frontier, while saying that Bayezid [*visota vaša*] *ôni mir držala koi je megû nami i laha ga naprêda držati* (has been abiding by *that peace that is between us*, and intends to observe it in future). Misunderstanding between the two sides and wrongful deeds committed by frontier lords (of both sides) may, therefore, result in the peace being broken.

Matthias's letter may have been a response to Bayezid's letter that Ivan Biliarsky correctly dated to the beginning of 1487 and suggested was a part of the same correspondence.<sup>209</sup> Bayezid's original letter is presently kept at the Vatican Apostolic Library, under the shelfmark Ott. gr. 469, pt. B.<sup>210</sup> It was first described in 1893 in the catalogue of the

<sup>205</sup> G. Hazai, 'A Topkapu Szeráj,' doc. 8, p. 292.

<sup>206</sup> Biliarsky, in fact, refers to Karl Nehring's 'Quellen zur ungarischen Außenpolitik,' doc. 190, p. 116, who, in turn, refers to Hazai's Hungarian summary; I. Biliarsky, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes,' p. 296, fn. 25.

<sup>207</sup> Güneş Işıksel, 'Friendship and the Principle of Good Neighbourhood between Bayezid II and Matthias Corvinus,' in *Matthias Corvinus und Seine Zeit*, eds. Christian Gastgeber et al. (Vienna: ÖAW, 2011), p. 36, fn. 18.

<sup>208</sup> Н. Радѡјчић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 2, pp. 363-6; T. Gökbilgin, 'Korvin Mathias,' doc. 3, pp. 380-1.

<sup>209</sup> I. Biliarsky, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes.'

<sup>210</sup> BAV, Ottob. gr. 469, pt. B.

fond by the librarian Cardinal Alfonso Capecelatro, who recognized the auctor, but did not attempt to date the letter beyond the vague datation contained in the letter, a note on the day and month of its compilation. Apart from the simple mention of the addressee that is found in the letter – the king of Hungary and Bohemia – Capecelatro refrained from discussing the king's identity.<sup>211</sup> In the more recent catalogue of Slavonic manuscripts kept at the Library, the letter is described in far more detail, but rather arbitrarily dated to 1492. The catalogue identifies the king as Vladislaus II (r. 1490-1516), without providing any evidence to support this.<sup>212</sup> This description of the document is official in the Library.<sup>213</sup> The letter was written on a piece of paper 1020 × 240 mm, in chancellery/minuscule Cyrillic, and contains Bayezid's tughra above the text. In 1999/2000 Ivan Biliarsky transcribed and published the letter both in transcription and translation to Bulgarian and French.<sup>214</sup> Having taken into consideration the datation present at the bottom of the letter – *meseca genara v dan* (day 2 of the month of January) – and information relayed by the letter, he correctly dated it to 2 January 1487, and concluded that it was intended for Matthias. There are several important pieces of information discussed in the letter that I shall return to later, but for now it is important to emphasize the terminology used by the sultan's chancery in describing the type of relations between the two countries. Near the beginning of the letter, Bayezid describes an incursion committed by Matthias's captains, stating that the attacked men did not carry weapons, trusting *u miru i u lûbôv koja je megû nami* (in the peace and love that is between us). More importantly, following a lengthy discussion of the main problem that was behind this correspondence, Bayezid claims that *šda ova i naša strana stôï ioče na miru i na prŕvôï kletve kôbi je bila učinjena megû nami* (still our side stands by the peace and the first oath that was done between us). Later still, the sultan mentions that this peace and all arrangements that accompanied it were negotiated, agreed on, and that eventually the two princes *u kletôvneĥ knigah zapisali* (wrote them down in charters of oath). If Matthias's men committed their deeds in *razorenîu i raskidenîu mira radi* (for the destruction and breaking of peace), Bayezid insisted this is confirmed to him by the king's court.

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<sup>211</sup> Alfonso Capecelatro, *Codices manuscripti graeci Ottoboniani Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome, 1893), n. 469, p. 260.

<sup>212</sup> Aksinija Džurova, Kasimir Stančev, Marko Japundžić, *Catalogo dei manoscritti slavi della Biblioteca Vaticana* [Catalogue of Slavic manuscripts in the Vatican Library] (Sofia: Svjat, 1985), n. 96, pp. 188-9. Cf. Peter Schreiner, 'Ein neuer Katalog slavischer Handschriften,' *Die Welt der Slaven* 33 (1988): pp. 63-8.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. <http://www.mss.vatlib.it/guui/console?service=shortDetail&id=214835>, accessed 2 March 2020.

<sup>214</sup> I. Biliarsky, 'Писмо на султан Баязид втори до крал Матиач Корвин од 1487 г.' [Letter by Sultan Bayezid II to King Matthias Corvinus from 1487], *Ricerche slavistiche* 44 (1997): pp. 61-93; *idem*, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes.'



Whenever, then, the peace treaty between Matthias and Bayezid was concluded and sworn, certainly before the summer of 1486,<sup>215</sup> there must have existed a document – capitulation, ‘*ahdname*, that listed requirements that the two sides had to uphold for peace to exist. That indeed this *name* or capitulation existed is not merely confirmed by the similarity of the phrases *kletovne knjige* and ‘*ahdname*, but by the terminology used by Bayezid II in his *name* of 1498 that prolonged the peace between the two states (now with Vladislaus II) that had been introduced in 1495. In this document, which bears further importance for this discussion, and has been similarly neglected in scholarship, Bayezid II explicitly states that when the earlier peace of 1495 had been agreed, *съ ѿбеѹ страна у клетовнех книгѹхъ написано естъ покои начинъ и покои путъ и покое артикуле* (it had been written down in charters of oath [*kletovne knjige*] by both sides in what manner and according to which articles [peace was established]).<sup>216</sup> Discovered in the Sächsische Hauptstaatsarchiv in Dresden by Lajos Fekete, this document, composed in the Cyrillic script in Slavonic (Serbian), was first published by Antal Hodinka in 1929.<sup>217</sup> Seven years later, in 1936, Vladimir Ćorović published photographs of the original document and, having criticized Hodinka’s transcription, published a German translation of the text.<sup>218</sup> Ever since then, this document has largely lurked in the shadow of scholarly negligence. Ćorović’s critique of Hodinka’s edition certainly is too harsh (in fact his German translation is a much worse representation of the original than Hodinka’s transcription), as the former made no great mistakes in his transcription, but thankfully does provide the reader with the original document. Bearing the sultan’s *tughra* above the text, this document is clearly the official, original ‘*ahdname* issued by the Ottoman side, but despite its importance it has not been celebrated as much as some other documents, such as the far more famous, and for this study more relevant *name* of 1488.<sup>219</sup> The fact that this ‘*ahdname*, as well as the only other meaningful and complete material on Hungarian-Ottoman diplomatic relations, had been compiled in this script and language highlights that they were indeed the official means of communication between Ottoman and Hungarian (and other local) courts at

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<sup>215</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziái emlékek*, vol. 3, docs. 90, pp. 121-3; ASMo, ASE, Cancellaria, Carteggio ambasciatori, Ungheria b. 1, 13/4.

<sup>216</sup> [Antal R. Hodinka] Антоній Р. Годинка, ‘Отвореный листь султана Баязита II. о мирѣ его съ Владиславомъ корольомъ угорскымъ и чешскымъ р. 1498’ [Open letter of Sultan Bayezid II about peace with Vladislaus, the king of Hungary and Bohemia, from 1498], in *Zbornik naučnih radova: Ferdi Šišiću povodom šezdestegodišnjice života, 1869-1929*, ed. Grga Novak (Zagreb, 1929), pp. 645-9.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Vladimir Ćorović, ‘Der Friedensvertrag zwischen dem Sultan Bayazid II. und dem König Ladislaus II,’ *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 90 (1936): pp. 52-9.

<sup>219</sup> See: G. Hazai, ‘Urkunde des Friedensvertrages.’

the time. This, as discussed, is a known fact.<sup>220</sup> This assumption has further implications for the study of Bayezid's mysterious capitulation or draft of 1488, the only known document issued during Matthias's reign that resembles an *'ahdname'*.

The latter document was edited and published by György Hazai twice. First in 1955 in his brief collection of Hungarian translations of relevant Ottoman documents from Matthias's period,<sup>221</sup> and subsequently in 1965.<sup>222</sup> Fortunately, in the latter publication Hazai presented both the photograph of the original document (from the Topkapı Müzesi Saray Arşivi), and a transliteration that he accompanied with a translation into German. On the basis of established views, that are still valid today, combined with the content of the document, and without providing almost any additional evidence for his assertions, Hazai dated it to 1488. Ever since, this peculiar piece of writing has been identified as the agreement between Bayezid and Matthias from 1488 when, allegedly, the truce of 1483 (that lasted for five years) was prolonged.

Indeed several sources suggest Matthias entered a new deal with Bayezid in 1488. Bonfini, who had settled in Hungary by that time, briefly reports that in 1488 an Ottoman legation came to *Pannonia* for yet another confirmation of truce.<sup>223</sup> Several passages later, he notes that, in 1490, they returned not to prolongue truce, but to 'vehemently request peace' (*sed pacem instantissime postulabat*) from the king.<sup>224</sup> Teleki further noted that the annals of the Zwettl Abbey contain a brief entry that states that in the summer of 1488 Ottoman envoys came before Matthias in Vienna, with whom they, allegedly, signed a treaty for a three-year peace.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Cf. Boško Bojović, *Raguse (Dubrovnik) et l'Empire ottoman (1430–1520)* (Paris: Association Pierre Belon, 1998), *passim*; Tilman Berger et al., eds., *Eine Sprachlehre von der Hohen Pforte. Ein arabisch-persisch-griechisch-serbisches Gesprächslehrbuch vom Hofe des Sultans aus dem 15. Jahrhundert als Quelle für die Geschichte der serbischen Sprache* (Cologne, 1989); Gregor Čremošnik, 'Srpska diplomatska minuskula' [Serbian diplomatic minuscule], *Slovo* 13 (1963): pp. 119–35; Valentin Putanec, 'Poliglotni ar.-per.-grč.-srp. i ar. perz.-grč.-hrv. rukopisni konverzacijski priručnici s konca 15. st. na Porti u Carigradu (Knjižnica u Aja-Sofiji, mss. 4749 i 4750)' [Multilingual hand-written conversational handbooks of the Porte in Constantinople from the end of the fifteenth century], *Rasprave Zavoda za jezik* 16 (1990): pp. 237–44; J. Reychman, A. Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomats*, p. 117, especially: Lejla Nakaš, 'Portina slavenska kancelarija i njen utjecaj na pisare u prvom stoljeću osmanske uprave u Bosni' [The Slavonic chancery of the Porte and its influence on scribes during the first century of the Ottoman administration in Bosnia], *Forum Bosnae* 74–75 (2016): pp. 267–97. See, further, note 101.

<sup>221</sup> G. Hazai, 'A Topkapu Szeráj,' doc. 11, pp. 294–5;

<sup>222</sup> *idem*, 'Urkunde des Friedensvertrages.'

<sup>223</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/8, p. 157; cf. Miklós Schmitt, *Imperatores Ottomanici a capta Constantinopoli, cum epitome principum Turcarum* (Trnava, 1760), p. 56. These news Péter Kulcsár connected to the mission of Hacı Zaganos, which I discuss in detail below. See: P. Kulcsár, *Bonfini magyar történetének forrásai és keletkezése* [The sources and origin of Bonfini's Hungarian history] (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1973), p. 144.

<sup>224</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/8, p. 158.

<sup>225</sup> Bernhard Link, *Annales Austrio-Clara-vallenses*, vol. 2 (Vienna, 1725), p. 288; József Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon* [Hungary in the Hunyadi period], vol. 5 (Pest, 1856), p. 462.

A slightly more reliable source is Queen Beatrix, Matthias's Neapolitan wife, who mentions an Ottoman legation in her letter to Ercole d'Este, the Duke of Ferrara and her brother-in-law, of 20 January 1488.<sup>226</sup> She wrote that on 18 January, only two days earlier, an Ottoman ambassador visited the king. Matthias welcomed him and granted him audience. She was not, however, completely sure about the purpose of his arrival and what was discussed, but was convinced that the matter was the ratification of peace 'for some further years,' as the 'Turk' wished to completely turn to his problem in the Levant. The most instructive about Matthias's 1488 treaty with Bayezid is another letter, a document that has hitherto not been discussed in scholarship, kept in the archives of Modena.<sup>227</sup> The letter was possibly sent by Beltrando Costabili, a Ferrarese who was at the time in the service of the young archbishop of Esztergom, Ippolito d'Este.<sup>228</sup> Compiled on 23 September 1488, apparently in Baden bei Wien where, according to this and other letters, Ippolito stayed with Beatrix and young John Corvinus,<sup>229</sup> the letter informs Ercole d'Este of his son's wellbeing and other local issues. Its second paragraph states that 'these days an ambassador of the Turk was with the king, *et hano concluso Treuga da observarssi in perpetuo como pace firmissima.*' This the author learned from Beatrix.

While basing his conclusions on another set of material, primarily from the Ottoman archives, Sándor Papp is of an opinion that the truce of 1488 was eventually ratified in the summer of that year.<sup>230</sup> Indeed, a number of Ottoman sources, some of which had already been published by Gökbilgin in 1952, show that Hungarian envoys have been visiting Edirne throughout 1488 and 1489.<sup>231</sup> But the document that Hazai dated to 1488 has at least since 1955 been closely related to another Ottoman source, a *sefâretnâme* (report) of an Ottoman envoy to Hungary, a certain Hacı Zağanos, that Hazai asserted was the envoy who received Matthias's oath in 1488.<sup>232</sup> Zağanos's report was again published by Hazai in 1976, both in

<sup>226</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 3, doc. 234, pp. 377-8. Again, a far better transcription can be found in the recently published correspondence of Beatrix: Enrica Guerra, ed., *Il carteggio tra Beatrice d'Aragona e gli Estensi (1476-1508)* (Rome: Aracne, 2010), doc. 81, pp. 136-7.

<sup>227</sup> ASMo, ASE, Cancelleria, Carteggio ambasciatori, b. 2, 19/3, 18.

<sup>228</sup> Briefly on Costabili, see: Albano Biondi, 'Costabili, Beltrando,' in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani* 30 (1984) – available at [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/beltrando-costabili\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/beltrando-costabili_(Dizionario-Biografico)/), accessed 4 March 2020.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. R. Horváth, *Itineraria*, p. 136.

<sup>230</sup> S. Papp, 'Hungary and the Ottoman Empire,' p. 61.

<sup>231</sup> T. Gökbilgin, *XV–XVI Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livasi: Vakıflar - Mülkler - Mukataalar* [Edirne and the liva of Paşa in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries] (Istanbul: Üçler Basımevi, 1952), pp. 103-9. Cf. S. Papp, 'Hungary and the Ottoman Empire,' pp. 61-2.

<sup>232</sup> G. Hazai, 'Topkapu Szeráj,' doc. 10, pp. 293-4.

transliteration and translation into German.<sup>233</sup> Ever since Hazai's first publication of the document in 1955 (in Hungarian summary), and especially the transliteration of 1976, it has been considered that indeed this letter must be related to the truce of 1488. Since the *sefâretnâme* describes Zaġanos's sojourn during the months of Cemaziyelahir and Rajab, which correspond to the spring and early summer of 1488, this letter too served as evidence for the datation of the truce in the summer of 1488. However, in 1992, in a paper that slipped under the radar of Hungarian scholarship (and scholarship in general, in fact), Gümeç Karamuk discussed Hacı Zaġanos's report in detail.<sup>234</sup> She also provided a better transcription and transliteration of the document. Her study was, however, not a direct critique of Hazai's assumptions, but of a datation of the document that was provided in Faik Reşit Unat's and Bekir Sıtkı Baykal's 1968 overview of *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameleri* (Ottoman envoys and their reports), where it is claimed, without proof, that Zaġanos's report was compiled in 1487, during Matthias's reign. Emphasizing several parts of the report and inconsistencies with the presumed datation, Karamuk argued that the letter could not have been written in either 1487 or 1488, or, in fact, during Matthias's reign. She pointed out several problems. For example, Matthias is explicitly named near the end of the document although another 'king' of Hungary is mentioned throughout the letter. More importantly, Zaġanos mentions that his sojourn took place in Cemaziyelahir and Rajab, but also that Easter festivities took place while he was in Hungary. These two months, as mentioned, correspond to the late spring and early summer of 1488. But Easter and the Hijri months of Cemaziyelahir and Rajab did not occur at approximately the same time in that year. They did correspond, however, in 1495, when Easter fell on 19 April,<sup>235</sup> and the Hijri months corresponded to the Julian March and April. In fact, Zaġanos states that he had the king swear the oath and grant the treaty on the fifth day of Rajab, which would then be 1 April 1495. Karamuk further discusses several other pieces of information from the letter and different readings, pointing out that *Pec* may actually be Pécs, and not Bécs (Vienna), that the letter mentions Lawrence Újlaki's quarrel with Vladislaus II in 1494/1495 (that Hazai did not correctly transcribe), John Corvinus's rule in Croatia, as well as a number of other contextual issues that allowed her to date the letter convincingly to 1495.<sup>236</sup> What Karamuk failed to notice, but further supports her claims, is that in the above-mentioned

<sup>233</sup> *idem*, 'Eine Urkunde der ungarisch-türkischen Friedensverhandlungen in der Zeit von Matthias Corvinus und Bāyezīd II,' *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 38 (1976): pp. 155-60.

<sup>234</sup> Gümeç Karamuk, 'Hacı Zaġanos'un Elçilik Raporu' [Hacı Zaġanos's legation report], *Belleten*, 56/216 (1992): pp. 391-403.

<sup>235</sup> See the Easter tables in: Jakov Stipišić, *Pomoćne povijesne znanosti u teoriji i praksi* [Auxiliary sciences of history in theory and practice] (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, <sup>3</sup>1991), pp. 203ff.

<sup>236</sup> G. Karamuk, 'Hacı Zaġanos,' pp. 399-403.

name of 1498, Bayezid explicitly dates the truce of 1495. The *name* contains information that the previous agreement was valid for three years, up until the *marta meseca tretideseti danь* ([the last] month of March, the thirtieth day).<sup>237</sup> Furthermore, it is clear from the original of the *name* of 1498 that this document, where it states that the new truce would be based on the articles of the previous one of 1495, describes the latter as ‘that peace that the king’s majesty (i.e. Vladislaus II) had done у Перѹю’ (*u Pečuû*, i.e. in Pécs). Bayezid, lastly, mentions his envoy Хажи Заноз (Haži/Hacı Zanoz) as the man who discussed the previous truce of 1495 with Vladislaus during negotiations for the prolongation of the peace in 1498. The name of Bayezid’s envoy is interestingly similar to the original envoy from 1495. Vladislaus’s II itinerary of these few months in the spring of 1495, recently briefly discussed by Tibor Neumann, further shows that the king spent the whole month of March in Pécs following the siege of Duke Lawrence’s castle at Újlak that fell into the king’s hands on 21 December 1494.<sup>238</sup> From Pécs Vladislaus proceeded to Székesfehérvár, where he was at the beginning of April.<sup>239</sup> In his *sefâretname*, Zaġanos claims that, having made his oath, the king left Pécs and travelled to *İstol Beligradı*, ‘where the late kings rest.’<sup>240</sup> *İstol Beligradı*, a toponym that stemmed from the Slavic *stolni beligrad*, is precisely a translation of ‘Székesfehérvár’ – lit. ‘Throne White City,’ in other words ‘Royal White City’ (Stuhlweißenburg, Alba Regia, Istolni Belgrad in modern Turkish).

Hacı Zaġanos’s mission, therefore, did not take place in 1488, but 1495. Although this does not disprove possible Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations and a truce/peace of 1488, it certainly takes his mission out of the equation, thus leaving only ‘western’ evidence, primarily the letter from September 1488, to support the dating of the truce. There are, however, further problems with the primary material that Hazai and Papp took to represent the negotiations of 1488. They concern the ‘*ahdname* or *temessük* of 1488. In his 1965 edition of the document, Hazai refrained from categorizing it, calling it merely an ‘Urkunde des Friedensvertrages’ and

<sup>237</sup> V. Ćorović, ‘Der Friedensvertrag,’ (see image of the document, no pag.); A. Р. Годинка, ‘Отвореный листъ,’ p. 636.

<sup>238</sup> T. Neumann, ‘II. Ulászló király délvidéki utazásai (1494–1496)’ [King Vladislaus’s II journeys to the south (1494–1496)], *Bácsország - Vajdasági honismereti szemle* 68 (2014): pp. 49–56; on the siege of Újlak in 1494, see: Tamás Fedeles, ‘Opsada Iloka 1494.’ [The siege of Ilok in 1494], *Scrinia Slavonica* 12 (2012): pp. 7–20, and *idem*, *A király és a lázadó herceg. Az Újlaki Lőrinc és szövetségesei elleni királyi hadjárat (1494–1495)* [The king and the rebellious duke. The royal campaign against Lawrence Újlaki and his allies (1494–1495)] (Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem, 2012).

<sup>239</sup> T. Neumann, ‘II. Ulászló király,’ see map on p. 50.

<sup>240</sup> G. Karamuk, ‘Hacı Zaġanos,’ p. 392; cf. G. Hazai, ‘Eine Urkunde,’ pp. 157, 159; *idem*, ‘Topkapu Szeráj,’ doc. 10, p. 294.

suggesting that it may have been ‘ein Arbeitsexemplar.’<sup>241</sup> In at least three different papers, Sándor Papp argued that this document from 1488 was, in fact, a draft of the treaty between Bayezid and Matthias, or a *temessük*.<sup>242</sup> He emphasized the importance of the discovery of the Latin version of the treaty (issued by the Hungarian side), and argued that it is the absence of the datation that shows that this was indeed only a draft. He mentions in passing that ‘la charte comporte les éléments qui sont caractéristiques à partir de la deuxième moitié du XVe siècle en ce qui concerne les rapports diplomatiques européens-ottomans,’ but does not further elaborate on this observation.<sup>243</sup>

One glance at the this document, its content and structure, however, is enough to suggest that it requires further investigation. It is a fairly short document, comprising of thirty-six lines of Ottoman text, just as other *name* of this period, both Venetian and especially Polish, were surprisingly short.<sup>244</sup> Still, it contains all diplomatic elements one may find in the contemporary ‘*ahdname*’; a brief *invocatio* (*Hüve*) at the top of the text, more on which below; it lacks the ‘introductory formula’ that Theunissen noted appears only in original Turkish texts; it contains the ‘indirect *inscriptio*’ as a part of the *narratio* that one especially finds in documents beginning with an *intitulatio*, as this does; just as elsewhere, the Hungarian envoy is also mentioned here; it is followed by the *dispositio* detailing all the arranged requirements; and, most importantly, ends with the characteristic sultan’s *oath-pledge*.<sup>245</sup> Nothing separates this document, as regards its diplomatic structure, from other contemporary ‘*ahdname*. However, it does not bear the *legitimatio*, i.e. the *tughra*, nor the *datatio* or *locatio*. The lack of the *tughra* shows that this is not the official document that was issued to the king. It certainly is, nevertheless, peculiar that the document corresponds to other similar instruments of the time, but lacks significant parts. This is justified by the note above the main text that reads *sûret-i ‘ahdnâme* – ‘copy/translation of the ‘*ahdname*.’ The *invocatio*, in fact, is not the part of the main, copied text, but of the copy as a document itself; it comes before the *sûret-i ‘ahdnâme* note. Although Hazai noted, and correctly translated, that this is a *sûret* of an ‘*ahdname*, that is an ‘Abschrift des Vertrages,’ he still failed to ponder its true character and allowed for

<sup>241</sup> G. Hazai, ‘Urkunde des Friedensvertrages.’ See note 5.

<sup>242</sup> S. Papp, ‘Hungary and the Ottoman Empire,’ p. 61; *idem*, ‘Ştefan cel Mare,’ p. 394; *idem*, ‘The System of Autonomous Muslim and Christian Communities, Churches, and States in the Ottoman Empire’ in *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century*, ed. Gábor Kármán, Lovro Kunčević (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 404-5.

<sup>243</sup> S. Papp, ‘Ştefan cel Mare,’ p. 394.

<sup>244</sup> Cf. D. Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 40ff, *passim*.

<sup>245</sup> On the diplomatic structure of these documents, see: D. Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, pp. 8-34; and especially H. Theunissen, ‘Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats,’ pp. 265-305.

speculations that this is a draft or a *temessük* that may or may not have been eventually accepted. When discussing the original nature of this document one has to bear in mind two things. Firstly, it is clearly stated in the document that this is indeed a copy of the '*ahdname*'. This alone should suffice to consider it a trustworthy copy of the treaty that was concluded between Hungary and the Ottoman empire. Secondly, having seen that correspondence between these two states largely relied on the Slavonic language and the Cyrillic script, as well as that not only the '*ahdname*' of 1498 was written in Slavonic, but that *name* issued by Selim I to Louis II of Hungary in 1519 (of which two further Latin versions exist, one of which is Louis's capitulation, the other the translation of the Slavonic *name*),<sup>246</sup> today kept at the British Library, is also a Slavonic-Cyrillic document,<sup>247</sup> I strongly believe that this *sûret* is indeed a translation and a copy of the original Cyrillic '*ahdname*' issued by Bayezid to Matthias.

None of this, however, resolves the problem of the copy's or the treaty's datation. And there is very little in the text that would help. Already Fenyvesi noted the name of Matthias's envoy, identified in the text as *Gal deyak* (that is Gal 'diák/deák'). Although he did not question the established datation, Fenyvesi did assert that this 'diák' Gál must be Gál Garai, a retainer of the Kosača family of Hercegovina who, during the 1470s, came to serve Matthias.<sup>248</sup> Indeed, during the 1460s a number of notes from the registers of the Ragusan Senate as well as Cyrillic charters pertaining to Duke Vlatko Kosača mention a certain Gallus de Gara and *Gaô dijak* in the service of the family of the Duke of Hercegovina.<sup>249</sup> Atanasovski had further noted that a certain *magister Gallus de Gaara* served Nicholas Újlaki in the early 1470s, when he figured as his ambassador to Ragusa, and claimed that he must be the same person.<sup>250</sup> But nothing

<sup>246</sup> L. Thallóczy, Sándor Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár (Dubicza, Orbász és Szana vármegyék) 1244-1710* [Collection of documents on Southern Slavonian counties of Dubicza, Orbász, and Szana] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1912), doc. 167, pp. 279-86; Augustin Theiner, *Vetera monumenta historica Hungarum sacram illustrantia*, vol. 2 (Rome, 1860), doc. 818, pp. 626-8.

<sup>247</sup> British Library, Add. MS 8160. See (quite poor) description at: [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=detailsTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=IAMS032-003150368&recIdxs=4&elementId=4&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&dscent=0&frbg=&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BL%29&tab=local&dstmp=1586190594699&srt=rank&mode=Basic&&dum=true&vl\(freeText0\)=8160&vid=IAMS\\_VU2](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/display.do?tabs=detailsTab&ct=display&fn=search&doc=IAMS032-003150368&indx=5&recIds=IAMS032-003150368&recIdxs=4&elementId=4&renderMode=poppedOut&displayMode=full&frbrVersion=&dscent=0&frbg=&scp.scps=scope%3A%28BL%29&tab=local&dstmp=1586190594699&srt=rank&mode=Basic&&dum=true&vl(freeText0)=8160&vid=IAMS_VU2), accessed on 6 March 2020. Far better description, with discussion and transcription, in: L. Nakaš, 'Bosanski pisar sultana Selima' [The Bosnian scribe of Sultan Selim], *Forum Bosnae* 77 (2017): pp. 62-113.

<sup>248</sup> L. Fenyvesi, 'Magyar-török diplomáciai kapcsolatok,' p. 92.

<sup>249</sup> [Ljubomir Stojanović] Лубомир Стојановић, *Старе српске повеље и писма* [Old Serbian charters and letters], vol. 1, pt. 2 (Belgrade-Sremski Karlovci, 1934), doc. 770, p. 187; cf. [Veljan Atanasovski] Вељан Атанасовски, *Пао Херцеговине* [The fall of Hercegovina] (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga-Istorijski institut u Beogradu, 1979), pp. 52, 151.

<sup>250</sup> B. Атанасовски, *Пао Херцеговине*, p. 87; L. Thallóczy, *Studien zur Geschichte Bosniens und Serbiens im Mittelalter* (Munich-Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1914), doc. 91, pp. 433-4, where a certain *magister Gallus de Gaara* is noted as Újlaki's envoy.

more is known about this Gál. Fenyvesi wrote, somewhat boldly, that he must have been a member of the baronial Garai family and that this may be the reason behind his appointment to this mission at the Porte. In other words, wrote Fenyvesi, it was through John Kishorvát, a relative of the family, that he managed to acquire this important post.<sup>251</sup> Kishorvát, a southern Hungarian nobleman of (possibly) Croatian origin who assumed an important role only after Matthias's death, indeed, through marriage, became related to the Bánfi line of the Garai,<sup>252</sup> and according to a brief note in a manuscript of the chapter of Pozsony, discovered by Nándor Knauz, he in 1489 delivered the relics of St John the Almsgiver from Constantinople to be placed in the Royal Chapel in Buda Castle.<sup>253</sup> This brief note was further truncated by Fraknói, who listed Kishorvát among Matthias's envoys in his influential paper on the king's ambassadors, and thence has his mission been considered a part of Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations in the 1480s.<sup>254</sup> There is no further evidence, however, on either Kishorvát's role or legation or membership in a legation, nor is there evidence that this Gál was indeed a member of the Garai family. Most importantly, there is no evidence that this Gál was the one whom Matthias sent to Bayezid to negotiate.

There are a number of references in the primary material to various Gáls who were either employed in Matthias's administration or were 'diákok' (*litterati*) at the time. Two of the most prominent *litterati* seem to have been Gál Kecheti, who served in the financial administration,<sup>255</sup> and Gál Poklostói. The former, however, was dead by 1476.<sup>256</sup> The latter appears in a charter from 1472 as *Gallus litteratus de Poclosto, notarius Cancellarie Regie Maiestatis*,<sup>257</sup> whom György Bónis also recognized as one of Matthias's trained notaries.<sup>258</sup> Unfortunately, nothing more is known about this Gál of Poklostó, other than that he may have

<sup>251</sup> L. Fenyvesi, 'Magyar-török diplomáciai kapcsolatok,' p. 92.

<sup>252</sup> On Hlapčić see: Stanko Andrić, 'Kishorvát od Hlapčica, Ivan' in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, available at <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=10420>, accessed 8 March 2020; *idem*, 'Velikaška obitelj Gorjanski: skica političke povijesti' [The magnate family of Gorjanski: a sketch of their political history], *Zbornik Muzeja Đakovštine* (2015): pp. 7-40; *idem*, *Vinkovci u srednjem vijeku. Područje grada Vinkovaca od kasne antike do kraja turske vlasti* [Vinkovci in the middle ages. The area of the town of Vinkovci between the late antiquity and the end of Ottoman rule] (Vinkovci-Slavonski Brod: Matica hrvatska-Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2007), pp. 82 ff; Mór Wertner, 'A Garaiak' [The Garai], *Századok* 31 (1897): p. 910.

<sup>253</sup> Nándor Knauz, 'A budai királyi várpalota kápolnája' [The chapel of the royal palace in Buda] in *Tudományos Értekezések*, ed. N. Knauz, Iván Nagy, vol. 1 (Pest, 1862), p. 48.

<sup>254</sup> V. Fraknói, 'Mátyás király magyar diplomatái,' pp. 843-4.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. A. Kubinyi, 'A kincstári személyzet a XV. század második felében' [The personnel of the treasury in the latter half of the fifteenth century], *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* 12 (1957): p. 33.

<sup>256</sup> MNL OL DL 74203.

<sup>257</sup> MNL OL DL 17323

<sup>258</sup> György Bónis, *A jogtudó értelmiség a Mohács előtti Magyarországon* [Legal professionals in pre-Mohács Hungary] (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1971), pp. 234, 236.



come from the county of Baranya.<sup>259</sup> The lack of further evidence on either of these Gáls, *de Gara* or *de Poclosto*, renders futile any attempt at dating the capitulations and attributing them to specific negotiations by relying on their biographies. Both may have been alive in the 1480s. In fact, it may have been a third, unknown Gál that travelled to Bayezid, although it seems the one from Poklostó is the best candidate.

What is certain is that the *'ahdname* was issued in the period between May 1481 and April 1490, that is between Bayezid's ascension and Matthias's death. Bearing in mind the previous discussion on the chronology of negotiations, this interval can probably be further shortened to the period between early 1484 and 1490, but the *name* cannot be, in any case, precisely dated to 1488, as Hazai and others would have it. Without a specific *datatio*, one can date it to 1484, 1485, 1488, or even 1490. However, there are several details in this document that are worthy of further discussion and that, after careful analysis, may offer clues about the date of the compilation of the original document upon which this copy was based. Firstly, in comparison to Bayezid's Cyrillic *name* of 1498, this document, if it was indeed issued upon the continuation of the peace of '1483' in 1488, is strikingly different. The whole introductory section of the 1498 *'ahdname*, which confirmed the prolongation of the peace established in 1495, describes negotiations that led to its continuation and several times, and quite explicitly, refers to the peace of 1495. Its whole *raison d'être* is not only the peace of 1495, but the capitulations that were accepted and exchanged in that year, whose regulations continued to govern relations between the two countries. No new clauses were introduced in 1498, as those from 1495 were renewed. Nowhere does Bayezid, on the other hand, speak of an existing agreement in the '1488' *'ahdname*, but he does emphasize that matters of peace were negotiated and that many letters had been exchanged between the two sides. At the end of this process, the narrative continues, Matthias eventually decided to send his envoy Gál and make 'peace' and 'friendship.' The wording of this introductory narration is in this respect similar to Bayezid's *'ahdname* issued to Poland in 1489.<sup>260</sup> Furthermore, the comparison of conditions listed in this copy with the discourse of Bayezid's correspondence with Matthias from 1487 offers other clues. One of the clauses of the document states that should any harm be inflicted upon people travelling or trading between the two countries, misdeeds would be investigated by two judges appointed by each side and rectified in accordance with 'God's command.'

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<sup>259</sup> MNL OL DL 16245; cf. Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában* [Hungarian historical geography in the Hunyadi period], vol. 2 (Budapest: MTA, 1894), s.v. 'Poklostó,' p. 518.

<sup>260</sup> D. Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations*, doc. 2, pp. 200-1.

These officials would be stationed in Belgrade (the Hungarian representative) and Smederevo (the Ottoman representative). In his letter dated 2 January 1487, having complained about the behaviour of Hungarian captains along the frontier, Bayezid emphasized that

*i po prêge smo se uglavili i umirili i u kletôvnehъ knigah zapisali, sъ obeû stran megû nami koi lûdje hode, ako bi se komu koje zlo prilučilo, sudôm i pravdôm da se iznage, po zapovesti Bžîôm da se zlo tô predieše, onoga i zla radi mir da se ne raskine.*

[we had agreed and made peace and wrote down in the charters of oaths that, should any evil befall people that travel between us, this wrongdoing should be investigated through a court and justice, and punished in accordance with God's command, so that peace would not be broken because of this evil].<sup>261</sup>

He thus referred directly to the clauses of the treaty, and this clause is present in the copy of the *'ahdname*. All of this suggests that the treaty compiled and then copied by the Ottoman *divan-i hümayun kalemi* may have been older than 1488, or at least that this treaty, if it was indeed written down only in 1488, was at least partially based on a template that had already existed. There are further elements of the text that may clarify some of these issues. One of the clauses states that when the sultan's army wishes to engage in *akin* against *giaours* in other countries, it shall not pass through the king's lands without the king's knowledge. This requirement is strikingly similar to issues that Stephen Bátori claimed ruined the peace of 1478/1479, discussed earlier. In this letter that obviously preceded negotiations that led to this *'ahdname* or its template, Bátori further wrote to Ali Bey that Matthias was again ready to accept peace:

ako veliki crъ vašъ s ône(m) naregjenïemъ, kako je bilъ g(s)piъ kralъ s njegove(m) ôce(m), i ushokje mi(r) i priatel(s)tvo, i kraljeva e svtlo(s) gotova, k onomu i prъvomu naregjenïû, čo se je prъvo zapisalo i naredil, hokje se tvrđdo drъža(ti), ako kje i crъ drъžati, i ônoi isplъniti, takoi da bude megû nami mirъ, i istino priatel(s)tvo.

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<sup>261</sup> BAV, Ottob. gr. 469, pt. B; I. Biliarsky, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes,' p. 298.

[if your great emperor wishes peace and friendship in accordance with that arrangement that the lord king [had] with his father, the royal majesty is also ready to abide by that first arrangement that had been initially written down and commanded, if the emperor too abides by it, so that peace and true friendship may be between us.]

In other words, the king was happy to enter peaceful relations on specific terms, only if Bayezid gave up his father's requests which, according to Bátori, came after the treaty was concluded, i.e. that the Ottoman army passes freely through Matthias's domains, 'with or without the king's approval.'<sup>262</sup> If Bátori is to be trusted, and it seems pretty clear that both sides were well aware of what had been negotiated earlier and written in the treaty, then his claims have at least three further implications. It seems that this clause on the movement of Ottoman troops across Matthias's territories had either been completely absent from the initial agreement (with Mehmed) or, and this seems more probable with respect to the tone of Bátori's narrative, that the novelty was only Mehmed's request that his troops cross the country *freely* without Matthias's knowledge or consent. That this indeed may have been the case is further suggested by the king's letter to Mehmed that describes Davud's behaviour, where the king openly informed the sultan that he had allowed Davud to go through his territories into *akin* against Frederick's lands. Importantly, here the emphasis lays on reasons behind Matthias's tolerance towards Davud's intentions. He only approved of it when word came from Davud that he had been given a mandate from the sultan to attack Frederick.<sup>263</sup> Secondly, if this clause was indeed absent from previous treaties, which seems unlikely, then a compromise was established, whereby Bayezid's troops could cross Hungarian territories, but exclusively with Matthias's approval. And lastly, this suggests that the two sides came to the same or at least similar agreement both in the late 1470s and early 1480s, in accordance with Matthias's wish expressed by Bátori, that he was willing to enter an agreement only if the treaty that had been arranged with Bayezid's father was reintroduced. In other words, this means that some (if not all) of the clauses present in the copy of the *'ahdname* of '1488' were present in the earlier agreement, and possibly also in discussions that had been taking place in earlier years, throughout the 1460s and 1470s.

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<sup>262</sup> Н. Радочић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 1, pp. 362-3.

<sup>263</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 247, pp. 388-90.

In both of his editions of this document, György Hazai noted that a part of the clause that governed the passage of Ottoman troops across Hungary was subsequently crossed out, and asserted this occurred for reasons stemming from the political context of the period. This part states that just as Ottoman troops would be allowed to go through Matthias's lands, they would also be allowed to go across *yâhud Kara Bogdan ya Eflak* (or Moldavia or Wallachia).<sup>264</sup> While further assumptions as to the dating of this document may be drawn on the basis of Hazai's observations (that maybe this specific document was an altered copy of the '*ahdname*' of 1484, modified following the Ottoman capture of Kiliya and Akkerman), this problem is not relevant for my argument. The fact that most of the clauses of the document correspond to what we learned from Matthias's and Bayezid's correspondence and other analysed material shows, in my view, that this '*ahdname*' represents the content of Hungarian-Ottoman treaties throughout the 1480s, as well as, probably, from the earlier period. In other words, this document is a copy of the treaty, probably originally composed in Cyrillic script and Slavonic language, that had possibly in its entirety been used repeatedly between 1478 and 1490. But a lasting truce under the conditions listed in the '*ahdname*' seems to have been introduced for the first time only in 1485, possibly in September. Although both in the late 1460s and in the late 1470s two sides came close to ratifying a final treaty, it seems that it was only in 1484 and then 1485 (following the altercation around the two Moldavian forts) that the two princes managed to swear their oaths and give force to its clauses.

And it is the content, rather than chronology, that we are primarily interested in here. It is the content of the treaty that in itself, and through comparison with other material from the period, sheds light on practical arrangements that governed relations and life along the frontiers between the two states. Although very little is revealed in the treaty, a few things are discernible through careful analysis. According to the treaty, if either Matthias or Bayezid wished to send their 'envoys or men' (*elçileri yâhud adamları*) to either the Porte or Matthias's court, they would be allowed to travel without letters of safe conduct or other guarantees.<sup>265</sup> This clause is another piece of evidence that suggests that this treaty (or its majority) indeed corresponded to Matthias's treaty with Mehmed from 1478. Let us recall that in 1478, in his letter to the sanjak-bey of Smederevo, the king wrote that according to the *dispositio pacis* agreed between the two princes their envoys were allowed to 'travel freely, without any special safe conduct,' under

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<sup>264</sup> G. Hazai, 'A Topkapu Szeráj,' doc. 11, pp. 294-5; *idem*, 'Urkunde des Friedensvertrages,' p. 143, comm. *e*.

<sup>265</sup> G. Hazai, 'Urkunde des Friedensvertrages,' p. 143-4.

the protection and escort provided by the ‘voivodes’ in Smederevo and Belgrade.<sup>266</sup> This condition is then followed by a provision that states that people, especially merchants, may travel between the territories of the two countries, safe from any attack or damage which, should it befall them, would be rectified through legal means, rather than outright revenge. This clause, then, corresponds to Bayezid’s letter from January 1487. Investigations, as mentioned, would have been conducted by representatives of the two sides installed in Belgrade and Smederevo, and merchants were obliged to pay fees, tolls, and fares in accordance with the customs of the land. Finally, if one wanted to travel to either of the two countries, they were obliged to acquire a letter from either the sanjak-beys or the Hungarian *bans* stationed along the frontier (*uçda duran*) and then appear before the *bans* or beys of the other side. With the latter’s permission, they were then allowed to travel freely wherever they wanted.

With other clauses regulating the Ottoman troops’ crossing Hungarian territory and the rulers’ neutrality in conflicts with a third side, it is clear that the majority of the treaty focused on travel, especially of traders, across the border. Zsolt Simon had already discussed at some length Hungarian-Ottoman trade in this and later periods.<sup>267</sup> A further discussion on trade as such, therefore, will be left out of this study. There are several other problems of an administrative nature, however, that have not yet been discussed. Simon noted that regulations regarding trade and travel of merchants seem to have gradually relaxed as time went by, starting with trade restricted to specific points along the frontier, and eventually, by the sixteenth century, ending with free trade across the borders. This, in Matthias’s period, is exemplified by Újlaki’s Opojevci, the only market along the frontier that was to be introduced following an agreement with the Ottomans in 1467; then free travel and trade with the approval of captains in Belgrade (and Smederevo). Although Simon puts the latter only in 1488, this provision was probably established, as we have seen, already in 1478. While the treaty explicitly states that two investigators/judges that were to investigate any misconduct towards travellers had to be installed in Belgrade and Smederevo, there is no indication as to the identity of these men, nor their specific jurisdiction, nor the permanence of these posts. Very much like adaptations that followed the Venetian-Ottoman treaty of 1479, similarly vague in most of its clauses, further clarifications were required for the treaty to be applicable in reality. This, and the arbitrary

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<sup>266</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 281, p. 419; MZK, Mk-0000.009, fol. 210v.

<sup>267</sup> Zsolt Simon, ‘Magyarország és az Oszmán birodalom közötti kereskedelmi kapcsolatok a 16. század elején. A baricsi és kölpényi harmincadok forgalma’ [Trade relations between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The trade at the thirtieth customs posts of Barics and Kölpényi]. PhD dissertation (Budapest: ELTE, 2007); *idem*, ‘A baricsi és kölpényi harmincadok a 16. század elején’ [The thirtieth of Barics and Kölpény in the early sixteenth century], *Századok* 140 (2006): pp. 815-62.

reading of the treaty's clauses, was one of the reasons for Matthias's and Bayezid's Cyrillic correspondence that followed its ratification. The motive behind Bayezid's letter of January 1487 was exactly Matthias's quite blatant breach of the contract, of the clause that clearly states that harm committed against travellers would be dealt with in justice, rather than through vengeance. The letter speaks of the murder of Matthias's envoy in Smederevo in late 1486, clearly DMITAR JAKŠIĆ, whose death seems to have caused quite a violent reaction among the Hungarian nobility, especially those living along the frontier. According to a certain VUK KULUČEGOVIĆ, a Serb that seems to have been employed at Matthias's court (possibly in the Cyrillic section of his chancery) and worked as an Ottoman spy, when news of Jakšić's murder reached Matthias, he stood up and said that 'the sultan's *'ahd* is great, but pointless' (*Hünkârün 'ahdi ulu, amma abes*).<sup>268</sup> During a brief discussion with his lords (*beys*, as Vuk puts it), they hinted at the possibility of avenging their 'brother Jakšić.' With Matthias's consent or not, they apparently did this with the assault that prompted Bayezid's reaction in January 1487. The king, who allegedly even considered assassinating an Ottoman envoy as a form of retaliation, was in the wrong as far as Bayezid was concerned, acting against the provisions of the contract. But Matthias insisted upon another, albeit similar, arrangement. In his letters dated 8 and 25 June 1487, sent from Sopron and the camp beneath Wiener Neustadt, respectively,<sup>269</sup> Matthias complained about the behaviour of the sanjak-bey of Bosnia, claiming that he ravaged both Bosnia and Croatia; that he had openly said that he could not care less about Bayezid's commands, that he would do everything to fall fighting Matthias and his men, and that he would avenge his recent defeat near Knin. The king, furthermore, praised the behaviour of the bey in Smederevo, but repeated that 'many others, and especially this voivode of Bosnia does not miss an opportunity to go against peace, cordiality, and brotherhood that we share with your Highness.'<sup>270</sup> Matthias, therefore, had to continue complaining, despite the fact that, according to his letter, *ûr znaemo da smo tužbom dodijali vašoi visoti i ûr vekje sramujemo se poniki put tužiti vašoi visoti* (we [i.e. Matthias] know that we are boring you with our complaints, and we are sometimes ashamed to complain to your Highness). But what Matthias wanted was for Bayezid to send 'a good man, with full authority, to investigate and remedy harm and guilt,' so that 'malefactors who disregarded our (i.e. both Bayezid's and Matthias's) commands' may be punished, and 'peace and brotherhood' left unshaken. The king promised that he too would

<sup>268</sup> G. Hazai, 'Zur Rolle des Serbischen im Verkehr des Osmanischen Reiches mit Osteuropa im 15.-16. Jahrhundert,' *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 48 (1976): pp. 86-7.

<sup>269</sup> T. Gökbilgin, 'Korvin Mathias,' doc. 2, pp. 379-80; Н. Радојчић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 2, pp. 363-6.

<sup>270</sup> Н. Радојчић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 2, pp. 363-6.

send an authorized representative. In an undated letter, published by Hazai – another Ottoman *sûret* of a probably Cyrillic original – an Ottoman sultan (probably Bayezid) responded to a Hungarian king (probably Matthias) about things that resemble issues listed in the above letter.<sup>271</sup> It may be that this letter was a direct response to Matthias's complaints from the summer of 1487. In any case, the sultan acknowledged the king's complaints, and added that he had already tried to deal with incursions of Ottoman subjects into Hungary, punished perpetrators and ordered the return of stolen goods. He continues with complaints about Hungarian incursions and abductions, and claims that he had sent an *emin* earlier to deal with similar problems, as it would have been just that if Hungarians committed incursions, they also, just as Ottoman troops, be punished and recompense the damage. This *emin* informed the king of his mission, and waited for a long time for a Hungarian representative in the frontier region. Neither a response nor a Hungarian '*emin*' were dispatched from Matthias's court. The sultan finally wrote that he would punish the perpetrators and return stolen goods, but he expected the Hungarian side to reciprocate.

He claimed that 'since We strictly adhered to the treaty and friendship (*'ahd ve dostluk*),' this *emin* was sent to the frontiers. And this phrase introduces us to a significant administrative problem presented, between the lines, in the correspondence and the treaty. There is no way of saying whether the sultan in the original letter, and not in the translation, explicitly referred to the treaty when justifying the *emin*'s mission in the borderlands. On the other hand, Matthias does not refer to the treaty when he requests this man to be sent and when he suggests that this 'bipartisan,' collaborative institution deals with incursions. The king does say, in the letter dated 25 June, that he had already asked Bayezid to do this, but apparently no positive response was received. This correspondence proves to have been either a product of the treaty's vagueness, or attempts at its improvement (or both). Nowhere in the treaty are incursions dealt with. It is only travellers (apparently of all kinds) and traders that were to be protected, and only wrongdoers against these individuals that were to be punished. Incursions were not allowed and were not supposed to happen during the duration of the peace. This is precisely why Matthias complained about them and argued they are detrimental to the treaty. It is precisely why Bayezid too complained about Hungarian incursions. This is not only attested by the above, undated letter, but by Matthias himself, who in his letter from Wiener Neustadt acknowledges Bayezid's complaints about certain incursions from the area of

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<sup>271</sup> G. Hazai, 'Eine türkische Urkunde,' p. 337-9.

Szörény.<sup>272</sup> There existed, therefore, two separate legal issues. One problem was dealt with in the treaty, i.e. deeds committed against travellers and merchants who had every right to travel, provided they respected other stipulations. No such right was enjoyed, naturally, by armed troops raiding either territories. That is why this problem appeared only afterwards, and why the two rulers had to find a different legal remedy, since commands, as both Bayezid and Matthias confessed, apparently did not work. Men sent to adjudicate such misdeeds were, therefore, sent only occasionally, and were not the same as the two investigators that were to be installed in Smederevo and Belgrade. But even these, as it seems, rarely, if ever, did their job within the framework established in the treaty. There is no evidence that some sort of a permanent office was established in either of the two cities. It may be that this role was assigned to the Hungarian *ban* or captain of the *Partes Inferiores*, or even castellan/captain of Belgrade and the sanjak-bey of Smederevo. But this is not suggested by the text of the treaty, as it clearly distinguishes between these officials and two men that were to tackle these issues. That this office may have also been occasional is suggested by Matthias's letter dated 8 June 1487, where he claimed that he had instructed one of his officials to investigate the murder of a certain Jew, an Ottoman subject, locate his property, and recompense the damage. This official of his was identified in the copy of the letter as كينچ تار تو, i.e. *kinçtarto*, in other words 'treasurer' (*kinçstartó*).<sup>273</sup> At the time, the post of the king's chief treasurer was held by Urban Nagylucsei, the incumbent (elected) bishop of Eger.<sup>274</sup> It does not seem that the bishop was given this task due to the nature of his office.

Having discussed most of the treaty's provisions, there is only one, and probably the most important issue yet to be addressed. Recalling the process described at the beginning of this chapter, a series of activities that aimed at defining (in quite precise terms) the Venetian-Ottoman border following the treaty of 1479, we must search for answers about similar procedures along the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier. Matthias's administration certainly had some experience with similar issues, and obviously people who were up to the task to argue, in legal and historical terms, and perambulating state borders. During the crisis in Hungarian-Venetian relations in the 1480s that followed conflicts around the island of Krk and in Dalmatia, negotiations about state territories and historical rights took place both in Buda and in Dalmatia. Venetian and Hungarian representatives – *oratores super confinibus* - armed with

<sup>272</sup> Н. Радойчић, 'Пет писама,' doc. 2, pp. 363-6.

<sup>273</sup> T. Gökbilgin, 'Korvin Mathias,' doc. 2, pp. 379-80.

<sup>274</sup> N. Tóth et al. *Magyarország*, vol. 1, pp. 81, 130.



legal and historical arguments that even referred to the period of the Roman Empire, battled over the extent of territories of their respective homelands.<sup>275</sup> But there is no evidence that such a process ever took place between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire during Matthias's reign, at least not as detailed, that is, as Venetian-Ottoman bordering.

Later Hungarian-Ottoman treaties, those of 1503 and 1519, contain quite elaborate lists of the princes' possessions that were to be included in the truce. Apart from lands in general, such as Hungary, or Bohemia, or Bosnia, or Hercegovina, these lists contain individual castles located along the frontier that, together with their appurtenances as well as state boundaries, were to enjoy peace for a given period.<sup>276</sup> But where these *metae* of individual castles, located in Bosnia and along the Danube, or *confinis* and *hatari* (from Hung. *határ*) or *kraišta* (marches/frontiers) of certain lands listed especially in the treaty of 1519 were located is not specifically elaborated, nor, it seems, was this required. That similar lists, something resembling an Ottoman *hudud*- or *sinur-name* (lit. 'letter of boundaries') may have existed in earlier Hungarian-Ottoman treaties had been suggested by Kołodziejczyk. He imagined a separate list attached to the treaty of 1444, an idea that Papp subsequently criticized.<sup>277</sup> Indeed no trace exists of a specific list of possessions, domains, castles, and their boundaries in the treaty of Matthias and Bayezid. It seems that the generic first clause of the treaty covered the problem that later capitulations and *'ahdname*ler addressed in detail. The first clause of the treaty states that castles, forts, lands, and provinces of the king, as well as the sultan, would remain as they were, and no demolition is required.<sup>278</sup> This simple statement was apparently satisfactory to both sides, but raises further questions. One may argue that this apparent difference between the documents from Matthias's and later periods stems from differences in their political backdrop. Much like in the case of the Venetian treaty with the Porte of 1479,

<sup>275</sup> See: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 33, fol. 70r; reg. 29, fol. 122v-123v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 4, n. 9-13. Cf. Riccardo Predelli, ed., *I Libri Commemorativi della Repubblica di Venezia* [The *Libri Commemorativi* of the Republic of Venice] (Venice, 1901), doc. 189, pp. 243-4.

<sup>276</sup> For 1503, see: MNL OL DL 30498; J. von Hammer, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Pest, 1828): pp. 616-20; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca (bánság, vár és város) története (1450-1527)* [The history of the (banate, castle, and town) of Jajce], *Oklevelek*, doc. 106 pp. 167-70; For 1519: L. Nakaš, 'Bosanski pisar sultana Selima'; MNL OL DL 24393; L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 167, pp. 279-86; A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 818, pp. 626-8.

<sup>277</sup> S. Papp, 'Der ungarisch-türkische Friedensvertrag im Jahre 1444,' *Chronica* 1 (2001): pp. 67-78; esp. pp. 74-5; *idem*, 'II. Murád szultán és I. Ulászló lengyel és magyar király 1444. évi békekötése' [The peace treaty of sultan Murad II and Polish-Hungarian king Ladislas I in 1444], *Acta historica* 109 (1999): pp. 52-3. Further on the peace of 1444, see: Pál Engel, 'A szegedi eskü és a váradi béke. Adalék az 1444. év eseménytörténetéhez' [The oath of Szeged and the peace of Várad. A contribution to the history of events of 1444], in *Mályusz Elemér emlékkönyv*, ed. Éva Balázs et al. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), pp. 77-96; Gábor Ágoston, 'Az 1444. évi török követjárás (Adalék az 1444. évi török-magyar békekötés történetéhez)' [The Ottoman embassy in 1444 (A contribution to the history of the Ottoman-Hungarian peace of 1444)], *Történelmi szemle* 29 (1986): pp. 261-76.

<sup>278</sup> G. Hazai, 'Urkunde des Friedensvertrages,' p. 143.

the Hungarian treaties of 1503 and 1519 (as well as 1495 and 1498) were preceded by further Ottoman conquests along the Hungarian frontier, particularly in Bosnia.<sup>279</sup> The bordering that followed the Venetian-Ottoman conclusion of peace was needed precisely because of disagreements, sometimes very petty, on the status of conquered lands on both sides. This may, therefore, be the reason for the inclusion of individual lands and castles in later Hungarian-Ottoman treaties. But here lies the crucial problem. Neither during the reign of Vladislaus II nor the early reign of his son Louis (i.e. until 1519) have territorial changes along the Hungarian-Ottoman borderlands been as drastic as in the times of Matthias. It was in the early years of Matthias's reign that the most significant changes took place, prior to the Battle of Mohács in any case. Both the final fall of Serbia in 1459 and Bosnia in 1463 took place during Matthias's reign, as well as his only noteworthy attempt at (re)gaining ground beyond the boundaries of Hungary proper in 1464, when he retook most of what Ottoman troops had managed to occupy during the previous year.<sup>280</sup> Herzegovina too was lost during Matthias's reign (although it was far less connected to Hungarian administration than other borderlands), as well as several castles, including Počitelj on the Neretva in 1471.<sup>281</sup> How come, then, that such a significant change in the territorial-administrative character of the region, in fact the collapse of two or even three previous polities, did not require any perambulation or bordering? How come, furthermore, that the partition of Bosnia between the Ottomans and Hungarians, through the conflicts of the 1460s, was bereft of a legal epilogue, the establishment of a relatively clear-cut state border?

One thing worth bearing in mind is that in this period, both in Hungarian dealings with the Ottomans and Venetians as well as Venetian negotiations with the Porte, pre-defined territorial entities seem to have figured as the nucleus of territorial division. In other words, unless specific perambulation dictated different terms, and this occurred rarely, old boundaries defined by both documents and memory were the basis of subsequent bordering. As I have mentioned at the beginning, Venetian envoys were tasked with collecting information and evidence on existing divisions prior to the bordering of 1479, they argued against Ottoman interpretations of the distribution of territory, and even in Hungarian-Ottoman capitulations of 1503 and 1519, lands and castles had *metae* and confines that one can only assume were traditional. As we have seen, Hungarian-Ottoman negotiations more than once developed along

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<sup>279</sup> See an overview of Ottoman-Hungarian clashes after 1490 in T. Pálosfalvi's, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 284-444.

<sup>280</sup> For literature, see note 29.

<sup>281</sup> A detailed analysis of Herzegovina's position at the time see in B. Атанасовски. *Пад Херцеговине*.

these lines. Since at least the mid-1460s both the Ottomans and Hungarians had continually offered or requested territory in exchange for peace. Such offers were made in 1465, 1473, and apparently throughout the late 1470s, when Bosnia and/or Serbia were either requested by or offered to Matthias for peace. The latter is best attested in the oration of Hungarian representatives in Nuremberg in 1479, who clearly spoke of the Ottoman offer to relinquish *Regnum Bosne* (among other things) in exchange for peace and free passage through Hungarian territories.<sup>282</sup> The phrasing of this and similar offers not only points again to the idea of a ‘territorial inseparability’ of specific political entities rooted, apparently, in their traditional extent, but to the specific case of Hungarian-Ottoman geopolitics. Bosnia, in other words, was not Ottoman to offer, at least not the whole of *Regnum Bosne*, as its majority, as we shall see in detail further, was in Hungarian hands. In fact, *Regnum Bosne* was further integrated into the administrative system of the Hungarian realm after 1464, and had a king between 1471 and 1477 – Nicholas Újlaki.<sup>283</sup> But even Újlaki, just as Vuk Branković, the scion of the Serbian despots, in his own area, campaigned for the liberation of the remainder of Bosnia in the early 1470s. Records of the Venetian Senate show that he, *novus creatus rex Bossine*, as the Venetians called him, sent an envoy to Venice in December 1472 to request subsidies and support for the ‘acquisition of the said kingdom’ (i.e. Bosnia),<sup>284</sup> although he governed a far greater part of this kingdom than the Ottomans. In January 1474, the Senate was of an opinion that Duke Vlatko of Herzegovina, who sent envoys with similar requests, ought to *se intelligeret cum Serenissimo rege Bossine [et] Illustrissimo Boicho filio Illustrissimi despotis Servie, qui in eadem sunt navi, et non minore ardent desiderio recuperandorum statuum suorum* (communicate with the King of Bosnia and Vuk, the son of the Despot of Serbia, who are in the same boat and burn no less of desire for recovering their own states).<sup>285</sup> But why would one wish to ‘acquire’ or ‘recover’ what was already theirs? This peculiar situation is probably best explained by Tubero, a contemporary Ragusan who compiled his own voluminous *Commentaries* similar to those of Piccolomini.<sup>286</sup> At the beginning of his narrative,

<sup>282</sup> BSB, MS Clm 26604, fol. 9r; MS Clm 443, fol. 177r.

<sup>283</sup> A. Kubinyi, ‘Die Frage des bosnischen Königtums von Nikolaus Újlaky,’ *Studia Slavica Academiae Scientiarum Hungariae* 4 (1958): 373-84; D. Salihović, ‘An Interesting Episode: Nicholas of Ilok’s Kingship in Bosnia 1471-1477,’ unpublished MA Thesis (Budapest: CEU, 2016); cf. *idem*, ‘Exploiting the Frontier – A Case Study: King Matthias’s Corvinus and Nicholas of Ilok’s Endeavour in Late Medieval Bosnia,’ in *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations: Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, eds. Dženan Dautović, Emir Filipović, Neven Isailović (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), pp. 97-111.

<sup>284</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 179v-180r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 208.

<sup>285</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 26, fol. 60v-61r.

<sup>286</sup> Ludovicus Cerva Tubero, *Comentarii de temporibus suis*, ed. Vlado Rezar et al. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001). On Tubero, see: Stjepan Antoljak, ‘Crijević, Tuberon Ludovik’ in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, available at <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=3706>, accessed on 16 March 2020.

Tubero, in Humanist antiquary discourse, described Bosnia and its relation to Hungary, ending his notes thus:

[...] Quare occupato quoque a Turcis Illyrico, Hungaris domestico bello impeditis, Bossinensis regni titulum Hungarorum reges nequaquam deposuerunt, eum non minus recte nunc quam antea usurpantes, quandoquidem ductu regis Matthiae Chugniadis sedem Bosinensium regum, quam incolę Iaizam uocant, cum multis aliis oppidis de Turcis recuperarunt.<sup>287</sup>

[[...] Therefore, even when Illyricum (i.e. Bosnia) was occupied by the Turks, as Hungarians were hindered by civil war, Hungarian kings by no means gave up the title of the Kingdom of Bosnia, usurping it no less rightly now as they did before, as under the leadership of Matthias Hunyadi they regained from the Turks the seat of Bosnian kings, which residents call Jajce, as well as many other towns.]

Just above this comment, Tubero noted that:

Est regio Illyrici inter Valdanum, quem fluuium Hunnam uulgo uocant, et Drinum amnem sita, partim Hungaricae, partim Turcaicę ditionis, nunc Bossinae regnum nuncupatur.<sup>288</sup>

[The region of Illyricum, now known as the Kingdom of Bosnia, lies between the Valdanus, a river known commonly as Una, and the Drina, partly under Hungarian, partly under Turkish authority.]

And this hints at the stance of the two sides regarding their territorial arrangements along the frontier. Tubero's comments are further complemented by information, albeit second-hand, about Ottoman views on the Hungarian presence in Bosnia. While describing the sojourn of Hungarian envoys in Turkey discussed above, the *Historia Turchesca* narrates how the Ottoman side requested several fortresses from Matthias, as well as Jajce and the whole of Bosnia. The Ottomans claimed Matthias's presence in Bosnia was illegal, as Mehmed was the one who had 'hunted down' the king of Bosnia (in 1463). On these grounds that land belonged

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<sup>287</sup> L. C. Tubero, *Comentarii*, p. 23.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

to him.<sup>289</sup> Another undated Cyrillic letter, issued by Vuk Branković (d. 1485) during the early negotiations that preceded the truce of 1484 and addressed to Bayezid, contributes to this discussion. In it the Serbian (titular) despot informed the sultan of his readiness to mediate for peace between the two rulers, revealing the offer presented by the sultan. Bayezid was willing to give Vuk 'lands and fortresses' so that in this way Vuk 'would be between you (i.e. Bayezid) and the king's Majesty, just as our predecessors had been before us.' Further in the letter, Vuk rephrases the offer: '[...] may there be peace between you and true brotherhood and friendship, and we, standing between you two, would serve you just as our predecessors have served you and gave tribute, as long as you wish.'<sup>290</sup> This solution was evidently never applied, but was certainly on the table. Why this offer, that obviously came from Bayezid, was either rejected by Matthias or revoked by Bayezid remains a mystery. It could be that Bayezid requested Bosnia in return. However, considering the difficult situation Bayezid found himself in during the first years of his reign, when Cem jeopardized his rule and his potential alliance with the West loomed, this seems highly unlikely. As Bayezid intensively sought peaceful relations with European states in order to gain space for his reckoning with Cem and his supporters, it seems far more likely that this offer was put forward in an attempt to quickly acquire truce with Matthias.<sup>291</sup> After July 1482 and Cem's second and final flight from Ottoman domains, Bayezid's position improved. It could be, therefore, that this offer came very early in Bayezid's reign, probably during 1481. This is further suggested by Vuk's letter, where he noted that Bayezid had only recently 'sat on the throne of his father's Empire.'<sup>292</sup> Later, with changes in Bayezid's domestic situation, it may have indeed been withdrawn. It is certainly far more difficult to justify Matthias's potential unwillingness to accept this offer, obviously beneficial to Hungary.

If indeed no detailed bordering between Hungarian and Ottoman possessions similar to that between Venice and the Ottoman Empire took place, and it seems it did not, there are several conclusions that can be drawn from this discussion. Perambulations were either perceived as unnecessary or unwanted by either of the two, or both sides. Both Hungarian and Ottoman rulers clearly agitated for their rights on contested territories, primarily in Bosnia and, apparently, further to the east. Not only did Hungarians lay claim to Bosnia, but, according to

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<sup>289</sup> D. da Lezze, *Historia Turchesca*, p. 61.

<sup>290</sup> Н. Радојчић, 'Пет писама,' док. 1, pp. 353-4.

<sup>291</sup> Cf. Sydney N. Fisher, *Foreign Relations of Turkey, 1481-1512* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1948), pp. 21ff; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire 1300-1650. The Structure of Power* (Basingstoke: Pgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 37-8.

<sup>292</sup> Н. Радојчић, 'Пет писама,' док. 1, pp. 353-4.

the testimony of a Venetian secretary at Bayezid's court who witnessed the clashes of 1484, Matthias sent an ambassador to Bayezid with claims that *Licostomo* (here meaning Chilia) rightfully belonged to Hungary, despite the fact that voivode Stephen of Moldavia held it at the time.<sup>293</sup> Not without reason, furthermore, Matthias had both the king of Bosnia and the Despot of Serbia under his wing. The former was, in fact, perceived by contemporaries as a direct cause for the installation of an Ottoman Bosnian (anti-)king in the 1470s, when it was believed that 'the Turk made this new Christian king of Bosnia, because one part of Bosnia had been given by the king (i.e. Matthias) to Nicholas, his voivode, who also made him king of Bosnia. The Turk believed that the rest of Bosnia would more likely submit to a Christian, rather than a Turk, and that is why he made a Christian king.'<sup>294</sup> Unwillingness to delineate territories may have, thus, come out of the unwillingness to surrender claims to areas that both the Hungarians and Ottomans, on rather similar grounds, considered their own. While Hungarian claims were fittingly summarized by Tubero – and based on traditional overlordship of Hungarian kings over Bosnia (and other territories),<sup>295</sup> Ottoman arguments may best be depicted with the reasoning presented to Venetians during their bordering disputes. In April 1481, merely days before his death, Mehmed II issued a letter to the Venetian doge regarding disputed territories along the frontier. Concerning Poljica, a strip of land in the hinterlands of Split in Dalmatia that, as we shall see, would play a significant role in the borderlands, Mehmed claimed his men visited the area, and investigated the issue with the help of the sanjak-bey and the qadi of Herzegovina.<sup>296</sup> 'All men of the land came, great and small, and testified that Poljica had belonged to the Herceg, just as we write' – and he wrote that it had belonged to him for at least sixty years. Thus, continued Mehmed, just as he possessed other lands of the Duke (Herceg), Poljica too are rightfully his and not Venetian. This argument is strikingly similar to the one presented to the Hungarian legation about Bosnia following the victory over Uzun Hassan.

Another fact must be taken into consideration, namely a clear geographical difference between Bosnia and the remainder of the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier. As one may have already noticed, Bosnia is nowhere to be found in the treaty of the 1480s, where specific consideration is awarded only to Smederevo and Belgrade, in other words areas of the frontier

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<sup>293</sup> Giuseppe Calò, ed., *22 dispacci da Costantinopoli al Doge Giovanni Mocenigo* (Venezia: Corbo e Fiore, 1992), doc. 28a, pp. 124-8.

<sup>294</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc 219, pp. 316-18.

<sup>295</sup> On Hungarian-Bosnian relations in the period, see: Mladen Ančić, 'Od zemlje do kraljevstva. Mjesto Bosne u strukturi *Archiregnuma*' [From land to kingdom. The place of Bosnia in the structure of the *Archiregnum*], *Hercegovina* 1 (2015): pp. 9-88.

<sup>296</sup> A. Bombaci, 'Nuovi firmani,' doc. 12, pp. 316-18.

between the sanjak of Smederevo and the Hungarian Lower Parts. And there is a significant difference between these two regions. While central and eastern portions of the borderlands were clearly demarcated by the Danube, the river that had in previous times also figured as the frontier between Hungary and Serbia,<sup>297</sup> no such borderline, either historically justified or geographically potent, existed between Hungarian and Ottoman sectors in Bosnia. Only the Sava, further to the north, and in this period firmly in Hungarian hands, could have played a similar role. But the western borderlands possessed a specific characteristic of their own, an almost impenetrable chain of mountains that Miklós Mihály Nagy recently recognized as the true goal of Hungarian traditional efforts at establishing a belt of defensive ‘buffer’ polities.<sup>298</sup> I shall discuss this in detail in the following chapter, but it is important to emphasize that Nagy argued, quite successfully, that it was the foothills of Bosnia, rather than the Sava, that figured as a natural southern barrier of the Hungarian plain. On the other hand, contemporaries recognized that Bosnia was the key to western and northwestern regions of Italy and the Empire. Constantly, especially Italians, emphasized that should Ottomans manage to capture the Hungarian-controlled section of its territory, the rest of Europe would have been in far greater danger.<sup>299</sup> For Hungarians, after 1464 Bosnia indeed seems to have played a role of a true frontier, a special zone of conflict and defence that stood before Hungary proper as a remnant of the ‘buffer’ that once, at least nominally, surrounded the kingdom. Let us for now only recall that in April 1464, just after Matthias’s successes in Bosnia, his coronation decree proclaimed that no one was to be granted a postponement at octave courts, *nisi solum illis, qui castra in confinibus regni et signanter in regno Bozne tenerent* (except to those who guard castles in the kingdom’s frontiers, particularly in the Kingdom of Bosnia).<sup>300</sup> But it was a frontier that was not closed and that Hungarians, apparently, wished to expand, at least up to

<sup>297</sup> Cf. Miloš Ivanović, Neven Isailović, ‘The Danube in Serbian-Hungarian Relations in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries,’ *Tibiscum* 5 (2015): pp. 377-93.

<sup>298</sup> See: Miklós Mihály Nagy, ‘A Délvidék mint geopolitikai puffer’ [Délvidék as geopolitical buffer] in *A Délvidék történeti földrajza*, ed. Sándor Kókai (Nyíregyháza: Nyíregyházi Főiskola Földrajz Tanszéke, 2006), pp. 161-77; *idem*, ‘Magyarország hadtörténeti földrajza (A magyar hadtörténelem földrajzi alapjai)’ [Geography of military history of Hungary (The geographical basis of Hungarian military history)], unpublished PhD thesis (Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem Természettudományi Kar, 2014); János Szabó, ‘A déli végek védelme a késő középkorban: a modellező kutatói gondolkodás a földrajzi viszonyok tükrében’ [The defence of the southern regions in the middle ages: the scholar’s thinking in the lights of geographical conditions]. In *Őrzők vigyázatok a határra! Határvédelem, határőrizet, határvadászok a középkortól napjainkig*, eds. László Pósn et al. (Budapest: Zrínyi kiadó, 2017), pp. 253-61.

<sup>299</sup> Cf. Emir Filipović, ‘The Key to the Gate of Christendom? The Strategic Importance of Bosnia in the Struggle Against the Ottomans,’ in *The Crusade in the Fifteenth Century, Converging and Competing Cultures*, ed. Norman Housley (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 151-68.

<sup>300</sup> Ferenc Döry et al., eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae. Gesetze und Verordnungen Ungarns 1458–1490* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989), § VI, p. 144; cf. János M. Bak et al., eds., *Decreta Regni mediaevalis Hungariae/The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, vol. 3 (Los Angeles: Charles Schlacks, 1996), § VI, p. 19, but beware of the poor translation in this edition.

its traditional borders. It was simultaneously a basis for further claims, a defensive line, and a base for Hungarian incursions into Ottoman territory, particularly those of the early 1480s. It also took a far more complex role in internal Hungarian politics.

Ottomans had the same reasons. It does not seem, furthermore, that the resistance of the local Ottoman beys may have had anything to do with the sultan's unwillingness to delineate the border. By this time, the Ottoman administration in the area was organized around the the sanjaks of Herzegovina, Bosnia, Smederevo, and soon Zvornik.<sup>301</sup> Although in the early to mid-fifteenth century, when Ottomans established their first frontier regions in eastern Bosnia and in Serbia,<sup>302</sup> they too were governed by the hereditary uç beys, the reorganization of the Ottoman administration, particularly under Mehmed II, marginalized their once central role in the Ottoman administration, warfare, and frontiers.<sup>303</sup> Best described by Lowry as merely commanders of *akinji* or (partly Christian) raiders interested primarily in booty, and not proselytism, themselves largely descendants of Christians of the early Ottoman 'predatory confederacy,' the *ghazi* beys were here, just as elsewhere, diminished to loyal administrative servants during a process that finally allowed the House of Osman to acquire ultimate authority within their polity.<sup>304</sup> Still, both in Mehmed's and Bayezid's reigns they occupied governing positions in the sanjaks adjacent to Hungary, though with much less autonomy and power, and with no prospect of inheritance.<sup>305</sup> This peculiar group, a remnant of a raiding alliance that was the early Ottoman 'state', throughout the fifteenth century expressed their dissatisfaction with

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<sup>301</sup> See: Hazim Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk* [Eyalet of Bosnia] (Sarajevo: Oslobođenje, 1959); *idem*, 'Управна подјела југословенских земаља под турском владавином до Карловачког мира 1699. год.' [The administrative structure of Yugoslav lands during the Ottoman rule until the Peace of Karlowitz in 1699], *Godišnjak Društva istoričara BiH* 4 (1952): pp. 171-204. Also: [Ема Миљковић-Бојанић] Ема Миљковић-Бојанић, *Смедеревски санџак 1476-1560. Земља - насеља - становништво* [The Sanjak of Smederevo 1476-1560. The land – the settlements – the people] (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 2004).

<sup>302</sup> H. Šabanović, 'Pitanje turske vlasti u Bosni do pohoda Mehmeda II 1463. g.' [The question of Ottoman rule in Bosnia before the 1463 campaign of Mehmed II], *Godišnjak Društva istoričara BiH* 7 (1955): pp. 37-51. For a recent reassessment of the issue, see: Nenad Filipović, 'Da li je postojalo samostalno osmansko bosansko krajište 1448.-1463. godine?' [Was there a separate Ottoman march in Bosnia between 1448 and 1463?], *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 64 (2014): pp. 167-206.

<sup>303</sup> For an overview see: G. İşıksel, 'Ottoman Power Holders in the Balkans (1350 – 1580): A Case of Upward and Downward Elite Mobility' in *Medieval Bosnia and South-East European Relations: Political, Religious, and Cultural Life at the Adriatic Crossroads*, ed. Dženan Dautović et al. (Amsterdam-Leeds: Amsterdam University Press-Arc Humanities Press, 2019), pp. 85-95.

<sup>304</sup> Heath Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003); cf. Mariya Kiprovska, 'The Mihaloğlu Family: Gazi Warriors and Patrons of Dervish Hospices,' *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* 32 (2008): pp. 193-222, as well as Nikolay Antov, *The Ottoman "Wild West."* *The Balkan Frontier in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>305</sup> In addition to the above, see: [Olga Zirojević] Олга Зиројевић, 'Смедеревски санџакбег Али-Бег Михалоглу' [Ali-Beg Mihaloglu, the sanjak-bey of Smederevo], *Zbornik za istoriju Matice srpske* 3 (1971): pp. 9-27. Cf. a German, far shorter, but better known version of this study: *idem*, 'Der Sandschakbey von Mederevo Ali-Bey Mihaloğlu,' in *VII. Türk Tarih Kongresi*, vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1973), pp. 567-77.



a new course of Ottoman domestic politics. Even in this time, as Kafadar emphasized, they openly agitated for their specific status, probably best exemplified by an anecdote noted by Aşıkpaşazade.<sup>306</sup> When Mehmed arrived before Belgrade in 1456 and there was talk among his captains of crossing the Danube to improve the position of the Ottoman army, the Rumelian beys disagreed with that, because (they said) ‘if Belgrade is captured, there would be nothing else left for us but to plow the land, as [they continued] there are no enemies left elsewhere.’ Aşıkpaşazade further observed that ‘they did all kinds of tricks to keep the city from falling. They did not make an effort to help taking the city.’ A similar frontiersmen’s ethos is probably what in the 1480s, following the conclusion of the treaty between Matthias and Bayezid, motivated the sanjak-bey of Bosnia to continue with his incursions. As Matthias put it, this bey was willing to give everything, even to die to avenge his defeat beneath Knin in Croatia, disregarding both the treaty and Bayezid’s commands.<sup>307</sup> Again, interestingly, it was the sanjak-bey of Smederevo that Matthias praised for his compliant behaviour.

Ottoman incursions into Venetian domains practically ceased after the early 1480s,<sup>308</sup> and Hungary was also largely spared after 1483.<sup>309</sup> In other words, regardless of the model of the treaty, or the demarcation of the border, incursions, even if not completely prevented, were a far rarer occurrence. Even if frontiersmen, maybe even on both sides, agitated against the closing of the frontier, it was not the line, either demarcated in the terrain or described on paper, that possessed the legal power to prevent warfare. The division of possessions as such, precisely what the Venetian-Ottoman bordering was, could not have implicitly prohibited or halted incursions. It was the truce, however, that prohibited incursions (although not prevented, as shown by Matthias’s and Bayezid’s correspondence). Where the demarcation could have been an issue, therefore, is when it meant relinquishing claims, as it did for Venetians in 1479. The Venetians also had apparently different goals than Hungarians might have had. As Maria Pedani put it in her study on Venetian-Ottoman frontiers, ‘the very nature of [Venetian] properties, long and narrow areas, squeezed between the sea waves and an increasingly

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<sup>306</sup> Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 147; Aşıkpaşazade’s story in: [Gliša Elezović] Глиша Елезовић, ‘Турски извори за историју Југословена’ [Turkish sources for the history of the Yugoslavs], *Братство* 26 (1923): p. 76.

<sup>307</sup> Н. Радојчић, ‘Пет писама,’ doc. 2, pp. 363-6.

<sup>308</sup> Cf. M. Pedani, ‘Turkish Raids in Friuli at the End of the Fifteenth Century’ in *Acta viennensia ottomanica: Akten des 13. CIEPO-Symposiums* (Vienna: Institut für Orientalistik, 1999), pp. 287-91; also Bogumil Hrabak, ‘Turske provale i osvajanja na području današnje severne Dalmacije do sredine XVI stoleća’ [Turkish incursions and conquest in the area of present-day northern Dalmatia until mid-sixteenth century], *Radovi Instituta za hrvatsku povijest* 19 (1986): pp. 69-100; cf. K. Pust, ‘Vpliv vojaških spopadov.’

<sup>309</sup> T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, p. 276-7.

dangerous enemy, led Venetians to want a border. It was a vital need for the survival of the Venetian *Stato da Mar*; in fact, the emperor, who ruled a vast empire from the heart of Europe, did not feel similarly, and could allow for the existence of a zone of uncertainty along its margins.<sup>310</sup> And so too could Matthias. Bosnia, as much as perceived as a possession of the Hungarian crown, was but a buffer that mitigated Ottoman threat immediately following Mehmed's swift conquest in 1463. Further to the east the Danube and partly the Sava figured as borders anyway. But what perambulations, negotiations, and demarcations seem to have been was a step that neither side needed or indeed wanted.

Most importantly, bordering between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, similar to that between Venice and the Ottomans, seems to have been left out primarily due to the legal nature of Hungarian-Ottoman arrangements. Unlike the Venetian-Ottoman peace of 1479, it does not seem that any of Matthias's treaties with either Mehmed or Bayezid introduced indefinite peace and put an end to warfare. They seem to have indeed been only truces, temporary peace, which were aimed at establishing relatively peaceful coexistence along the frontiers between the two polities, but did not definitely end the hostilities. War was expected to continue following the short-term truces that were apparently a part of short-term policies of both sides. Further elaborate diplomatic missions and political agreements were therefore left out of Hungarian-Ottoman dealings. That is why in 1488 Beltrando Costabili wrote about an Ottoman legation that visited Matthias to conclude a truce that was to be observed as peace.<sup>311</sup> For the same reason Bonfini wrote that in 1490 the Turks returned, not to prolongue truce anymore, but to request peace.<sup>312</sup> For all (or any) of these reasons, demarcation of fixed borders was not a part of Hungarian-Ottoman treaties in Matthias's times. And throughout the period, the two polities met at ill-defined frontiers.

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<sup>310</sup> M. Pedani, *Dalla frontiera al confine* [From frontier to border] (Rome-Venice: Herder- Università Ca' Foscari, 2002), p. 40.

<sup>311</sup> ASMo, ASE, Cancelleria, Carteggio ambasciatori, b. 2, 19/3, 18.

<sup>312</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/8, p. 158.



## COMPOSITION AND EXTENT OF HUNGARIAN SOUTHERN BORDERLANDS AND THEIR ROLE IN MATTHIAS'S DEFENSIVE SYSTEM

### Introductory remarks

The extent of Hungarian borderlands towards the possessions of the Ottoman Empire, especially in Bosnia, was vaguely defined by a series of strongholds located in the territorial 'buffer' that extended beyond the river Sava, deeper into the Dinaric Alps and towards the Adriatic. Viewed as a continuation of King Sigismund's anti-Ottoman policies,<sup>313</sup> Matthias's possessions along this frontier have long been interpreted as a specific 'southern defensive system,' a well-organized, planned, and firmly controlled complex of 'border castles' (often called *végvárak*, sometimes *határvárak*) and corresponding administrative and military structures that together provided elastic defence to Hungary.<sup>314</sup> The dominant interpretation of this defensive strategy was introduced in a series of studies by Ferenc Szakály on the Battle of Mohács, the chronology of the Hungarian-Ottoman conflict, and, naturally, on the 'Hungarian-

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<sup>313</sup> József Deér, 'Zsigmond király honvédelmi politikája' [King Sigismund's defensive policy], *Hadtörténelmi közlemények* 37 (1936), pp. 1-57, 169-202; P. Engel, 'Ozorai Pipo. Ozorai Pipo emlékezete' in *idem*, *Honor, vár, ispánság* (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), pp. 247-301; Erik Fügedi, *Castle and Society in Medieval Hungary (1000-1437)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986), pp. 123-47; Elemér Mályusz, 'A négy Tallóci fivér' [The four Tallóci brothers], *Történelmi Szemle* 23 (1980): pp. 531-76; *idem*, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387-1437* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), pp. 128-66; F. Szakály, *A mohácsi csata*; *idem*, 'The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System,' pp. 141-58; G. Rázsó, 'A Zsigmond-kori Magyarország és a török veszély (1393-1437)' [Hungary during the reign of King Sigismund and the Ottoman peril], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 20 (1973), pp. 403-41; *idem*, 'Military Reforms in the Fifteenth Century' in *A Millennium of Hungarian Military History*, eds. László Veszprémy, Béla Király (Brooklyn: Brooklyn College Press, 2002), pp. 54-82

<sup>314</sup> L. Fenyvesi, 'A temesközi-szörénységi végvárvidék funkcióváltozásai (1365-1718)' [The changes in function of border fortresses in Temesköz and Severin (1385-1718)]. In *Végvárak és régiók a XVI-XVII. században*, eds. Tivadar Petercsák, Jolán Szábo (Eger: Heves megyei múzeum, 1993), pp. 235-287; A. Kubinyi, 'A Mohácsi csata és előzményei' [The Battle of Mohács and its background], *Századok* 115 (1981): pp. 66-107; *idem*, 'Magyarország déli határvárai a középkor végén' [Hungarian border castles at the end of the middle ages], *Várak a későközépkorban - Die Burgen im Spätmittelalter. Castrum Bene* 2 (1990): pp. 65-76; Géza Pálffy, 'The Origins and Development of Border Defence System Against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (Up to the Early Eighteenth Century)' in *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, eds. Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 3-70; Gyula Rázsó, 'Hunyadi Mátyás török politikája.' [Matthias Hunyadi's Turkish politics], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 22 (1975): pp. 305-48; *idem*, 'The Mercenary Army of King Matthias Corvinus' in *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi: War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, eds. János Bak, Béla Király (Brooklyn: Brooklyn College Press, 1982), pp. 125-140; *idem*, 'Mátyás hadászati tervei és a realitás' [Strategical plans of king Matthias and reality], *Hadtörténelmi közlemények* 103 (1990): pp. 1-30; F. Szakály, *A mohácsi csata*; *idem*, 'Phases of Turco-Hungarian Warfare Before the Battle of Mohács (1365-1526),' *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 33 (1979): 65-111; *idem*, 'The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System and its Collapse'; *idem*, Pál Fodor, 'A kenyérmezői csata (1479. Október 13.)' [The Battle of Kenyérmező (13 October 1479)], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 111 (1998): pp. 309-48; Zoltán Tóth, *Mátyás király idegen zsoldosserege (A fekete sereg)* [King Matthias's foreign mercenary army (The Black Army)] (Budapest: Stádium, 1925); L. Veszprémy, 'Szabács ostroma (1475-1476)' [The siege of Šabac] *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 122 (2009): pp. 36-61.

Croatian border defence system' itself.<sup>315</sup> There, Szakály claimed that the strategy of Matthias's era cannot be viewed separately from Sigismund's earlier efforts, but as their continuation and improvement that eventually led to the establishment of a defensive system that was based upon two lines of fortresses stretching across the Balkans along a northeast-southwest axis, between Szörény and Klis, the Danube and the Adriatic, through Bosnia and Croatia. Both Szakály's and later studies, primarily that of Géza Pálffy, established that at least four crucial changes that took place during Matthias's reign contributed to the evolution of this system towards its classic, 'Hunyadi' form.<sup>316</sup> This was the (partial) recapture of Bosnia in 1463/1464, the capture of Šabac in 1476, the joining of the *banates* of Croatia and Slavonia in 1476, and the introduction of the captaincy of the 'Lower Parts' in 1479. According to this view, Matthias thus organized a defensive wall that directly faced not only Ottoman territory, but the direction of Ottoman expansion into Europe. But while this interpretation suits well modern concepts of space, especially its two-dimensional cartographic representations, little in the way of considerations of the geographical layout of the Hungarian 'buffer' ever influenced it. Although accepted, Szakály's 'thesis' is lacking with respect to the geography and geopolitics of Matthias's southern frontier. In addition, the spatial distribution, locations, and identification of its strongholds as well as the chronology of the system can also be further elucidated. A detailed analysis of the composition and geographical background of Matthias's possessions along the frontier will nuance the traditional view that Matthias's system of defensive castles was largely a solid creation that was in place throughout his reign, comprising of a number of well-known forts (Belgrade, Šabac, Srebrenik, Jajce, Senj, Knin, and Klis), providing frontal defence to Hungarian territories in their background. How this system allegedly worked, according to such views, was summarized by Bonfini. Writing about the early Jagiellonian, rather than Matthias's Hungary, he noted: *Quibus de rebus* [i.e. an Ottoman attack and organization of defence] *Rex in eam spem venerat, se si arma inferre Turcae perrexisset, dum primis Regni arcibus expugnandis tempus tererent, exercitum sexaginta*

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<sup>315</sup> F. Szakály, *A mohácsi csata*; *idem*, 'Phases of Turco-Hungarian Warfare'; *idem*, 'The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System'; F. Szakály, P. Fodor, 'A kenyérmezei csata.'

<sup>316</sup> Cf. G. Pálffy, 'The Origins and Development of Border Defence System,' or *idem*, 'A török elleni védelmi rendszer szervezetének története a kezdetektől a 18. század elejéig,' *Történelmi Szemle* 38 (1996): pp. 163-217. See also: R. Horváth, 'The Castle of Jajce in the Organization of the Hungarian Border Defence System under Matthias Corvinus,' in *Stjepan Tomašević (1461.–1463.) – slom srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva*, ed. Ante Birin (Zagreb-Sarajevo: Hrvatski institut za povijest- Katolički bogoslovni fakultet u Sarajevu, 2013), pp. 89-98.

*millium hominum facile duorum mensium spacio contracturum*.<sup>317</sup> That this may have been a valid point, but utterly misunderstood, I shall discuss further below.

Let us for now further note that Szakály's ideas have already faced criticism, particularly with regard for his disregard of geography.<sup>318</sup> However, little of this criticism contributed to the overarching view of Matthias's policies along the frontier.<sup>319</sup> In recent years, the best developed and the most stimulating criticism has been coming from Miklós Mihály Nagy and his own geographically and geopolitically oriented views on Hungarian southern 'buffers,' i.e. systems of political and military influence that provided defence to the plains of Hungary proper.<sup>320</sup> Nagy's views consider complex questions related to medieval defensive strategies and geographical and geopolitical conditions these strategies were influenced by, including implications of characteristics that shaped the geostrategic importance of the Balkans from late antiquity to the period of Hungarian-Ottoman conflicts in the late Middle Ages. Focusing on the characteristics of the terrain of the Balkans and on the great rivers, particularly the Danube and the Sava, Nagy especially highlighted the importance of the Dinarides (akin to the Alps in the west and the Carpathians in the east) in the defence of the Hungarian low plains. With no control over the practically impassable mountainous areas of Bosnia and Croatia, to paraphrase him, no Hungarian king could have effectively defended Hungary. Nagy's comments resonate in facts of history both preceding and following Matthias's age. Let alone Sigismund or the Angevine kings of Hungary, who invested significant effort in controlling these natural barriers, even the Hungarian frontier facing the Byzantine Empire, another south-eastern foe that traced paths of expansion later followed by the Ottomans, converged towards similar, if not identical points along the Danube near Belgrade and the mountains of the Western Balkans.<sup>321</sup> No wonder, furthermore, that it was the Danube that had to be surpassed

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<sup>317</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 5/3, p. 234.

<sup>318</sup> See a recent summary of discussions on Szakály's views in János Szabó, 'A déli végek védelme a késő középkorban: a modellező kutatói gondolkodás a földrajzi viszonyok tükrében' [The defence of the southern regions in the middle ages: the scholar's thinking in the lights of geographical conditions]. In *Őrzők vigyázzatok a határra! Határvédelem, határőrizet, határvadászok a középkortól napjainkig*, eds. László Pócs et al. (Budapest: Zrínyi kiadó, 2017), pp. 253-61.

<sup>319</sup> One of the reasons for the success of Szakály's ideas (if not the sole reason) is that both his studies on the course of Hungarian-Ottoman conflict and the Hungarian defensive system had (also) been published in English. Disregard for primarily Hungarian scholarship resulted, for example, with surprisingly poor premises to James D. Tracy's *Balkan Wars: Habsburg Croatia, Ottoman Bosnia, and Venetian Dalmatia, 1499-1617* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), that would certainly reach a far greater audience than anything written in either Hungarian or other languages of local historians, far superior in their understanding of the history of these areas.

<sup>320</sup> M. M. Nagy, 'A Délvidék mint geopolitikai puffer'; *idem*, 'Magyarország hadtörténeti földrajza.'

<sup>321</sup> Cf. Ferenc Makk, *The Árpáds and the Comneni. Political Relations between Hungary and Byzantium in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989); Paul Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan Frontier. A Political Study of the Northern Balkans, 900-1204* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Also: J. Szabó,

by the Ottoman army, so that it could march towards Mohács and later deeper into Hungary.<sup>322</sup> Terrain dictated political relations in the region to a significant extent.

Relying significantly on Nagy's analysis of the relief and geography of Matthias's borderlands between Belgrade and the Adriatic, I will try to shed further light on the structure of the defensive system and its dependence, or relation, to relief. But firstly, in the paragraphs that follow, I will identify and locate all frontier castles that King Matthias had included into his 'buffer' towards the Ottoman Empire, as much as all available, published and unpublished, sources allow. Closely related to this task is chronology which I will clarify to show how, and when, Matthias's system developed and changed. Lastly, and most importantly, I will analyse in detail reasons for the king's acquisition of certain areas and forts along the frontier. I shall thus try to show that not only did different sections of Hungarian borderlands have different roles (a part of which had nothing to do with defence against the Ottomans), but that a complex political situation in the area of the emerging *triplex confinium*, involving at least one other agent – Venice - largely dictated the king's motivation for the acquisition of at least a third of the castles that are traditionally considered to be a part of the 'southern defensive system.'

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*Háborúban Bizánccal: Magyarország és a Balkán a 11-12. században* [In war with the Byzantium: Hungary and the Balkans in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries] (Budapest: Corvina, 2013).

<sup>322</sup> See: Géza Perjés, *The Fall of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary: Mohács 1526 - Buda 1541* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); J. Szabó, *A mohácsi csata* [The Battle of Mohács] (Budapest: Corvina, 2006); *idem*, *Mohács: régi kérdések – új válaszok. A Magyar Királyság hadserege az 1526. évi mohácsi csatában* [Mohács: old questions – new answers. The army of the Kingdom of Hungary at the Battle of Mohács in 1526] (Budapest: Hadtörténeti intézet és múzeum-Line Design, 2015).

## Bosnia

Lajos Thallóczy's monograph on Jajce, a study now more than a century old, still figures as the only detailed analysis of the composition of the Hungarian *banate* of Jajce/Bosnia following Matthias's counterattack of 1463.<sup>323</sup> Apart from the all-important *diplomatarium* (edited largely by Sándor Horváth), the study also includes a list of castles that belonged to the *banate*, without distinguishin between Matthias's and later periods. The list does not always contain evidence, it is long out-dated, lacks several forts and includes others without proof. Nevertheless, it must be a starting point for any investigation of the composition of Hungary's borderlands of the late fifteenth century.<sup>324</sup> No such lists exist for other parts of the frontier, either towards the sea or towards Belgrade. It is our current task to identify and locate all forts that entered the system, as well as to date their acquisition by the king. The first significant event that altered the frontier was the Ottoman conquest of the Kingdom of Bosnia (and parts of Herzegovina), and Matthias's response in 1463. Territorial changes that took place then would define the geopolitics of the two opposing sides for more than half a century.

Matthias was certainly pleased with his actions in Bosnia in the late 1463.<sup>325</sup> Immediately after his return to Slavonia from the Bosnian campaign, exhilarated about the coronation that was to follow as his negotiators had only recently reacquired the Holy Crown from Frederick III,<sup>326</sup> the king sent his invitations throughout the kingdom, setting the date of the coronation to March 1464.<sup>327</sup> Matthias's narrative started with his latest feat, relating his coronation directly to successes in Bosnia. 'Now that things regarding the reacquisition of our Kingdom of Bosnia, that had been unfortunately lost, have with God's grace ended favourably,' wrote the king, it was time for his coronation. Bonfini, his court historian, who did not witness the king's siege of Jajce, noted that:

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<sup>323</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*.

<sup>324</sup> Recently, Jelena Mrgić made a list in her monograph on the 'Donji Kraji,' an area largely corresponding to the Hungarian '*banate* of Jajce.' It is largely based on Thallóczy's results, with no significant contributions. See: [Jelena Mrgić] Јелена Мргић, *Доњи Краји. Крајина средњовековне Босне* [Donji Kraji. The march of medieval Bosnia] (Belgrade-Banja Luka: Filozofski fakultet u Beogradu-Filozofski fakultet u Banjaluci-Istorijski institut u Banjaluci, 2002), pp. 122-32; cf. *idem*, *Северна Босна, 13.-16. век* [Northern Bosnia, thirteenth to sixteenth centuries] (Belgrade: Istorijski institut, 2008).

<sup>325</sup> For a recent analysis of Matthias's campaign of 1463, see T. Pálósfalvi's, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 208-21.

<sup>326</sup> See: K. Nehring, *Matthias Corvinus, Kaiser Friedrich III. und das Reich*, pp. 13-23.

<sup>327</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca, oklevelek*, doc. 15, pp. 18-9; MNL OL DL 203552.



‘When Matthias returned to Buda, with Jajce and a large part of Bosnia captured [...], indeed nothing had pleased him as much as the thought of a legitimate coronation.’<sup>328</sup>

The victory at Jajce may have even played a certain ceremonial role at the coronation, as Bonfini claims that ‘*Arambechus* (Haram-bey, the commander of the defences of Jajce during Matthias’s campaign) followed the king [to Buda] with two hundred cavalry, and adorned the coronation with evidence of the recent victory.’<sup>329</sup>

While still in Slavonia on their return trip from Bosnia, the king’s soon-to-become chancellor, John Vitéz, compiled a letter in Matthias’s name addressed to the pope in January 1464.<sup>330</sup> The letter contained the king’s account of events that had been taking place in Bosnia during the preceding months. With Jajce in Hungarian hands, claimed the king, many other castles surrendered. Although Matthias believed that by that time (January 1464) very few or none of the Bosnian castles would have remained in Ottoman hands, a harsh winter thwarted his efforts, and ‘merely’ sixty or so forts changed hands. None, apart from Jajce, were named in this letter. Bonfini himself, certainly well acquainted with both the narratives that circulated around Matthias’s court and documents of the king’s administration, noted that further twenty-seven *oppida* had been captured by Matthias’s troops.<sup>331</sup> Another contemporary source, the *Historia Turchesca*, whose authorship in this part is still rather vague,<sup>332</sup> claims Matthias captured Jajce and ten other castles in Bosnia.<sup>333</sup> Jan Długosz was even less generous, stating in his Chronicle that it was merely five fortresses, Jajce presumably included, that the king managed to acquire.<sup>334</sup> Tubero, who was around five at the time of Matthias’s counteroffensive, merely noted that Jajce and ‘many other *oppida*’ were regained.<sup>335</sup> In a contemporary letter, sent in November 1463 from Tata, while Matthias was still in Bosnia with his army, John

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<sup>328</sup> *Capta Jayza et magna Bosniae parte, postquam Matthias [...] Budam pervenit, nihil profecto Corvinae magnanimitati fuit antiquius, quam de legitima coronatione cogitare.* A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 1/1, p. 1.

<sup>329</sup> *Arambechus regem secutus cum CC equitibus coronationem eius recentis victoriae testimonio decoravit.* A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 3, 3/10, p. 246.

<sup>330</sup> The letter has been published several times, best in: *Johannes Vitéz de Zredna opera quae supersunt*, ed. Iván Boronkai (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980), p. 213-6. Cf. editions in: V. Fraknói, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae regis epistolae*, doc. 19, pp. 25-9; *idem, Mátyás király levelei*, doc. 36, pp. 45-9; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 14, pp. 13-8.

<sup>331</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 3, 3/10, p. 246.

<sup>332</sup> Cf. P. MacKay, ‘The Content and Authorship.’

<sup>333</sup> D. da Lezze, *Historia Turchesca*, p. 32.

<sup>334</sup> Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, vol. 9, book 12 (Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 2005), p. 70.

<sup>335</sup> Tubero, *Commentarii*, p. 23.

Rozgonyi,<sup>336</sup> the king's *tárnokmester*, informed Ulrich von Grafeneck of events that had been unfolding along the southern Hungarian frontier.<sup>337</sup> Rozgonyi especially emphasized news that were delivered by an envoy who had only recently returned from Matthias. He claimed that, while Jajce remained to be captured, the *civitas* of Zvečaj and many other castles had already fallen into the king's hands. Rozgonyi was so impressed by Matthias's advance, in fact, that he was convinced the king would soon capture the whole of the Kingdom of Bosnia. There were some from the region, however, who looked upon the king's endeavour anxiously, as they saw Matthias's contingent to be far too small to be able to successfully perform the task the king put before them.<sup>338</sup> Still, Matthias persevered and succeeded in regaining most of the Bosnian forts that the Ottoman had taken during the spring of 1463. The next year, Matthias added further castles in north-eastern Bosnia.<sup>339</sup> How many had fallen into his hands, however, was obviously a vague matter.

Jajce, the castle that Rozgonyi compared to the Hungarian Buda<sup>340</sup> and Girardo dei Colli saw as a centre of an effective control over Bosnia,<sup>341</sup> was certainly in Hungarian hands by the end of December and would remain the centre of Hungarian Bosnia long after Matthias's death.<sup>342</sup> It would also figure as the administrative centre of Nicholas Újlaki's kingship in Bosnia during the 1470s.<sup>343</sup> At approximately the same time, the king also took the castle of Zvečaj. Not only is this confirmed by Rozgonyi, but the well-known Ottoman renegade, Konstantin Mihailović, who according to his own account was the commander of the janissary

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<sup>336</sup> His name, and office, were written in German, which caused some problems with the identification of the author. Emir Filipović recently failed to recognize the Hungarian individual behind the German *Iohannes von Rossingen, thornantmeyster*, although it had already been suggested by Zoltán Tóth in 1934 that this may have, in fact, been Rozgonyi. See: Z. Tóth, 'A huszárok eredetéről' [The origin of the Hussars], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 35 (1934): p. 151, fn. 63; cf. F. Szakály, 'Remarques sur l'armée de Iovan Tcherni,' *Acta historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1978): p. 60, fn. 74. For Filipović's views see: *idem*, 'Minor est Turchorum potentia, quam fama feratur... Contributions to the History of Bosnia in the Second Half of 1463' in *Pad Bosanskog kraljevstva 1463. godine*, ed. Neven Isailović (Belgrade-Sarajevo-Banja Luka: Istorijski institut Beograd-Filozofski fakultet u Sarajevu-Filozofski fakultet u Banjoj Luci, 2015), pp. 195-226. Rozgonyi was correctly identified by Stanko Andrić in 'Rijeka Sava kao protuturski bedem (do pada Bosne)' [The river Sava as a bulwark against the Turks (until the fall of Bosnia)] in *Rijeka Sava u povijesti*, ed. Branko Ostmajer (Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2015), pp. 227ff.

<sup>337</sup> A. Bachmann, *Urkundliche Nachträge*, pp. 27-8.

<sup>338</sup> Cf. Giuseppe Praga, *Testi volgari spalatini del trecento* [Spalatine vernacular texts of the fourteenth century] (Zadar, 1928), doc. 3, p. 100.

<sup>339</sup> For Matthias's campaign of 1464 in eastern Bosnia, see: A. Јаковљевић, 'Између османског и угарског крајишта'; T. Pálosfalvi's, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 213ff.

<sup>340</sup> A. Bachmann, *Urkundliche Nachträge*, p. 28.

<sup>341</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 231, pp. 380-5.

<sup>342</sup> Cf. E. Filipović, 'Minor est Turchorum potentia'; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*, *passim*.

<sup>343</sup> <sup>343</sup> A. Kubinyi, 'Residenz- und Herrschaftsbildung in Ungarn in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts und am Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts,' *Vorträge und Forschungen* 36 (1991): *Fürstliche Residenzen im spätmittelalterlichen Europa*, pp. 440-1; D. Salihović, 'An Interesting Episode,' *passim*.

corps guarding the fortress during Matthias's campaign, also wrote of its fall into Hungarian hands.<sup>344</sup> Although, as Filipović noted, there are some chronological discrepancies between the two accounts, Rozgonyi's and Mihailović's, the castle was certainly taken in the autumn of 1463.<sup>345</sup> Further evidence from 1474 shows that the castle was governed by officials of Hungarian *bans* of Bosnia,<sup>346</sup> and that it remained in Hungarian hands well beyond 1490. It even figures in Hungarian-Ottoman capitulations of 1519 as a Hungarian possession in Bosnia.<sup>347</sup>

There are further castles mentioned in the primary material dating from 1474 that were, just as Zvečaj, controlled by the men of the *ban*. This important, and thus far neglected, legal document that stemmed from a disagreement between the *ban* and his officials over their remuneration for services in Bosnian castles, which we shall examine in more detail later, also notes three further forts – those of *Kamichatz*, *Solmufezek ac castellum Lewach*.<sup>348</sup> The castle of Kamičak is only mentioned in this letter prior to 1495.<sup>349</sup> *Solmufezek* is obviously Sólyomfészek. This Hungarian toponymic variant, meaning 'Hawk's nest', corresponding to the Slavic *Sokol* or even sometimes *Sokolowo hniesdo*<sup>350</sup> (i.e. 'Hawk' or 'Hawk's nest,' respectively), shows that this is the castle of Sokol. The existence of several identical toponyms throughout medieval Bosnia led to some confusion as to the location of this castle and the time of its acquisition by Matthias. Thallóczy claimed that Matthias managed to acquire it only in 1465, but a detailed analysis of Thallóczy's assertions shows that he was a victim of a simple confusion.<sup>351</sup> Indeed around 1465 news circulated between the two shores of the Adriatic of the king's attempts at acquiring a certain castle of Sokol.<sup>352</sup> But this occurred during the king's

<sup>344</sup> [Konstantin Mihailović iz Ostrovice] Константин Михаиловић из Островице, *Јаничарове успомене или Турска хроника* [The memoirs of a Janissary or the Turkish chronicle], ed. [Đorđe Živanović] Ђорђе Живановић (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1966), p. 155. For an English edition, inferior to the one cited here, see: Konstantin Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, tr., eds. Benjamin Stolz, Svat Soucek (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1975), p. 141.

<sup>345</sup> E. Filipović, 'Minor est Turchorum potentia,' pp. 220-1.

<sup>346</sup> MNL OL DL 74714. Cf. S. Andrić, 'Podgorje Papuka i Krndije u srednjem vijeku: Prilozi za lokalnu povijest (drugi dio)' [The surroundings of Papuk and Krndija in the middle ages: Contributions for the local history (part two)], *Scrinia Slavonica* 9 (2009): p. 62; B. Grgin, 'Plemićki rod Deževića Cerničkih u kasnome srednjem vijeku' [The noble kindred of Deževićes of Cernik in the late middle ages], *Radovi Zavoda za znanstveni i umjetnički rad u Požegi* 1 (2012): p. 115.

<sup>347</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 147, pp. 279-86. Cf. P. Kovács, 'Jajca és az 1519-es magyar-török béke' [Jajce and the Hungarian-Ottoman truce of 1519], *Levéltári Közlemények* 63 (1992): pp. 91-6.

<sup>348</sup> MNL OL DL 74714.

<sup>349</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca, oklevelek*, p. 107.

<sup>350</sup> *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 4 (Kórník: Biblioteka Kórnicka, 1855), doc. 122, p. 117.

<sup>351</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*, pp. 271-2; *Oklevelek*, doc. 34, pp. 42-3. Cf. Esad Kurtović, E. Filipović, 'Četiri bosanska Sokola' [The four Bosnian Sokols], *Gračanički glasnik* 32 (2011): pp. 201-22.

<sup>352</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca, Oklevelek*, doc. 34, pp. 42-3.

dealings with the elderly Duke of Herzegovina in the mid-1460s, aimed, as it seems, towards further acquisitions along the Drina. The duke's Sokol was among his other castles along the eastern marches of his domains, a few hundred kilometres southeast from the Sokol mentioned in 1474. That such a mistake had taken place is quite surprising, as the material Thallóczy based his claims on clearly states Sokol was among the Duke's strongholds in *le terre sue de Drina*.<sup>353</sup> Sokol rarely appears in later sources, but it certainly remained in Hungarian hands until well into the sixteenth century. In 1492, it figured among Hungarian frontier castles where Ottoman captives were held,<sup>354</sup> and is counted among other border strongholds in the early sixteenth-century lists of expenses of their garrisons.<sup>355</sup> Lastly, Levač also seldom appears in the primary material. Other than in 1474, it was noted as the Hungarian possession in Bosnia in 1481,<sup>356</sup> and then in material dating from the period well after 1490. It certainly remained a Hungarian possession throughout Matthias's reign.<sup>357</sup>

A different Sokol is noted as a Hungarian post near the river Una in an interesting 'discourse on roads that the Turks may use to enter Italy' by an anonymous author, found in two manuscripts of the Milanese Ambrosiana.<sup>358</sup> This version is a later copy of a text that had been originally compiled in 1475, at least according to the information provided in the text itself, and was published and discussed in the 1930s by Fabio Cusin.<sup>359</sup> Nearly forty years later, Agostino Pertusi, an expert in renaissance Europe's ideology of the Ottoman Turks, also published the text with slight differences, apparently unaware of Cusin's edition.<sup>360</sup> It is a particularly important source for analyses of geographical characteristics of Ottoman incursions into Croatian territory and beyond. Here, however, its importance stems from the fact that it also mentions the castle of Kamengrad, one among many forts in the region whose owners cannot be precisely determined and whose history in this period is vague at best. Although anonymous, the author of the 'discourse' seems to have been employed in the

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<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

<sup>354</sup> MNL OL DL 26055. For a brief discussion on the document, see: Árpád Nógrády, 'A list of ransom for Ottoman captives imprisoned in Croatian castles (1492)' in *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth to Early Eighteenth Century)*, eds. Géza Dávid, Pál Fodor (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 27-34.

<sup>355</sup> MNL OL DL 21279; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 114 and 115, pp. 178-92; cf. György Bónis, 'Ständisches Finanzwesen in Ungarn in frühen 16. Jahrhundert,' *Nouvelles Études historiques* 1 (1965): p. 84-8; A. Kubinyi, 'The Battle of Szávaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi (1523). Ottoman Advance and Hungarian Defence on the Eve of Mohács' in *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, eds. Géza Dávid, Pál Fodor, (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 73, fn. 6.

<sup>356</sup> HR-AHAZU)-70, *Diplomata Latina*, D-XVI-59.

<sup>357</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, *passim*.

<sup>358</sup> Biblioteca Ambrosiana, D 216 inf., fol. 185r-186v; Q 116 sup., fol. 215r-216v.

<sup>359</sup> F. Cusin, 'Le vie d'invasione dei turchi,' pp. 154-5.

<sup>360</sup> Agostino Pertusi, 'I primi studi in occidente sull'origine e la potenza dei Turchi' [The first studies in the West on the origin and power of the Turks], *Studi Veneziani* 12 (1970): pp. 547-52.

Venetian administration in the area close to the Hungarian territory, as his work was addressed to the Venetian doge. In any case, he was familiar with the situation along the frontier and related to Venice. As regards the castle of Kamengrad, the author noted that this castle was one of the starting points of Ottoman incursions into areas to the northwest, that, in fact, this was where the Turks assembled before crossing into Croatian territory. If this was indeed so, considering the location of Kamengrad, the Ottomans had an exclave of sorts in the midst of the Hungarian-controlled territory, among Hungarian castles along the Una, some 80 kilometres northwest of Jajce as the crow flies. But there are further significant issues with the few primary sources that mention Kamengrad.

It seems that the castle was captured by the troops of Martin Frankapan even before Matthias's offensive of 1463. Not only did Matthias commend Martin for his contributions, but the latter rewarded in September 1463 one of his retainers for a dedicated service, especially his role in the recent expedition against Ottoman troops 'and assault on the castle of Kővár' (a Hungarian toponym having the same meaning as the Slavic Kamengrad) in the Kingdom of Bosnia.<sup>361</sup> The primary material of Hungarian provenance then mentions the castle in early 1481. The document that mentions it is related to the activities of the Slavonian *iudicium generale* of 1481 that, under Matthias's orders, at least in principle tried to tackle the accumulated crimes of the Slavonian nobility.<sup>362</sup> Among the accused was John, the royal castellan of Krupa, a castle located on the Una and very close to Kamengrad. Among many crimes (including incest) that John was accused of, he allegedly gave provisions to the Turks in Kamengrad.<sup>363</sup> Regardless of whether indeed John committed deeds he was accused of, it seems certain that by 1481, and probably much earlier, Kamengrad fell into Ottoman hands. The 'discourse' on directions of Ottoman incursions into Italy offers further clues as to the chronology of the castle's history. Although a later copy, the text seems to have indeed been written in the 1470s and seems to reflect the situation of the period before the middle of the decade. As Cusin already noted, its author ascribed certain settlements and strongholds to individuals that lived in the period the 'discourse' was purportedly compiled.<sup>364</sup> In fact,

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<sup>361</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, 1454-1527 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1912), docs. 54, 56, pp. 53-6, 57-60.

<sup>362</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Blagay* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1897), doc. 205, pp. 388-92; cf. István Tringli, 'Az 1481. évi szlavóniai közgyűlés' [The Slavonian General Assembly in 1481] in *Tanulmányok Borsa Iván tiszteletére*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1998), pp. 291-318. See also: Bogoljub Krnic, 'Iudicium generale (opći sud) u Ugarskoj i Hrvatskoj' [Iudicium generale in Hungary and Croatia], *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 9 (1907): pp. 1-76.

<sup>363</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Blagay*, doc. 205, pp. 388-92.

<sup>364</sup> F. Cusin, 'Le vie d'invasione dei turchi,' pp. 145-6.

although the author was not best acquainted with the distribution of the Frankapan domains among the brothers, he does correctly list the family's possessions, and names both Stephen and Bartholomew Frankapan. As the latter died in 1474,<sup>365</sup> this suggests Kamengrad may have been in Ottoman hands long before the middle of the 1470s.

Describing *akins* led by Davud Paşa in 1479/1480 discussed in the previous chapter, Kemalpaşazâde's account also contains data on Kamengrad. A section of his narrative is dedicated to Ottoman clashes with Hungarian troops near the river Sana, where the Ottoman historian, both in prose and a poem, relays a story of Gürz Ilyas's actions, claiming that he, after leading an incursion into Hungarian territory, returned to the Ottoman-controlled area with prisoners, whom he left at Kamengrad in order to return to the fight and relieve an Ottoman unit still engaged against Hungarian troops.<sup>366</sup> However, Kemalpaşazâde's 'History of the House of Osman,' written in the sixteenth century, is the only one among several similar works that relays this story. It is for this reason that scholars have speculated that the narrative of Davud's *akins* may have been borrowed from Hayreddin Çelebi's now lost *Ğazavât-i Dāvūd Pasha*, a work belonging to the genre of *gazavâtnâme*, poetry or prose celebrating deeds of Ottoman frontier lords.<sup>367</sup> If indeed this was so, it would lend further trustworthiness to the story, as Kemalpaşazâde alone, who was a contemporary of these events, but not a witness, cannot be completely trusted, especially in details. That said, even Matthias's correspondence with the pope discusses Hungarian-Ottoman clashes in the area just north of the Sana in the autumn of 1480, precisely when, according to Kemalpaşazâde's account, Davud allowed for smaller skirmishes following larger *akins* into Hungarian and Frederick's lands that summer.<sup>368</sup>

Neither the castle of Kamengrad nor the area around it appear in Ottoman *defters* of the sanjak of Bosnia from 1468, 1485, or 1489.<sup>369</sup> Although this may seem to suggest that it was not in Ottoman hands at the time, one must bear in mind the peculiar administrative nature of *tahrir defterleri* as registers of primarily economic character, used in the centralized Ottoman administration for control over the state's income. In words of Heath Lowry, 'these registers were intended to list all sources of taxable revenue earmarked as income for the *timariots*, or

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<sup>365</sup> V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, p. 265.

<sup>366</sup> İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, vol. 7, pp. 473-87.

<sup>367</sup> See: Barbara Flemming, *Essays on Turkish Literature and History* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018), pp. 344-51; Halil İnalcık, 'The Rise of Ottoman Historiography,' in *Historians of the Middle East*, eds. Bernard Lewis, Peter M. Holt (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 152-67.

<sup>368</sup> V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 43, pp. 65-9.

<sup>369</sup> Ahmed Aličić, ed., *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna iz 1468/69. godine* [Defter of the sanjak of Bosnia from 1468/1469] (Mostar: Islamski centar, 2008); cf. Hamdija Kreševljaković, 'Kamengrad,' *Naše starine* 6 (1959): p. 22.

fief-holders [...]. In short, they were tax registers for the *timar* system and nothing else.<sup>370</sup> As such, they did not list castles controlled by the *ulufeci* (that is those formally attached to the Ottoman court as *kapu kulu* receiving pay, rather than *timars*) or for that matter forts controlled by other, sometimes Christian, troops. In this period, as recently argued by Lowry and indicated by Konstantin Mihailović, members of frontier garrisons were largely Janissaries, ‘slaves’ of the Ottoman household tasked primarily with the upkeep and defence of Ottoman frontier outposts.<sup>371</sup> Ottomans, furthermore, do not seem to have kept more than two dozen fortresses in Bosnia anyway,<sup>372</sup> and Kamengrad, if it indeed remained in their hands, was certainly an outpost that may have indeed been guarded by a handful of janissaries that John, Krupa’s castellan, supplied with necessary provisions. It is certainly noteworthy that during the late 1460s and early 1470s, when incursions into northern Croatia and further towards Venetian and Habsburg domains significantly intensified, reports on Ottoman movements regularly note the area around the Una as the place where Ottoman troops either assembled before an attack or crossed into the domains of the Frankapans.<sup>373</sup> The crucial importance of these areas in the further shaping of Matthias’s southern frontier, as well as for Venetian involvement in local politics, will be discussed in far more detail later. But it is important to emphasize that especially in this period (around 1468/1469) the region between the bay of Kvarner and the Sana was extraordinarily active, and suffered significant Ottoman incursions and clashes, witnessing traffic in Ottoman captives in huge numbers, depopulation, destruction, and significant territorial changes.

The lack of explicit evidence on Kamengrad’s fate as well as arguments *ex silentio* (devised from *defters*) have previously motivated scholars to rely on a peculiar piece of evidence included in Marino Sanudo’s ‘Diaries.’ In his enormous work, Sanudo brought what he purported was a translation of a letter that the sanjak-bey of Bosnia had addressed to John

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<sup>370</sup> H. Lowry, ‘The Ottoman *Tahrir Defterleri* as a Source for Social and Economic History: Pitfalls and Limitations,’ in *idem*, *Studies in Defterology. Ottoman Society in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Istanbul: Isis press, 1992), pp. 7-8.

<sup>371</sup> H. Lowry, *The Shaping of the Ottoman Balkans, 1350-1500* (Istanbul: Bahçeşehir University, 2008), pp. 1-64. Cf. K. Mihailović, *Memoirs, passim*.

<sup>372</sup> On the administration of the sanjak of Bosnia see: H. Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*. Cf. Aladin Husić, ‘Trvdave Bosanskog sandžaka i njihove posade 1530. godine’ [Fortresses of the Sanjak of Bosnia and their garrisons in 1530], *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 49 (2000): pp. 189-229.

<sup>373</sup> See, e.g.: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni Segrete, reg. 23, fol. 158v, 164r-165r, reg. 24, fol. 34v-35v; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 431, 441, 446, 447, 449, 461, 473, pp. 411, 420, 422, 423, 427-8, 435-7, 453-4, etc.; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, docs. 45, 64, 76 pp. 75-6, 99-100, 117, etc. Cf. B. Grgin, ‘The Ottoman Influences on Croatia in the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century,’ *Povijesni prilozi* 23 (2002), p. 92.

Corvinus in 1499.<sup>374</sup> The sanjak-bey allegedly wrote that [...] *li vostri homeni ale terre di nostro Signor sono venuti a robar, e specialmente al borgo del Chamenogrado hano ruinato per le continue incursioni*. The veracity of Sanudo's claims, however, cannot be confirmed as the content of the letter is known only from his translation, however unlikely it may seem that he had time and intentions to forge a letter related to a relatively insignificant event. But this was enough for Kreševljaković to assert that Kamengrad finally fell into Ottoman hands between 1489 and 1499,<sup>375</sup> and for Mrgić to claim that 'it is known' that it fell precisely in 1499.<sup>376</sup> This is clearly not the case. If anything, even the sanjak-bey's letter shows that the castle had already been in his possession for some time. The general impression, considering all evidence, is that it may have returned under Ottoman control by the late 1460s (assuming its garrison indeed failed to resist Martin Frankapan's assault), right at the time when another, similarly enigmatic fortress, practically disappears from the primary material.

The area of the *župa/comitatus* of Livno, today in western Bosnia, then within the eastern marches of Croatia, appears relatively often in the material from the mid-1460s, considering how rarely it is mentioned in either older or younger sources. While Matthias focused on north-western sections of the Ottoman-occupied Bosnia in 1463, Duke Stephen of Herzegovina and his sons initially had significant successes in driving Ottoman troops off their own lands.<sup>377</sup> By mid-November 1463, one of the duke's sons apparently even reached as far north as Srebrenica,<sup>378</sup> thus practically encircling Ottomans in Bosnia, while by the end of December it was rumoured in Italy that the duke had retaken all but three of his castles.<sup>379</sup> Another son of the duke, Ladislaus, who caused much trouble in the region in the preceding period by collaborating with the Ottomans (whom his own father famously cursed on his deathbed in 1466),<sup>380</sup> had, however, temporarily changed sides and seems to have matched his brother's deeds in the east. Matthias certainly had no issues with his past. In Jajce in December

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<sup>374</sup> Giuseppe Valentinelli, 'Rapporti della Republica Veneta coi Slavi meridionali. Brani tratti dei diarii manoscritti di Marino Sanudo, 1496-1533' [The relationship between the Republic of Venice and South Slavs. Passages from the manuscript of Marino Sanudo's Diaries], *Arkiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku* 5 (1859): p. 68. Cf. Ćiro Truhelka, *Tursko-slovjenski spomenici Dubrovačke arhive* [Turkish-Slavic documents in the Archives of Dubrovnik] (Sarajevo: Zemaljska štamparija, 1911), pp. 206-7.

<sup>375</sup> H. Kreševljaković, 'Kamengrad,' pp. 21-4.

<sup>376</sup> J. Мргич, *Доњи Крају*, p. 128.

<sup>377</sup> See: [Sima Ćirković] Сима Ћирковић, *Херцег Стефан Вукчић-Косача и његово доба* [Duke Stephen Vukčić-Kosača and his time] (Belgrade: Naučno delo, 1964), pp. 254ff.

<sup>378</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 289, pp. 283-8.

<sup>379</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 11, pp. 159-60

<sup>380</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 363, pp. 350-6. His father wished that 'if he had a thousand lives, it would be just that he lost them all, not only because of what he did against me, his parent and lord, but against all of Christendom, as the Lord knows he led the Grand Turk in Bosnia to the death and destruction of us all.



1463, the king accepted Ladislaus's submission to his rule, and forged a relationship that largely relied on Ladislaus's engagement in Hungarian expeditions both in Bosnia and elsewhere, but not against Venice.<sup>381</sup> Commending his efforts in fighting off the Ottomans, the king awarded him all that he had managed to seize from Ottoman garrisons, primarily the castles of Vesela Straža, Prozor, and Livno with their appurtenances. Matthias's captains in the region certainly had authority over Livno from then on,<sup>382</sup> but the castle that seems to have played an important role both for the Venetians and Ottomans remained firmly in Ladislaus's hands. As early as 1456 the king of Bosnia complained to Venice that the sultan had requested Livno from him, in order to gain access to Venetian possessions along the Adriatic coast, and an easier route towards Italy.<sup>383</sup> Ten years later, in the spring of 1466, the Venetian count of Split wrote to Venice that Livno was very important to the Venetian dominion, because it is located in the place from which it was easy to invade the Republic's possessions in Dalmatia.<sup>384</sup> For this reason alone, on the open request of Ladislaus's envoys, Venice granted him 300 ducats for the defence of the castle, 'so that it would not fall in the hands of the Turks or someone else.'<sup>385</sup> And apparently not only Turks, but Hungarians too wished to acquire it. A later document, issued in 1471 by Matthias, that contains several *transumpta* from the 1460s clarifies the region's later history. The charter itself confirms Ladislaus's and his son's possession of the castles of Kalnik (*minor* and *maior*) in Slavonia, but its most important part describes how the pair acquired it. A copied charter of 1467 narrates that two of the king's captains, John Rozgonyi and John Túz, had recently taken the castle of Livno and granted Ladislaus the Slavonian castle of Bozsjákó in exchange.<sup>386</sup> As the latter, however, pertained to the Hungarian Hospitaller priory, and Matthias had no intentions of disrupting their rights, in 1467 Matthias granted him Kalnik instead, but with a stipulation that as soon as the remainder of Bosnia is liberated, Ladislaus had every right to request Livno back. The king's two captains were certainly in the region by the summer of 1466,<sup>387</sup> where they arrived with an army and Matthias's clear instructions *pro reformacione confinium regnorum nostrorum Dalmacie et*

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<sup>381</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Bosnyák és Szerb élet- s nemzedékrajzi tanulmányok* [Bosnian and Serbian biographical and genealogical studies] (Budapest: Franklin, 1909), doc. 57, pp. 493-8; *idem*, *Studien zur Geschichte*, doc. 80, pp. 418-22; cf. the latest overview of the Kosačas's relations with Hungary in T. Pálosfalvi's, 'A szentszávai hercegek Magyarországon' [The Dukes of Saint Sava in Hungary] in *Hercegek és hercegségek a középkori Magyarországon*, ed. Attila Zsoldos (Székesfehérvár, 2016), pp. 111-25.

<sup>382</sup> MNL OL DL 16275; L. Thallóczy, *Bosnyák és Szerb*, doc. 60, 503-4.

<sup>383</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 93, pp. 86-7.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 371, p. 364.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>386</sup> MNL OL DF 233461.

<sup>387</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 376-9, pp. 375-8.

*Croacie*.<sup>388</sup> Already in August 1466, with a rather peculiar deed, Janus Pannonius took the Vlatković brothers, lords in the region of Hum west of the Neretva, the area where the Kosačas traditionally held authority, into his protection in the name of King Matthias.<sup>389</sup> Interesting here is that he identified the senior brother as the voivode of Livno. What happened to this area after 1466, however, is a matter of speculation. Hazim Šabanović noted that Livno itself appears in Ottoman defters only in 1485 but has also convincingly showed that it fell into Ottoman hands earlier.<sup>390</sup> Mladen Ančić, taking into consideration Šabanović's conclusions and pointing to the fact that a bell that had belonged to one of the local churches bears the date of its production – 1479 – argued that then the area must have been (re)captured by the Ottomans between 1479 and 1485.<sup>391</sup> However, already the earliest Ottoman summary *defter* of Bosnia, dating from 1468/1469, contains information on the area of Livno, although not the castle of Livno (in fact Bistrički grad) itself.<sup>392</sup> The *defter* notes that a certain Christian named Paul, son of Gregory, held a *timar* in the vicinity of Livno, in fact in the *nahiye* that bore the same name.<sup>393</sup> The castle of Hum, not 9 kilometres from Livno itself as the crow flies, and on the very edge of the Ottoman territory towards the Croatian *comitatus* of Cetina, was left under Paul's control. His *timar* largely comprised of villages surrounding the hills of Tribanj to the south, towards the karst field of Duvno. All villages, all fourteen of them, were noted as completely deserted. The *defter* contains several other notes related to Paul and his 'fief,' offering important chronological contributions to the issue at hand. It was additionally noted in 1477 that one of Paul's possessions (elsewhere in Bosnia) was granted to another man, since Paul had recently been captured. The same remark contains information that this particular piece of property had earlier been granted to Paul, since he surrendered the castles of Hum (that he would later command) and Travnik.<sup>394</sup> Paul's deed, unfortunately, is not dated, and may have taken place either in 1463 or later.<sup>395</sup> But further in the *defter* it was also noted that two villages near the town of Konjic were also in his hands. These villages had earlier belonged to a certain Davud,

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<sup>388</sup> MNL OL DF 275108.

<sup>389</sup> MNL OL DF 255781; E. Laszowski, 'Prilozi za povijest bosanskih porodica' [Contributions to the history of Bosnian families], *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskoga zemaljskog arkiva* 19 (1917): doc. 3, pp. 119-20.

<sup>390</sup> H. Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, p. 151; cf. Machiel Kiel, 'Livno,' in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Consulted online on 26 October 2018 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912\\_islam\\_SIM\\_4675](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_4675)

<sup>391</sup> M. Ančić, *Livno. Srednjovjekovna hrvatska županija* [Livno. A Croatian medieval county] (Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika, 2001), pp. 28-30.

<sup>392</sup> A. Aličić, ed., *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna*, pp. 195-6.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>395</sup> Aličić was of the opinion that Paul surrendered the castles between 1463 and 1468, when the work on the *defter*'s compilation started. See: Ibid., p. 195, fn. 2723.

who himself received them in 1470, but as he became the *serasker* of voynuks of Saray Ovası (Sarajevo), they were transferred to Paul, son of Gregory, only to be again redistributed in 1477 (apparently after Paul's capture) to a Christian named Philip.<sup>396</sup> All of Davud's *timars* in central Bosnia were thus granted to Paul, apparently after April 1470. As the earlier entry notes that two separate *timars* around Konjic had been united and then given to Paul, and one of them is this *timar* of Davud, it seems probable that Paul was awarded all of his fiefs in 1470 or shortly thereafter. Although Paul's surrender of Hum is not explicitly dated, the wording of one of these entries suggests that the surrender of the castle(s) was a prerequisite for the redistribution of these possessions. Consequently, this suggests that the delivery of Hum took place either in 1470 or some time earlier, and that Livno too, in whose *nahiye* Paul's possessions were located, may have finally fallen into Ottoman hands around that time.

There are further issues, however, to be considered here. The first is the fact that Paul surrendered both Hum and Travnik. The fall of the latter into Ottoman hands was recorded in drafts of reports on the progress of the Ottoman army in Bosnia in 1463, compiled by the count of Trogir.<sup>397</sup> On 3 June 1463, he listed Bosnian castles and towns that had by that time been captured by Mehmed's armies, and Travnik is counted among them. Although, just as Livno, it may have been retaken by Hungarian or other troops, there is very little evidence to support this assumption. It is only certain that the *defter* of 1468/1469 noted the area around Travnik as deserted, while other evidence points to the fact that it was granted to a certain Christian *voynuk* Stephen in the period between 1470 and 1474, because the Ottomans concluded it would be beneficial for them to keep the area under their control, and not abandon it due to constant Hungarian incursions.<sup>398</sup> Still, it is noteworthy that the sanjak-bey of Bosnia who decided to grant Travnik to Stephen did this in accordance with the sultan's decision to refurbish and equip the castle of Travnik in or after 1470.<sup>399</sup> Another curious fact is that precisely in 1471 Matthias confirmed Ladislaus in the possession of the castle of Kalnik, who enjoyed it purely on the basis of his surrender of Livno to the king's captains in 1466. The charter granted not only the right to request Livno back on the condition that Kalnik is returned

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<sup>396</sup> Ibid., pp. 100, 102.

<sup>397</sup> Marko Šunjić, 'Trogirski izvještaji o turskom osvojenju Bosne (1463)' [Reports from Trogir on the Turkish conquest of Bosnia (1463)], *Glasnik arhiva i Društva arhivskih radnika BiH* 29 (1989): doc. 3, pp. 147-8. Drafts and letters compiled by the count of Trogir that Šunjić published are, unfortunately, lost. During my recent research in the State Archives of Zadar I have not been able to locate this material, although the staff assumed it must have only been misplaced, probably by Šunjić himself. Other similarly important, and thus far unknown drafts and letters, nevertheless, are still located in the same box. These I shall discuss further below.

<sup>398</sup> A. Aličić, ed., *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna*, pp. 248-9; H. Kreševljaković, Derviš M. Korkut, *Travnik u prošlosti 1464-1878* [History of Travnik 1464-1878] (Travnik: Zavičajni muzej Travnik, 1961), pp. 9-10.

<sup>399</sup> H. Kreševljaković, D. M. Korkut, *Travnik u prošlosti*, pp. 9-10.

to the crown, but also all of his father's possessions that he rightfully claimed, once Bosnia is liberated.<sup>400</sup> The reissuing of charters from 1467 was requested by Ladislaus. Could this possibly suggest that by October 1471 Ladislaus was left without hope of returning to his possessions farther south? Could it be that, when in September 1471 the last remaining Hungarian post at the Neretva fell Livno too was finally subdued? Could it be that then, and not earlier, Paul, son of Gregory, too surrendered Hum and not in 1463? Unfortunately, the definitive answer cannot be given. Men from Livno still figured among the retainers of Croatian *bans* as late as 1480,<sup>401</sup> but whether their homeland had by then been overrun or was still in the hands of their lord remains unknown. It certainly seems that the area was a desolate marchland, at least in the early period of the Ottoman presence. The fact that a Christian timariot guarded a castle with an appertaining territory contiguous with the nearby lands governed by Croatian *bans* certainly testifies to the feeble nature of Ottoman authority in the area, especially considering that the same man apparently governed the castle in the name of the late king(s) of Bosnia. A glimpse into the life along these frontiers is offered by a brief but invaluable piece I discovered in Zadar, the only other material that mentions this Paul of Gregory. In a codex that records civil cases that took place in Split in the latter half of the fifteenth century, a complaint presented by one Stephen *Troverač* is also noted. According to his testimony, dating from January 1470, he had been captured by the Turks in Luka, the territory of the *ban* of Croatia. As he was being led by his captors towards Vrhbosna, a chance appeared for him to escape, which he managed to do. However, on his trip back home he entered the 'territory called Neretva, near the homes of Stephen, the brother of Paul Gregurić,' where he was captured again and sent to Paul, who held him incarcerated in the castle of Hum 'which belongs to this Paul.' Stephen remained locked in the castle for 'ten weeks and two days,' as Gregurić was not willing to release him until a ransom, altogether sixteen ducats, was paid.<sup>402</sup> One phrase found in this record, namely that [*Stefanus*] *supervenit in unum territorium vocatum Neretva, apud domos Stefani fratris Pauli Gregorich* suggests that Stephen and Paul may have been Vlachs (who possessed multiple *homes/houses*). The dating of the document and Stephen's capture (that may have taken place in late October/early November 1469, according to his testimony) also further suggests that Paul acquired/surrendered Hum before 1470. One other possibility is that

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<sup>400</sup> MNL OL DF 233461.

<sup>401</sup> MNL OL DF 255849.

<sup>402</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 14, 30/3, fol. 51r.

the Vlatkovićs remained in Livno after 1466. As we shall see, by the mid-1480s they, at least partially, turned to the Ottomans and enjoyed a status similar to that of Paul Gregurić in Hum.

Contributing to the picture of the western/north-western frontier is the (unclear) fate of the castle of Ključ where Stephen Tomašević was apparently beheaded in 1463. It is also found among the castles listed by the count of Trogir in the spring of 1463,<sup>403</sup> but not much else is known about it. It was certainly in Ottoman hands in 1503.<sup>404</sup> The ‘discourse’ of 1475, however, named another Ottoman post whence raiders were entering Croatia. Apart from *Camingra*, the author also noted *Clum*.<sup>405</sup> Considering that the text survived only as a later copy, orthographic peculiarities such as these are in abundance, a fact that Cusin himself ascribed to the poor job the copyist had done while reading the original. As no other similar toponym is known to have existed or presently exists in the area, and Ključ is indeed located not 30 km from Kamengrad as the crow flies, in the area adjacent to medieval Croatia, I am quite certain the ‘discourse’ refers to Ključ. That this was indeed so is confirmed by another similar contemporary narrative, to which I shall return later, authored by Martin Segono, the bishop of Ulcinj in the early 1480s, of apparently Serbian origin.<sup>406</sup> In his well-informed (and thus far largely neglected) tractate on roads suitable for an expedition against the Ottomans and roads that were at the time (before the early 1480s) used by Ottoman *akinji*, Ključ is also noted as the starting point of their expeditions.<sup>407</sup>

The region around Travnik remains vaguely defined. We have already seen how still in the 1470s the Ottomans struggled with keeping control over the area, primarily due to its unfavourable position, being the extreme Ottoman outpost towards the Hungarian Jajce with little, if anything, between them. In the *defter* of 1468/1469 nearly the whole area around Travnik was noted as deserted, and it apparently remained so well into the 1470s when, just as it happened with Hum, a Christian took it over. Šabanović suggested that the area was completely deserted well into the 1470s and was even later settled largely by Vlachs.<sup>408</sup> Desanka Kovačević, although arguing solely based on the data from the *defter* of 1468/1469, claimed Travnik and the surrounding area was not in Ottoman hands at the time, disregarding

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<sup>403</sup> M. Šunjić, ‘Trogirski izvještaji,’ doc. 3, pp. 147-8.

<sup>404</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 106 pp. 167-70.

<sup>405</sup> F. Cusin, ‘Le vie d’invasione dei turchi,’ p. 154; A. Pertusi, ‘I primi studi,’ p. 549.

<sup>406</sup> A seminal study on Segono is A. Pertusi, *Martino Segono di Novo Brdo, vescovo di Dulcigno. Un umanista serbo-dalmata del tardo Quattrocento – vita e opere* [Martin Segono of Novo Brdo, bishop of Ulcinj. A Serbian-Dalmatian humanist of the late fifteenth century – life and work] (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo, 1981).

<sup>407</sup> Ibid., pp. 105-6.

<sup>408</sup> H. Šabanović, *Bosanski pašaluk*, p. 149.

the possibility that the town was not noted for other reasons (that it was in control of the Ottoman *ulufeci*<sup>409</sup>), as well as that villages around it were entered into the register, albeit largely abandoned.<sup>410</sup> But there were significant changes that took place before the mid-1470s in this minute, but important fraction of the Hungarian-Ottoman borderland. The fortress of Toričan stood barely a mile (if that) from Travnik, overlooking the valley along which the modern town of Travnik has developed. It stood, furthermore, more than 15 miles southeast of Jajce. This castle, just as the surrounding area, remained controversial in the sparse studies that touched upon it. In any case neither Thallóczy nor most later scholars counted it among Hungarian strongholds in the area. Đorđo Mazalić claimed in a little-known paper from 1948 that the castle of Toričan was in fact controlled by the Hungarian side up until the very end of the fifteenth century.<sup>411</sup> Provoking as they may be, his conclusions were based on a misreading of the Hungarian-Ottoman capitulations of 1503, which Mazalić took to represent recent territorial changes along the frontier. With Toričan listed among Ottoman castles, he assumed the fort had only recently fallen into their hands. His conclusions were recently outright dismissed by Aladin Husić in his study on medieval Toričan. He correctly noted that the *deFTER* of the Ottoman march of İshakoğlu İsa Bey from 1455 contains a note which proves that the sultan was in Toričan in the summer of 1464,<sup>412</sup> during his second campaign in Bosnia.<sup>413</sup> But Husić rejected any ideas of Hungarian presence in the area, claiming the fort was firmly in Ottoman hands from 1463 onwards.<sup>414</sup> Still, further brief, and very important information is found in a charter granted by Matthias to a middling Hungarian nobleman John Viszlai in 1476.<sup>415</sup> The charter, kept at the Hungarian national archives, remained unknown thus far, but contains crucial information that alters our understanding of territorial arrangements along the frontier in Matthias's times. This particular document is a *littera statutoria* (letter of *seisin*) by the Hospitaller convent of Székesfehérvár, recording a donation of land that the king had granted to Viszlai. He was to receive possessions of a certain late Ladislaus of

<sup>409</sup> Cf. Aladin Husić, 'Srednjovjekovni Toričan na razmeđu dviju epoha' [Medieval Toričan at the turn of two epochs], *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 54 (2005): p. 133.

<sup>410</sup> [Desanka Kovačević-Kojić] Десанка Ковачевић-Којић, *Градска насеља средњовјековне босанске државе* [Urban settlements of the medieval Bosnian state] (Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, 1978), p. 85.

<sup>411</sup> [Đorđo Mazalić] Ђорђо Мазалић, 'Травник и Торичан' [Travnik and Toričan], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu* 3 (1948): p. 146.

<sup>412</sup> H. Šabanović, ed., *Krajište Isa-bega Ishakovića. Zbirni katastarski popis iz 1455. godine* [The March of Isabey Ishaković. *Icmal defter* from 1455] (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 1964), p. 105.

<sup>413</sup> On Mehmed's repeated attempt at capturing Jajce in 1464 see: Kovács, 'Jajca 1464-es ostroma. "Amikor a hollós nindzsák délre mentek büntetni a muzulmán"'" [The siege of Jajce in 1464. 'When the raven ninjas went south to punish the Muslims'] in *Az értelem bátorsága: tanulmányok Perjés Géza emlékére*, ed. Gábor Hausner (Budapest: Argumentum, 2005), 403-18.

<sup>414</sup> A. Husić, 'Srednjovjekovni Toričan na razmeđu dviju epoha,' pp. 123-38.

<sup>415</sup> MNL OL DL 93505.

Szentmihályfalva in the county of Baranya, as they have reverted to the crown due to Ladislaus's treason, i.e. by *nota infidelitatis*. Ladislaus's sin was, according to the king, that 'he had abandoned'<sup>416</sup> our castle of *Thurychan*, whose vice-castellany he was holding, and because of this the said castle ended up in the hands of the Turks.' At least according to Matthias's decree of 1462, high treason, particularly in cases of the surrender of castles, could be met with confiscation and subsequent redistribution of one's estates only following conviction in court.<sup>417</sup> Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any record of Ladislaus's accusation or conviction, thus leaving the date of his abandonment of Toričan to speculation. It certainly occurred before October 1476. Considering that Mehmed was probably in Toričan in the summer of 1464, this could have either taken place during the second Ottoman assault on Jajce, or later, as Matthias's army also entered Bosnia for the second time during the same year, as a response to Mehmed's failed attempts.<sup>418</sup> In any case, Toričan had certainly been in Hungarian hands for a period between 1463 and 1476. In 1503, both Toričan and Travnik were noted as Ottoman possessions.<sup>419</sup>

It was during this second Hungarian campaign of 1464, which was only partially successful as it failed to deliver Zvornik which seems to have been the primary objective, that Matthias's troops widened the Hungarian frontier further towards Belgrade. In comparison to its western section, very little is known of the castles that changed hands in 1464 and constituted the eastern section of Hungarian Bosnia. Toponyms that do appear in the primary material, largely dating from the period after 1490, are those of Teočak, Sokol, Tešanj, Srebrenik, as well as Brčko, Dobor, Újvár, *Arky* (Jaruge), Slobočina, Dubočac, Gradačac, and Mihaljevci. Which of these castles the king's armies captured in 1464 and which may have already been in Hungarian hands is not completely clear (as well as whether, indeed, all of these fell under the administration of Hungarian *bans* at the frontier). Srebrenik was certainly taken in 1464 and would famously remain a significant Hungarian frontier outpost well after Matthias's death.<sup>420</sup> Teočak, previously controlled by Serbian rulers, was first documented as a Hungarian-held fortress in 1465, when it was owned by Nicholas Újlaki, *comes perpetuus de*

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<sup>416</sup> The verb *deperdo* (used in its subjunctive form *deperdidisset* in the charter) can be interpreted in various ways – to destroy (rarely and only in participle), or lose, abandon. I am therefore inclined to interpret it as *abandon*, which seems to fit the rest of the narrative.

<sup>417</sup> F. Döry et al., eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae*, § II, p. 125. Also in Bak et al., eds., *Decreta Regni mediaevalis Hungariae*, § II, p. 16. Again, I must advise against using the English translation of the Latin text in the latter edition, which is particularly poor at this place.

<sup>418</sup> On Matthias's second campaign in Bosnia, see: T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Móhacs*, pp. 215-21.

<sup>419</sup> MNL OL DL 30498; J. von Hammer, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Pest, 1828): pp. 616-20; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 106 pp. 167-70.

<sup>420</sup> Cf. L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, docs. 23 and 24, pp. 27-30, *passim*.

*Thechlak* since at least May that year.<sup>421</sup> In 1471 Újlaki was both the perpetual count of Teočak and the ‘lord of the land of Usora,’ the north-eastern province of Bosnia.<sup>422</sup> It seems he would continue to keep it in his possession until his death in 1477, when the castle, presumably, returned to the king’s captains.<sup>423</sup> It may further be speculated that it fell into Ottoman hands before 1474, as then Matthias identified Nicholas as *alias* count of Teočak,<sup>424</sup> but this offers little with respect to concrete evidence. The castle does not appear in later sources from Matthias’s period. It appears (both as a *nahiye* and castle) only in the defter of the sanjak of Zvornik from the first half of the sixteenth century.<sup>425</sup> As Srebrenik, Sokol, and Tešanj fell in 1512, it could be that Teočak too shared their destiny.

Sokol and Tešanj also do not appear in sources dating to the period of Matthias’s reign. It has been suggested, and rightly so, that both were counted among Hungarian frontier posts after 1464.<sup>426</sup> There is no *explicit* information that between 1464 and 1490 any significant territorial changes took place in the region, and it is evident from letters and charters of King Wladislas II and Pope Leo X that by the beginning of November 1512 the Turks captured Srebrenik, Tešanj, and Sokol along with castles pertaining to its *banate*, particularly *Barcha* (Brčko) and *Waya*.<sup>427</sup> While describing southern regions of Hungary, Nicholas Oláh, in his *Hungaria et Atila* written in 1536, noted that Turks had captured approximately twenty years earlier (i.e. around 1516) the Hungarian castles of Srebrenik, Maglaj, and Gra(da)čac.<sup>428</sup> The fact that Tešanj, Sokol, and apparently Maglaj were counted among Hungarian castles at the beginning of the sixteenth century provides further grounds for speculation. As Adem Handžić argued on the basis of fifteenth-century Ottoman *defters*, the forts of Doboj, Maglaj, and Tešanj may have been in the hands of the Ottoman-installed king of Bosnia until 1476.<sup>429</sup> Maglaj and

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<sup>421</sup> MNL OL DL 100746.

<sup>422</sup> MNL OL DL 17162.

<sup>423</sup> See: D. Salihović, ‘An Interesting Episode.’

<sup>424</sup> MNL OL DL 24975.

<sup>425</sup> A. Handžić, ed., *Dva prva popisa Zvorničkog sandžaka (iz 1519. i 1533. godine)* [First two defters of the sanjak of Zvornik (1519 and 1533)] (Sarajevo: ANUBiH-SANU, 1986), *passim*.

<sup>426</sup> See: A. Handžić, *Tuzla i njena okolina u 16. vijeku* [Tuzla and its surroundings in the sixteenth century] (Sarajevo: Svjetlost, 1975), pp. 35-6.

<sup>427</sup> MNL OL DF 268266, 204170; Antal Nagy et al., eds., *Monumenta rusticorum in Hungaria rebellium anno MDXIV* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1979), pp. 35-54; cf. Odorico Raynaldi, *Annales ecclesiastici*, vol. 20 (Cologne: Johann Wilhelm Friess, 1694), p. 159; G. Pray, *Epistolae procerum Regni Hungariae*, vol. 1 (Bratislava: Belnay, 1806), doc. 39, pp. 81-3. Cf. Iván Borsa, ‘A Somogy megyei levéltár Mohács előtti oklevelei’ [Pre-Mohács sources in the Archives of the County of Somogy], *Somogy megye múltjából - Levéltári évkönyv* 14 (1983): p. 78.

<sup>428</sup> Nicolaus Olahus, *Hungaria et Atila sive de originibus gentis regni Hungariae* (Vienna, 1763), p. 40.

<sup>429</sup> A. Handžić, ‘Nahija Brod krajem XV i početkom XVI vijeka’ [The nahiye of Brod at end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries] in *Radovi sa simpozijuma ‘Srednjovjekovna Bosna i Evropska kultura,’* ed. Fikret Ibrahimpašić (Zenica: Muzej grada Zenice, 1973), p. 375.



Tešanj are particularly interesting in this respect, as by the late 1480s there were certain Vlachs in their vicinity that Ottoman *defters* identified as previously subjected to a certain, unnamed king, but neither castle appears in Ottoman *defters* until well into the sixteenth century.<sup>430</sup> Interestingly, however, according to a report of the Milanese envoy in Buda, Matthias's army was in Bosnia in the summer of 1476, providing aid to this Bosnian king against troops the sultan had sent against him due to his correspondence with Matthias, whereby he wished to be recognized by the Hungarian king.<sup>431</sup> Precisely on the morning of 3 July a letter arrived at the king's court from Gabriel Matucsina, the archbishop of Kalocsa who had been sent to Bosnia with the army, with information that he had chased away the Turks and freed the king of the siege. Nothing further is known of the fate of this Bosnian king.<sup>432</sup> Taken together, all this information suggests that the castles of Maglaj and Tešanj<sup>433</sup> may have come under Hungarian control then, and not in 1464. Dobo, on the other hand, was surrendered to the Ottomans around the same time, as the *defter* of 1468/1469 explicitly states.<sup>434</sup> But although Srebrenik and Tešanj were certainly in Hungarian possession until 1512, Oláh was mistaken about Maglaj. In the capitulations of 1503, it figures among Ottoman castles.<sup>435</sup>

Further nearby forts, those of Dobor, Gračac, and Mihaljevci/Mihalócz(?) (noted as *Myhalocz* in the primary material), either on or not far from the Sava, seem to have been in private hands throughout the period, at least according to rare, and much later evidence. In 1512, when the nearby aforementioned castles fell into Ottoman hands, and the king felt this would certainly endanger southern Hungarian regions contiguous with Bosnia, he confiscated the castles of Gračac and Mihalócz from John Tahy, the nephew of Bartholomew Beriszló, the late Hospitaller prior, and inheritor of his whole estate.<sup>436</sup> Although King Wladislas counted

<sup>430</sup> See especially Branislav Đurđev et al., eds., *Kanuni i kanun-name za bosanski, hercegovački, zvrnički, kliški, crnogorski i skadarski sandžak* [The *kanuns* and *kanunnames* for the sanjaks of Bosnia, Hercegovina, Zvornik, Klis, Montenegro and Skadar] (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 1957), doc. 3, pp. 13-4; A. Handžić, 'O kretanju stanovništva u regionu srednjeg toka Bosne (međuprostor Maglaj-Dobo-Tešanj) od druge polovine XV do kraja XVI st.' [On the population in the region of Maglaj-Dobo-Tešanj between the second half of the fifteenth and the end of the sixteenth centuries] in *idem*, *Studije o Bosni: historijski prilozi iz osmansko-turskog perioda* (Istanbul: OIC-IRCICA, 1994), pp. 19-28; *idem*, 'Nahija Brod,' p. 375; A. Husić, 'Maglaj u ranom osmanskom period (15. i 16. stoljeće)' [Maglaj in the early Ottoman period (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries)], *Anali Gazi Husrev-begove biblioteke* 27-28 (2008): pp. 113-34.

<sup>431</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziak emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 219, pp. 316-18.

<sup>432</sup> On Matthias Vojšalić, the last Ottoman-installed king of Bosnia, see: Dubravko Lovrenović, *Na klizištu povijesti (sveta kruna ugarska i sveta kruna bosanska) 1387-1463* [On the landslide of history (the holy crown of Hungary and the holy crown of Bosnia) 1387-1463] (Zagreb-Sarajevo: Synopsis, 2008), pp. 387-8.

<sup>433</sup> On Tešanj see also: A. Husić, 'Tešanj u 16. Stoljeću' [Tešanj in the sixteenth century], *Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju* 61 (2011): p. 303 and *passim*.

<sup>434</sup> A. Aličić, ed., *Sumarni popis sandžaka Bosna*, p. 78.

<sup>435</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 106 pp. 167-70.

<sup>436</sup> MNL OL DF 268266.

the two castles among those of the priory (and requested John to hand them over to the bishop of Veszprém),<sup>437</sup> it seems they were a private possession of the late prior, whose family had their ancient possessions in the area of Dobor.<sup>438</sup> One other possibility, and this will be discussed in detail later, is that when Bartholomew was granted the priory and its estates in the mid-1470s by Nicholas Újlaki and Matthias, he received these two castles as well.<sup>439</sup> The problem is that the castles are rarely mentioned in other material. According to a document that is widely regarded a forgery (but which may truthfully reflect land-ownership in north-eastern Bosnia in the 1460s),<sup>440</sup> as well as one other trustworthy document, this area was under the control of Radivoj, the uncle of the last Kotromanić king of Bosnia, prior to 1463.<sup>441</sup> Gračac at least was considered a part of Usora that, as we have seen, Nicholas Újlaki controlled since the mid-1460s. It could be, therefore, that Gračac, located farther from the Sava and thus the Beriszló estates than Mihalócz, passed onto Bartholomew after Újlaki's death in 1477, as he had already controlled Hospitaller estates that were in Újlaki's hands in the early 1470s (as a part of the complex of estates and polities that included the Kingdom of Bosnia). This would mean that it was Matthias's army that captured the castle in their second campaign in Bosnia. But this, due to the lack of sources, remains merely conjecture. In all, Srebrenik, Tešanj, and Sokol (and possibly Maglaj) seem to have been incorporated into the kingdom's defensive mechanism, but this cannot be argued with certainty for Mihalócz, Gračac or Dobor. One would expect that at least the latter two, not least due to their position, may have shared the fate of Srebrenik, Tešanj, and Sokol, but this cannot be proven decidedly. Nor can the date of their occupation by the Hungarians. While Srebrenik seems to have been in their hands since 1464, other castles may have been taken only in 1476.

One further intriguing matter, however, calls for additional discussion and opens space for speculation. If Handžić was correct in his interpretations, and indeed the lordship of Ottoman-installed king(s) of Bosnia was located in territories pertaining to Doboj, Maglaj, and Tešanj, this bears further implications. As mentioned, Radivoj Ostojić, who as early as the

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<sup>437</sup> HR-HDA-877, 693 = MNL OL DF 219189.

<sup>438</sup> On the Berislavić/Beriszló family, see: Marija Karbić, *Plemićki rod Borića bana* [The noble kindred of Ban Borić] (Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski institut za povijest-Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje, 2013).

<sup>439</sup> On the Hospitaller priory of Hungary in Matthias's times: D. Salihović, 'Pro sustentatione castrorum: The role of the Hospitaller Priory of Hungary in King Matthias Corvinus's Anti-Ottoman Defensive Policies, c. 1464-1490,' *Journal of Medieval History* (forthcoming May 2021).

<sup>440</sup> [Milan Vukičević] Милан Вукичевић, 'Из старих србуља' [From the old Srbuljas], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 13 (1901): pp. 345-7; Ćiro Truhelka, 'Fojnička kronika' [The Chronicle of Fojnica], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Bosni i Hercegovini* 21 (1909): pp. 446-8.

<sup>441</sup> A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 558, pp. 373-4.

1430s figured as a pretender supported by the Ottomans,<sup>442</sup> had certain estates in this area. Although of a later date and possibly a forgery, one document from the so-called Chronicle of Fojnica testifies that the castles of Tešanj and Gračac belonged to Radivoj.<sup>443</sup> The latter is partially corroborated by a trustworthy document from 1461, a papal instrument that shows that Radivoj indeed had control over Tešanj.<sup>444</sup> The castle of Sokol was also, without any doubt, in his hands, as Radivoj's own contract with the family of his father-in-law from 1449 proves.<sup>445</sup> It has long been known, as documents from Ragusa show, that the Ottoman-installed king of Bosnia that occupied the post between 1465 and at least 1471 was in fact Matthew/Matthias, son of Radivoj.<sup>446</sup> What all this suggests is that Mehmed II may have installed his king of Bosnia, in fact, in the possessions of his late father Radivoj. This could mean that Tešanj, Maglaj, as well as Gračac and Sokol came under Hungarian control only in 1476, and not 1464, when Srebrenik and Teočak were captured. Although it has been argued in historiography, primarily by Ćirković, that there were at least two, if not three different *Matijas* that occupied the same position between 1465 and 1476, and this has become the accepted view, evidence is very weak. In fact, Thallóczy, whose views Ćirković criticized, was of an opinion that this was only one man.<sup>447</sup> Babinger too shared his views, although considered the king to be a scion of another Bosnian family.<sup>448</sup> The Hungarian historian based his claims primarily on a similarity between a surname that occasionally appears next to Radivoj's name – *Krstić/Kristić*, etc., i.e. *Charstich* in the primary material – and the name that the Milanese envoy gave to the king he discussed in 1476 – *Mattia Christianissimo*.<sup>449</sup> Although Ćirković was quite adamant that this connection did not exist (relying solely on reason), *Christianissimo* was not an adjective, but a name, and no doubt the Milanese envoy had significant issues

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<sup>442</sup> On Radivoj in general see: S. Andrić, 'O obitelji bosanskog protukralja Radivoja Ostojića (prilog rasvjetljavanju bračnih veza posljednjih Kotromanića s plemstvom iz dravsko-savskog međurječja)' [On the Family of the Bosnian Anti-king Radivoj Ostojić (A Contribution to the Study of Nuptial Relations between the Last Members of the Kotromanićes and the Nobility of the Drava-Sava interamnium)], in *Stjepan Tomašević (1461.-1463.) – slom srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva*, ed. Ante Birin (Zagreb-Sarajevo: Hrvatski institut za povijest-Katolički bogoslovni fakultet u Sarajevu, 2013), pp. 109-32; Pejo Čošković, 'Kotromanići' s.v. 'Radivoj' in *Hrvatski biografski leksikon* - <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=249#Radivoj>, accessed on 22 May 2019.

<sup>443</sup> See note 440.

<sup>444</sup> A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 558, pp. 373-4.

<sup>445</sup> MNL OL DF 260762; cf. S. Andrić, 'O obitelji,' where the document is discussed in detail.

<sup>446</sup> See: S. Ćirković, 'Властела и краљеви у Босни после 1463.' [The aristocracy and kings in Bosnia after 1463], *Istoriski glasnik* 3 (1954): pp. 123-131 and the literature he discusses there.

<sup>447</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*, pp. 121-2.

<sup>448</sup> F. Babinger, *Мехмед Освајач*, pp. 220-1.

<sup>449</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacizai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 219, pp. 316-18. Ćirković left the possibility that the document may have been erroneously transcribed, thus doubting the veracity of the *Christianissimo* 'surname.' However, the original document has the same name. See: ASMi, Carteggio Visconteo-Sforzesco, Potenze estere, 650 (Ungheria), 2/8, 17.

(possibly intentionally) with correctly interpreting the Slavic name ‘Kr(i)stić’ that so closely resembled ‘Christian’ in any language that he may have encountered in Buda. ‘Krstić’ comes from ‘krst’, i.e. *cross*, while ‘Kristić’ literally stands for ‘little Christ/(son) of Christ’ with an obvious root in *χρῖστος*. I would not, therefore, so easily reject the idea that the envoy’s *Mattia Christianissimo* was in fact Matija Kristić, son of Radivoj. In other words, only one Matthias may indeed have been the Ottoman king of Bosnia between 1465 and 1476. Regardless of their number, Ottoman-installed king(s) of Bosnia may have enjoyed Radivoj’s estates.

Apart from Jajce and other castles of the western section of Hungarian Bosnia discussed above, King Matthias Corvinus and his men controlled a substantial number of other strongholds of various strength and size that rarely appear in the primary material from the period between 1463 and 1490, or only figure in the material dating from the period after Matthias’s death. Although Livno and Kamengrad were apparently lost during Matthias’s reign, no other evidence exists that would suggest that other castles in this area were also subdued by Ottoman frontier lords. There is also no evidence to suggest that Hungarian kings who followed Matthias expanded Hungarian borderlands in this region. This warrants certain credibility to the documents dating from the period immediately after Matthias’s death in 1490 as concerns the number and location of castles prior to 1490. Bearing this in mind, castles/towers of Greben, Osik, Kozara, Koszorúvár (Vinac), Banja Luka, Bočac, Cserépvár, Jezero, Komotin, Peč, and Vrbas need to be briefly addressed.

Greben, a fort upstream from Jajce along the Vrbas, nearly halfway between Jajce and Slavonia, appears regularly in the post-1490 material. It seems to have had a Franciscan monastery in its vicinity and was counted among the appurtenances of Jajce.<sup>450</sup> Matthias was apparently with his army in a camp beneath Greben in 1480, as attested both by the king’s own charter and Bonfini.<sup>451</sup> The latter, narrating the king’s pursuit of Ottomans returning to Bosnia in 1480, relates that the Hungarian army set up camp in its vicinity, and thence, numbering 16 000 and lightly armed, ravaged Ottoman lands.<sup>452</sup> Located north of Jajce along the Vrbas, the natural path from the fords of the Sava deeper into Bosnia, *in sinistra ripa Verbas amnis*, in the words of the sixteenth-century geographer Mario Negri,<sup>453</sup> it had probably been taken during the campaign of 1463. Kozara, on the other hand, considered a part of the ‘lower Slavonian’ county of Sana (Szana), and thus Hungary, was not, but Matthias certainly tried to

<sup>450</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, docs. 67, 68, 83, pp. 104-23, 124, 138.

<sup>451</sup> J. Teleki, *Hunyadiak*, vol. 12, doc. 652, pp. 141-2.

<sup>452</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/5, p. 102.

<sup>453</sup> Domenico Mario Negri, *Commentariorum geographiae libri XI* (Basel, 1557), p. 91.

acquire it in the 1470s and 1480s. The castle was at the centre of a legal dispute that seems to have lasted between at least 1473 and 1481, and possibly longer. In 1464, the king granted the castle to John Székely of Hídvég and Michael Székely of Szentgyörgy, but the latter sold it to Ladislaus Rohfi Décsei for 3000 florins in 1473.<sup>454</sup> In 1481, Ladislaus was accused by the king's attorney that he, in fact, committed a serious offense against Matthias with the purchase of the castle. According to the accusation, as Matthias wished to reacquire Kozara and compensate the two Székelys, in the early 1470s he ordered Ladislaus (he was the vice-ban of Slavonia at the time) and his lord, the *ban* of Slavonia, to redeem the castle with 500 florins gathered from the thirtieth tax in the county of Zagreb. But Ladislaus, disregarding the king's orders, acquired the castle for himself. Ladislaus's representative, however, presented two charters to the court in 1481, showing that Matthias granted the castle to the two Székelys, as well as that they sold the castle of Kozara with two other smaller forts in its vicinity to Ladislaus in 1473, before the chapter of Čazma.<sup>455</sup> Indeed, the deed of 1473 shows that Ladislaus bought the forts for 3000 florins, which the previous owners were eager to sell for one very good reason.<sup>456</sup> Located in the vicinity of Ottoman possessions in Bosnia, the castle and its surroundings had been ravaged by the Turks vehemently and frequently. The two owners were exhausted, having invested immense effort and expenses, as well as witnessed bloodshed and violent deaths of their men in attempts to defend the castle. In their view, the area had little chance of fighting off the enemy and was on the brink of being overrun, especially as no 'stipend, help or subsidy' had been granted by the king in the nearly ten years that the two governed it. In order to protect the area adjacent to Slavonia and Hungary proper, and relinquish its defences to a more suitable captain, the pair sold it Ladislaus. But Ladislaus stood no chance at the court. The judges, although impressed by the submitted evidence, ruled against him on a rather technical basis. As the king, they claimed, decreed in 1464 that all deeds granted before his coronation had to be confirmed before a certain deadline, and neither of the two charters presented as evidence were thus reissued,<sup>457</sup> the judges proclaimed Kozara a royal possession.<sup>458</sup> However, nothing is known of the castle's fate. Matthias famously concluded his Slavonian *iudicium generale* of 1481 with extensive pardons in exchange for largely monetary concessions.<sup>459</sup> Whether the king retook Kozara, maybe arranged a deal with

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<sup>454</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, docs. 134, 138, pp. 208-11, 218-23.

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 134, pp. 208-11.

<sup>457</sup> F. Döry et al., eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae*, § XXIII, pp. 147-8.

<sup>458</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 138, pp. 218-23.

<sup>459</sup> For details, see: I. Tringli, 'Az 1481. évi szlavóniai közgyűlés'.

Ladislaus, compensated or left him there remains unknown. A castle by the name of *Koszar* figures in a list of Hungarian and Ottoman castles in Bosnia found in the *Acta Tomiciana*, a sixteenth-century collection of Polish documents compiled by Stanisław Górski, of unknown origin and without an exact date of compilation.<sup>460</sup> Both Thallóczy and Mrgić recognized *Koszar* as Kozara(c).<sup>461</sup> However, judging by the place of *Koszar* among other Ottoman-controlled castles, in Bosnia and not Slavonia, as well as the orthography, what the list probably refers to is another castle in the vicinity of Jajce – Koszorúvár, i.e. Koszorú in Hungarian or Vinac/Vinčac in Slavonic, both meaning ‘Wreath(-castle).’ On the other hand, the list also contains the castle of *Cosser* which may correspond to either Kozara or Koszorúvár. Considering, however, that neither in the capitulations of 1503 nor 1519 does Kozara(c) figure among Ottoman castles, and Koszorúvár does, the fate of the castle remains obscure.<sup>462</sup> It does not seem that it fell into Ottoman hands by 1519.

The ownership of the fortress at Osik, near Kozara, in the Slavonian county of Vrbas towards Bosnia was, it seems, similarly controversial. At least according to claims presented by Stephen Dessewffy to King Wladislas in 1491, in 1479 the *provisor* of the castle at Jajce, a certain Stephen of Pest, occupied the castle of *Ezek* and kept it for some unspecified period.<sup>463</sup> In 1479 Stephen’s castellans, again according to Dessewffy, manned the castle at *Ezek*.<sup>464</sup> Although Thallóczy counted it among the castles of the ‘*captain*’ and the ‘*banate* of Jajce,’<sup>465</sup> Stephen’s motivation is not clear, nor was Stephen a captain. His castellans were apparently connected to his office in Jajce, but whether the takeover of *Ezek* was a private brawl or an action guided from Matthias’s court remains unknown. Although by 1491 the castle was neither in Dessewffy’s nor Stephen of Pest’s hands, it also remains unknown when the latter abandoned it.

Koszorúvár or Vinac/Vinčac/Venčac, or *Wenchaz* in Latin documents,<sup>466</sup> unlike Kozarac, certainly did fall into Ottoman hands by 1519. In the *decretum minus* of 1498 issued by King Wladislas II, one of the articles addressed punishment of captains who lose frontier

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<sup>460</sup> *Acta Tomiciana*, doc. 122, p. 117. The document, dated completely arbitrarily to 1518, was also printed in L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 186, p. 277.

<sup>461</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*, p. 271; cf. J. Мргić, *Доњи Крају*, p. 128.

<sup>462</sup> MNL OL DL 30498; J. von Hammer, *Geschichte*, vol. 2, pp. 616-20; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 106 pp. 167-70; L. Nakaš, ‘Bosanski pisar sultana Selima’; MNL OL DL 24393; L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 167, pp. 279-86; A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 818, pp. 626-8.

<sup>463</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 143, pp. 231-2.

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 137, pp. 216-8.

<sup>465</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca*, p. 274.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. L. Nakaš, ‘Bosanski pisar sultana Selima.’

castles due to negligence.<sup>467</sup> Singled out were a couple of commanders who lost their castles during Wladislas's reign, including Francis Haraszti who lost Koszorúvár. Although Engel and Hammer assumed the castle fell in 1496,<sup>468</sup> John Corvinus's letter dated to September 1491 explicitly mentions that Ottoman troops had occupied the castle recently and were expected to commit to an assault on Jajce.<sup>469</sup> The castle, some 10 kilometres from the latter, was described by Corvinus as *clavis et porta arcis Jaycze*. Probably no significant defences stood between it and the central Hungarian stronghold in Bosnia. Komotin too was noted in the decree of 1498. However, no primary material suggests a more precise date of its fall. Standing at approximately the same distance from Jajce as Koszorúvár, just to the north, it also provided a buffer of sorts to Jajce, contributing to its safety. Just as Komotin and Koszorúvár, other significant castles, particularly those of Banja Luka, Vrbas, Bočac, and Jezero were located on or near the Vrbas, along the axis that connected the Hungarian outposts in Bosnia and the Sava, a natural Hungarian barrier towards Bosnia. Although all four are found in the later material as Hungarian posts, neither is mentioned in the sources from before 1490. No doubt all of them were part of the Hungarian frontier in Bosnia during Matthias's reign, and, if Ottoman armies had captured them in 1463, they must have been retaken during the Hungarian campaign of the same year. No army could have reached Jajce along the Vrbas's banks without passing near Banja Luka, Vrbas, and Bočac. Nothing is known of a number of different strongholds in-between territories held by the two sides that appear particularly in the capitulations of 1503 and 1519. The problem of ownership of Kotor, Prepelica/Prepolica, Belograd/Beograd/Prusac, Glamoč, Fenerlik/Kaštel, etc. is truly puzzling and little, if anything, can be said about the history of these castles in this period.<sup>470</sup> The identification and the location of some of these toponyms are still controversial, as their ubication remains a matter of discussion and speculations.<sup>471</sup>

Relatively little, then, can be said with certainty about the composition and exact extent of the Hungarian frontier in Bosnia during Matthias's reign, certainly much less than Szakály (and Thallóczy) would make one think. The primary material from before 1490, complemented

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<sup>467</sup> F. Döry et al., eds., *Decreta Regni mediaevalis Hungariae/The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, vol. 4 (Budapest-Idyllwild: CEU-Charles Schlacks, 2012), § XLII, p. 116.

<sup>468</sup> Johann Christian von Engel, *Staatskunde und Geschichte von Dalmatien, Croatien, und Slavonien* (Halle: Gebauer, 1798), p. 562; J. von Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, vol. 4 (Paris: Bellizard, Barthès, Dufour & Lowell, 1836), p. 42.

<sup>469</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, doc. 55, pp. 80-1.

<sup>470</sup> Several individuals from these places appear in Dalmatian notary books from the period. There is nothing, however, in these notes that would reveal the status of the fortresses.

<sup>471</sup> Cf. e.g. A. Husić, 'O ubikaciji srednjovjekovne tvrđave Fenarlik' [On ubication of the medieval fortress of Fenarlik], *Prilozi* 31 (2002): pp. 83-94.

by the later sources, shows that the presence of Hungarian garrisons was centred on the area along the river Vrbas, a natural path through the mountainous Bosnia from Jajce towards Hungary. Just as little can with any certainty be said about the exact dates of the takeover or loss of certain areas, particularly in Usora and the territory towards the Ottoman sanjak of Smederevo. The frontier furthermore, at least in Bosnia, seems to have stabilized only in the 1470s, by which time the Hungarians established (or expanded) their presence in the north-east, while the Ottomans secured a cordon of sorts along the Croatian territory to the west, with Livno in the south and Ključ and Kamengrad in the north, manned either by local renegades or Ottoman *ulufeci*.

In order to understand better the role of the Hungarian-held strongholds, that were, without doubt, taken by Matthias for the sole purpose of keeping the Ottomans as far away from Hungary as possible, we shall now turn to their geographical surroundings and geopolitical potential. Once put on a map, and their position with respect to terrain analysed in significant detail, Bosnian castles should reveal further information about their concrete role in the defensive mechanism. In other words, in the following paragraphs I will return to views recently (re)emphasized by Nagy, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, and weigh them against the ideas that characterize the ‘Szakály thesis’. This is not to say, however, that Szakály and scholars that follow his reasoning, at least in principle, completely failed to recognize the general role of a part of the Hungarian borderlands in the south. It was, without doubt, a defensive one. But it certainly did not, as we shall see, provide a comprehensive, impenetrable, linear defence of Hungarian territories. Vast regions remained out of direct control of Hungarian captains, as well as Ottoman. And it was the characteristics of the terrain that not only dictated the extent of Hungarian involvement, but also complemented obstacles presented by Hungarian fortresses. Furthermore, when analysing the role of these strongholds and the whole defensive system in general, one has to bear in mind the fact that Matthias, as far as the available material shows, did not build castles in Bosnia, unlike in other areas along the frontier.<sup>472</sup> Furthermore, if Matthias is to be trusted, it was the harsh winter of 1463 that stopped his advance.<sup>473</sup> The failure beneath Zvornik the next year halted further Hungarian advance in

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<sup>472</sup> See: MNL OL DF 293306; R. Predelli, ed., *I Libri Commemorativi*, vol. 17, doc. 158, p. 315; József Csermely, ‘A Szendrő közelében épített magyar erődök szerepe Hunyadi Mátyás törökellenes védelmi rendszerében’ [The role of Hungarian fortifications near Smederevo in Matthias Hunyadi’s anti-Turkish defence system], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 124 (2011): pp. 845-63; M. Kiel, ‘The Ottoman Castle of Ram (Haram) in Serbia and the Accounts of its Construction, 1491’ in *State and Society in the Balkans before and after the Establishment of Ottoman Rule*, eds. Srđan Rudić, Selim Aslantaş (Belgrade: Institute of History, 2017), pp. 165-89.

<sup>473</sup> *Johannes Vitéz de Zredna*, p. 215



the east of Bosnia. It was primarily failure and chance, rather than plan, that shaped the Hungarian borderlands. Both Ottomans and Hungarians were thus left unsatisfied with the extent of their control over Bosnia and had to come to terms with what they had (as suggested also by the material discussed in the previous chapter). That said, it was certainly plan that guided Matthias to focus his efforts on Jajce and the castles along the Vrbas. This was his primary goal in 1463. In 1464 the goal seems to have been Zvornik, a castle that, had it been taken, would have provided a deeper buffer to the southern Hungarian counties along the Sava. At least the first campaign was largely successful, much more than the one that followed it, and thus Jajce, a castle that became the centre of Hungarian administration in Bosnia and the principal matter of dispute between the two sides, remained in Hungarian hands. It was not only its prestige that made Mehmed think that one cannot truly control Bosnia without Jajce.<sup>474</sup> It was its crucial position above the Vrbas, the road that led towards Hungary through the impenetrable mountains of Bosnia, that was at the centre of interest of both sides. It was with control over Jajce that one could conquer the Bosnian Dinarides extending to the Hungarian plain. And that is why Matthias came to terms with his position in Bosnia. With Belgrade and later also Šabac (from 1476)<sup>475</sup> providing the last line of defence to Hungary farther in the east, at least Jajce salvaged the majority of the Hungarian hilly frontier in the west. It was, in other words, good enough.

To demonstrate the specific ways in which the castles in Bosnia provided protection to provinces to its north and northwest, I will base the following discussion on a ‘viewshed’ analysis of their locations and surroundings. This computational simulation, dependent in its accuracy only on inputs provided by the researcher, returns areas visible from a specific point in space, taking into consideration the characteristics of the surrounding relief. In this case, points are determined by locations of castles. Analyses were conducted with the use of QuantumGIS software, version 2.18.25, GRASS GIS’s viewshed.r function, and the ‘viewshed’ plugin developed for QGIS. I have compiled a composite digital elevation model (DEM) for the area of the Balkans from rasters provided by the NASA’s Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) 1-Arc Second global DEM which I acquired through United States Geological Survey. DEMs are used to provide data on the relief’s elevation. I set the radius of analysis to 0.228°, thus corresponding to c. 18 km at 45°0’N, accounting for limits in viewshed due to the curvature of the Earth and an average range of sight in near-perfect

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<sup>474</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 231, pp. 380-5.

<sup>475</sup> L. Veszprémy, ‘Szabács ostroma.’

conditions. I have included the effect of the atmospheric refraction into the analysis and set the height of the observer to 7 m above the ground, the only arbitrary value that seemed to me to be close to the average height of medieval walls, towers, and castles in the area.<sup>476</sup>

The analysis returns the following results:

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<sup>476</sup> Cf. Zorislav Horvat, 'Zidine i braništa na utvrdama kontinentalne Hrvatske 12. – 15. stoljeća' [Walls and battlements on fortifications of continental Croatia, twelfth to fifteenth centuries], *Prostor* 4 (1996): pp. 175-200.

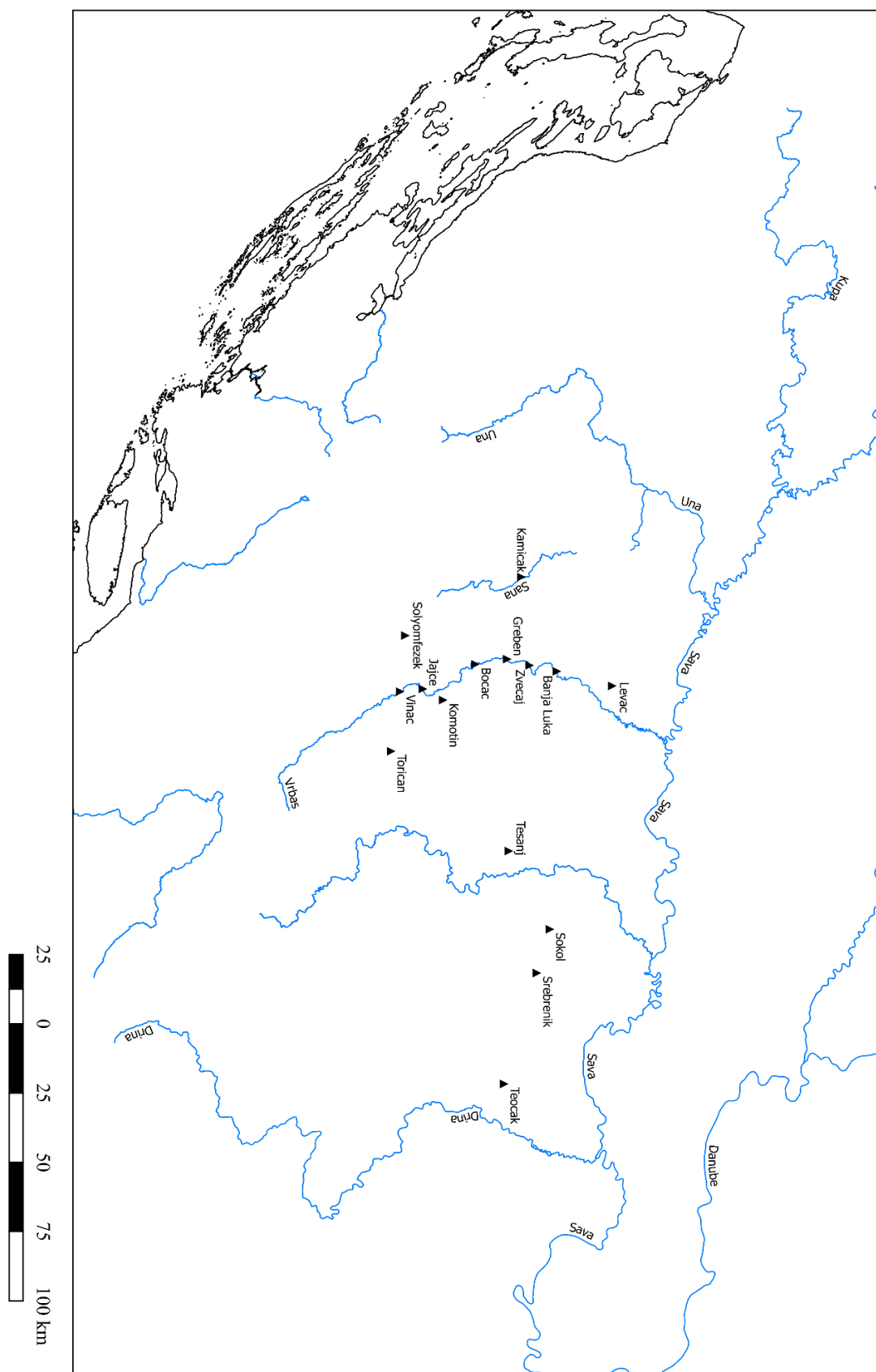


Figure 1 - Hungarian-held castles in Bosnia

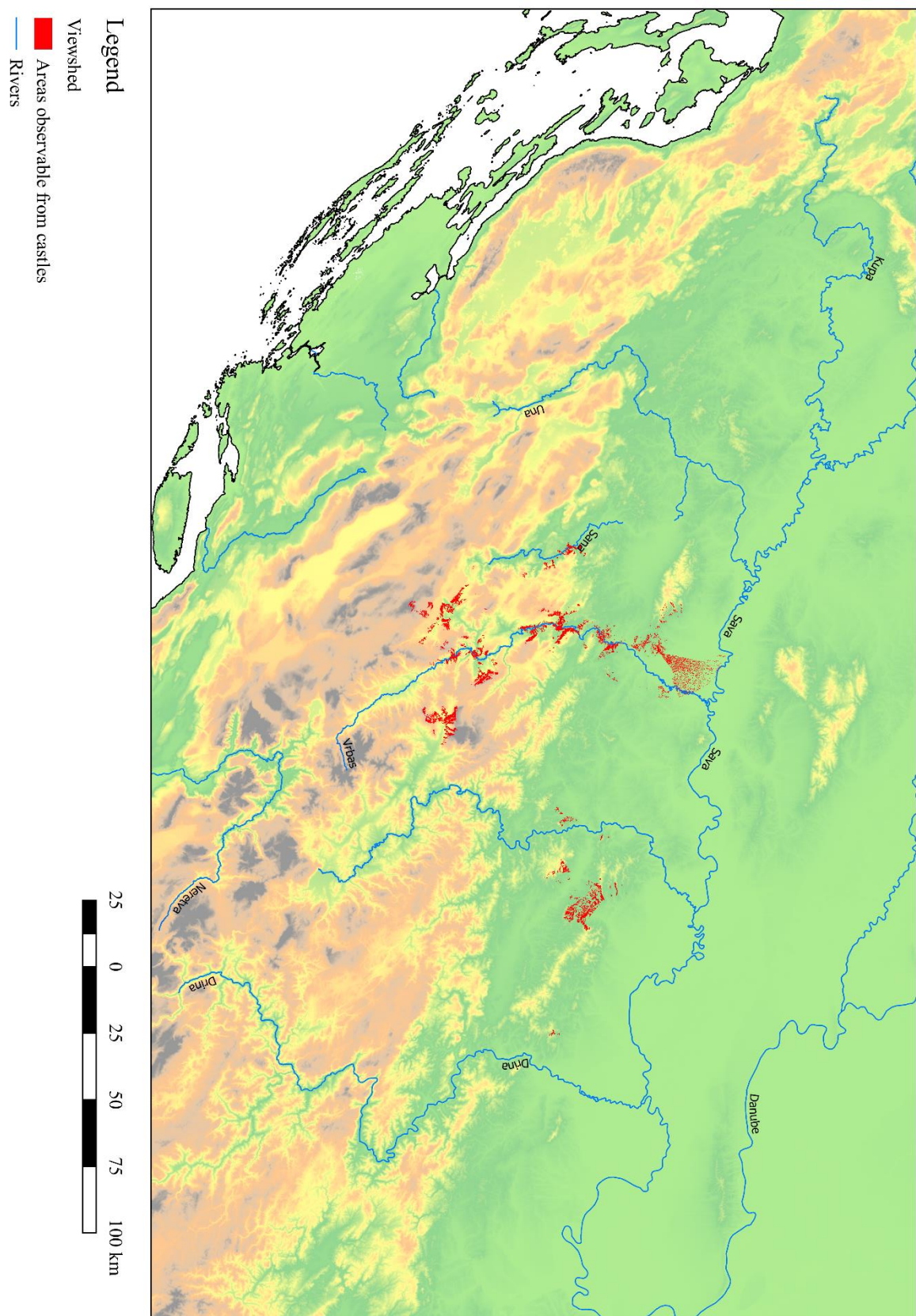


Figure 2 - Viewsheds of Hungarian-held castles in Bosnia

It is quite clear already from the first map that the main cluster of Hungarian garrisons was grouped along the Vrbas. The second map not only emphasizes this peculiarity but shows that the majority of fortresses were quite useless in monitoring areas outside the Vrbas's canyon. Not only does this depict, quite plastically, the abrupt changes in altitude and the harsh terrain of the area, but suggests that the primary objective of Hungarian defences was indeed to cover the approach to fords on the Sava. With a similar objective in mind, the Hungarian troops apparently entered eastern Bosnia in 1464. By failing to take Zvornik on the Drina, they were left with Srebrenik, Teočak and other nearby forts that were taken either in 1464 or 1476 that served the same purpose with respect to fords further down the Sava. The role of rivers and the lower terrain stretching between the Bosnian mountains and the Sava's valley is probably better represented by the following map depicting karst fields, river valleys, and flood plains in the region.<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>477</sup> Floodplains reconstructed on the basis of the '*Magyarország vízborította és árvízjárta területei az ármentesítő és lecsapoló munkálatok megkezdése előtt*' [Hungarian water-covered areas and wetlands before the flood protection and drainage] map, developed by Woldemár Lászlóffy and the Hydrographic Institute of the Hungarian Royal Ministry of Agriculture in 1938. See the map at <https://maps.hungaricana.hu/hu/HTITerkeptar/2206/>, accessed on 3 December 2018. Cf. *Földrajzi Közlemények* 68 (1940): pp. 218-19; Zsolt Pinke and Beatrix Szabó, 'Analysis of the Map of the Ministry of Agriculture: Water Covered Areas and Wetlands in the Carpathian Basin before the Commencement of Flood Protection and Draining,' in 2. *Nemzetközi és 8. Országos Interdiszciplináris Grastyán konferencia előadásai*, eds. Melinda Szappanyos, Virág Rab (Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, 2010), pp. 194-203.



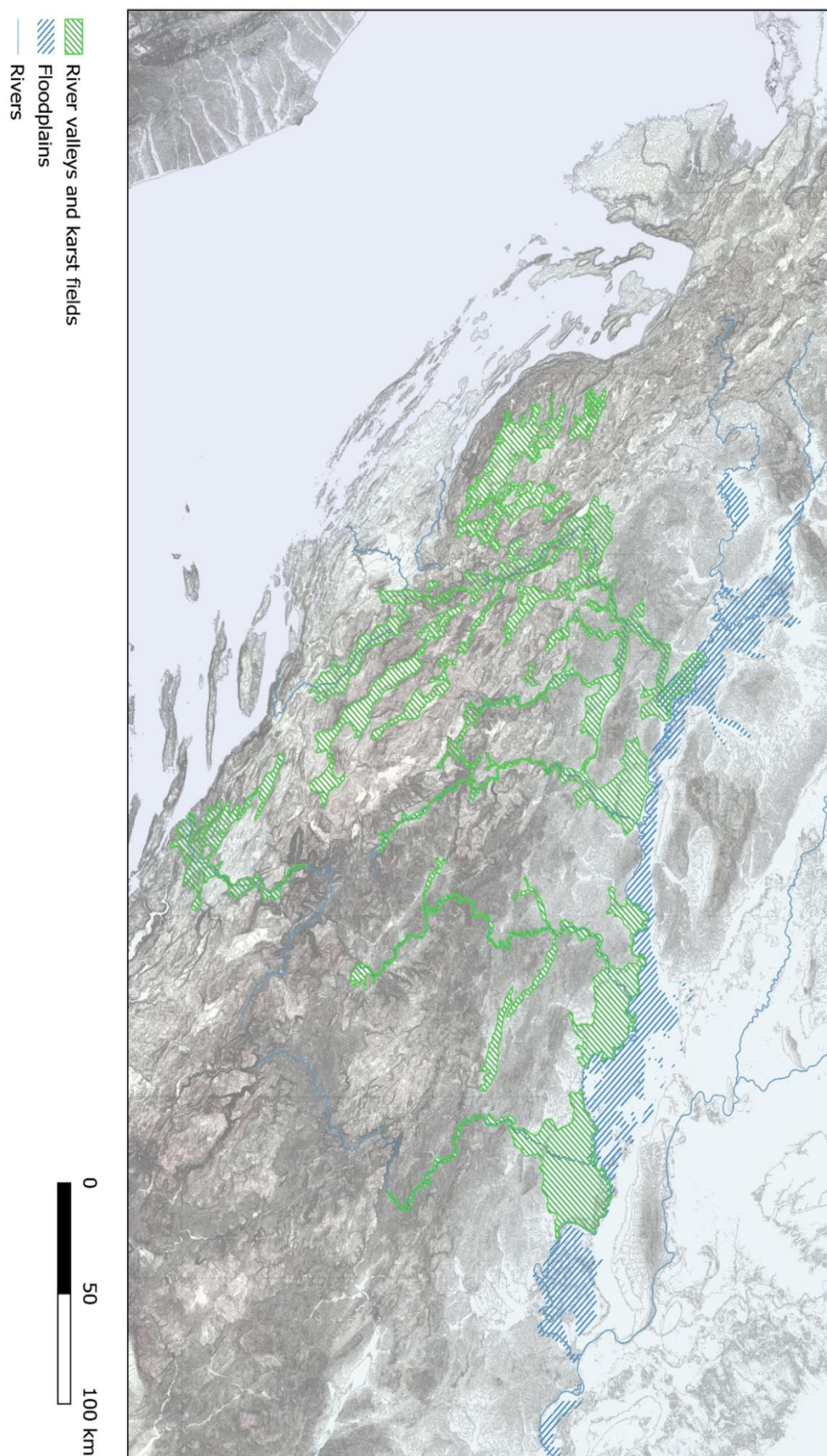


Figure 3 - Terrain of the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier

It was precisely through these valleys and fields that an army of a substantial strength could have penetrated deeper into Hungarian territories. What these maps ultimately show is that the ‘geopolitical’ approach is probably the correct way of looking at the structure of Matthias’s (and later) defensive mechanism in the south. Apparently vast regions of Bosnia, particularly between the rivers Bosna and Vrbas were left void of any Hungarian presence, but still the defensive system functioned. It did not, therefore, *stretch* between Belgrade and Klis. It filled out ‘holes’ in the terrain that otherwise protected approaches to the Sava and Hungary that obviously could not have been circumvented.

## Croatia and Slavonia

Bosnia, however, was not the only arena of Hungarian-Ottoman conflict, nor did its castles alone witness conquest by royal troops. Szakály’s ‘defensive system’ stretched far beyond the Vrbas or the Bosna, or the karst fields of Tropolje and the mountain of Dinara, into Croatia and towards the Adriatic. Its central points further in the west were Knin, Klis, Skradin, and Senj.<sup>478</sup> Just what Matthias controlled in areas west of Bosnia by 1490 is maybe best portrayed by his son’s agreement with Hungarian barons in the late spring of 1490, in the deed that would later be famously confirmed by Wladislas II in the so-called ‘Farkashida capitulation.’<sup>479</sup> Among many issues that regulated John’s status under Wladislas’s regime, the document also listed his rights with regard to castles left to him by his late father. Under the conditions of the treaty, the young prince was entitled to Croatian castles of Senj, Steničnjak, Lipovec, Vivodina, Ripač, Novi, Starigrad, Bag, Otočac, Prozor, Obrovac, Kličevac, Počitelj, *Wech*(?), Krupa, Japra, Obrovac (na Uni), Brinje, and Belaj. And this was only in Croatia. There were other castles nearby and scattered across the kingdom. All of these castles, as we shall see in the following paragraphs, were acquired by his father through use of force and skilful negotiations between 1464 and the mid-1480s. The majority were in the area between Senj and Knin, overlooking Croatian karst fields and directions of Ottoman incursions both into Venetian Dalmatia and *Terraferma*, as well as the imperial Carniola and Carinthia.

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<sup>478</sup> F. Szakály, ‘The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System,’ pp. 141-58.

<sup>479</sup> Ferdo Šišić, ‘Rukovet spomenika o hercegu Ivanišu Korvinu i o borbama Hrvata s Turcima (1473-1496)’ [A handful of documents about prince John Corvinus and the Croats’ struggle against the Turks (1473-1496)], *Starine JAZU* 37 (1934): doc. 59, pp. 287-94.

Directions of Ottoman incursions into the above areas, all of which crossed the territory of medieval Croatia, were discussed in several contemporary and near-contemporary treaties. One of them is the already mentioned ‘discourse of 1475.’<sup>480</sup> There the author noted that, after gathering in the fields of Kamengrad and Ključ, Ottoman troops crossed the river Una at the ford near the castle of Sokolac (near Bihać) whence they entered Croatia and thereafter had two roads at their disposal. The first led Ottomans towards Brinje and Ledenice, leaving Senj to their left, and thence through Vinodol either towards Bakar and Trsat or towards Grobnik and Klana and further towards Bistrica and Postojna, already deep in Carniola. If Istria and farther Venetian possessions were their target, they would use the road leading from Trsat towards Rašpor and thence towards Friuli. The second road through Croatia led the Turks from the Una towards Steničnjak and Metlika, leaving the Frankapan estates, namely Brinje, Plaški, Modruš, etc. to their left, crossing the Kupa into Carniola. The author was certainly well acquainted with the geography of the area, correctly listing the succession of toponyms along the roads towards Venetian and imperial possessions.

A contemporary local, a doctor of canon law, and by the early 1480s the bishop of Ulcinj, Martin Segono, made a similar effort to record the directions of Ottoman incursions into Croatia, Italy, and ‘Germany.’<sup>481</sup> One of his writings, entitled accordingly and probably compiled in or soon after December 1480,<sup>482</sup> is specifically dedicated to the geography of the Balkans and routes used by Ottoman raiders. As Agostino Pertusi showed, his work was later used by Felix Petančić who copied it nearly verbatim and published it as his own well-known treatise *Quibus itineribus Turci sint aggrediendi*.<sup>483</sup> Segono wrote of several roads of the Balkans, among which were those from Vrhbosna and Ključ towards Dalmatia and its hinterland, as well as from Ključ towards Croatia and Carinola. According to his experience, Ottoman raiding parties would start from Vrhbosna, travel towards Visoki (Visoko) and Prozor and thence towards Klis, Split, Trogir, and Šibenik. A second route led them towards Ključ, and thence across Bistrica towards Zadar and the sea. On their return back to Ključ (and presumably on the initial journey from the castle towards Dalmatia), they would cross the Una near Bihać, or would enter Bosnia through a southern route across Lika and through the narrow

<sup>480</sup> F. Cusin, ‘Le vie d’invasione dei turchi,’ p. 154-5; A. Pertusi, ‘I primi studi,’ pp. 549-52.

<sup>481</sup> Martin Segono, *Quos terrarum limites, quasve gentium regiones adeant in Turcos expeditionem affectantes et ex quibus Dalmatiae finibus iidem barbari in Germanorum agros excursionem faciant*, critical ed. in A. Pertusi, *Martino Segono*, pp. 86-146.

<sup>482</sup> See Appendix 1 for comments on datation.

<sup>483</sup> See A. Pertusi’s *Martino Segono* and ‘I primi studi’. Cf. Luka Špoljarić, ‘Feliks Petančić’ in *Christian-Muslim Relations*, vol. 7, pp. 50-7.



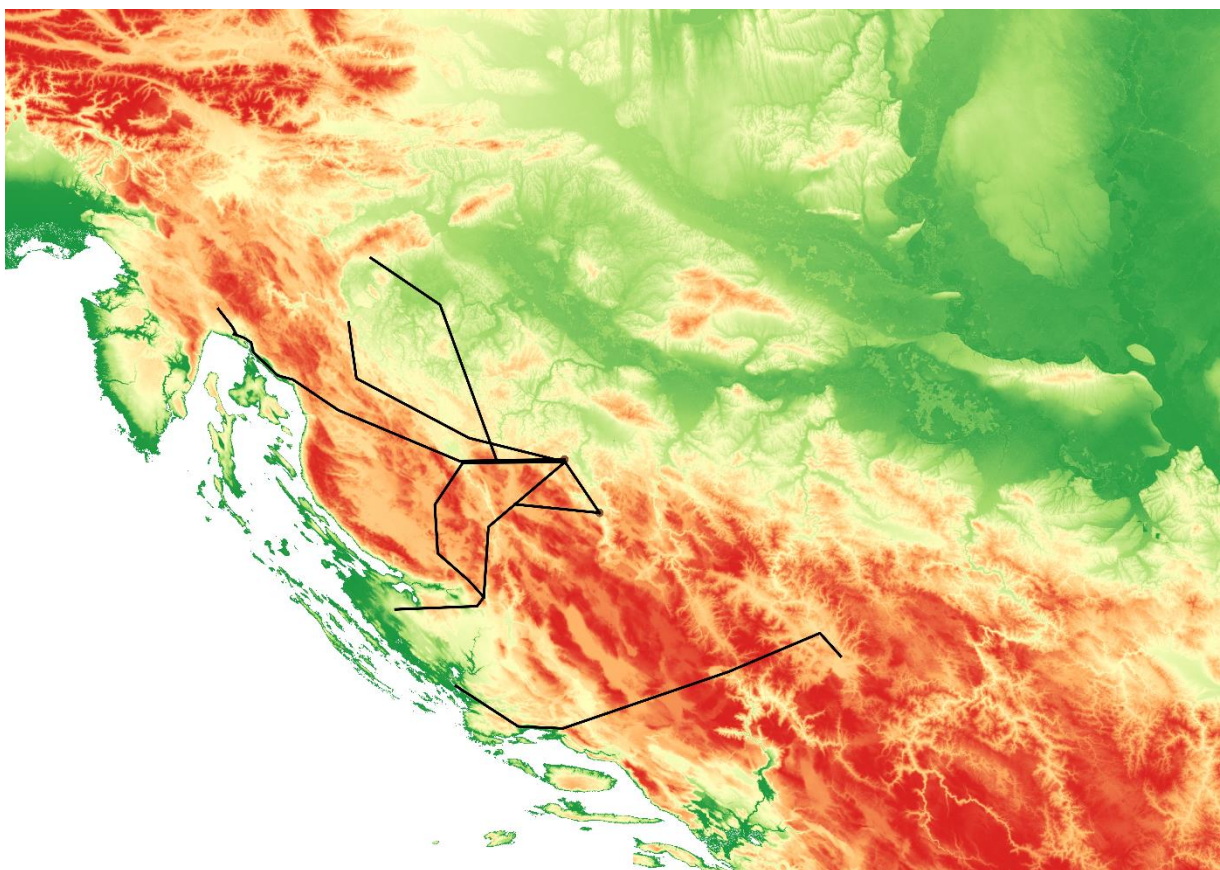
passages of the ‘Alps of Krbava’ that are very difficult to traverse.<sup>484</sup> Another road gave them access to Croatia and Carniola. This one went from Ključ towards the Una, which they would cross between Bihać and Krupa, and allowed the raiders to invade the areas of Croatia around Modruš, all the way to the Kupa. From here they could enter Carniola. Contemporary reports of various Italian ambassadors and spies confirm that indeed these areas, described both in the ‘discourse’ and by Segono, were used by Ottoman *akinji* as corridors towards Italy and Carniola.<sup>485</sup>

Drawn on a map, the relation between castles that Matthias had acquired in the area by 1490 (including other royal castles further south) and these routes shows how suggestive the depiction may be in interpreting the role of the king’s strongholds in Croatia and the reasoning behind their acquisition. In simplest terms, routes described by the two sources would look something like this:

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<sup>484</sup> For a more detailed attempt at interpreting these routes from Petančić’s text, see: Petar Matković, ‘Putovanja po balkanskom poluotoku XVI. vijeka’ [Travels across the Balkan peninsula in the sixteenth century], *Rad JAZU* 49 (1879): pp. 103-64.

<sup>485</sup> See above, pp. 19-22. Also: F. Cusin, ‘Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,’ doc. 83, pp. 111-2.



*Figure 4 - A rudimentary map of paths used by Ottoman intruders*

However, when characteristics of the terrain are taken into account, a somewhat more complex network is revealed. The analysis of a ‘least cost path’ between Ottoman and Croatian castles within the same area and along the same general routes (using the same composite DEM), returns these results:

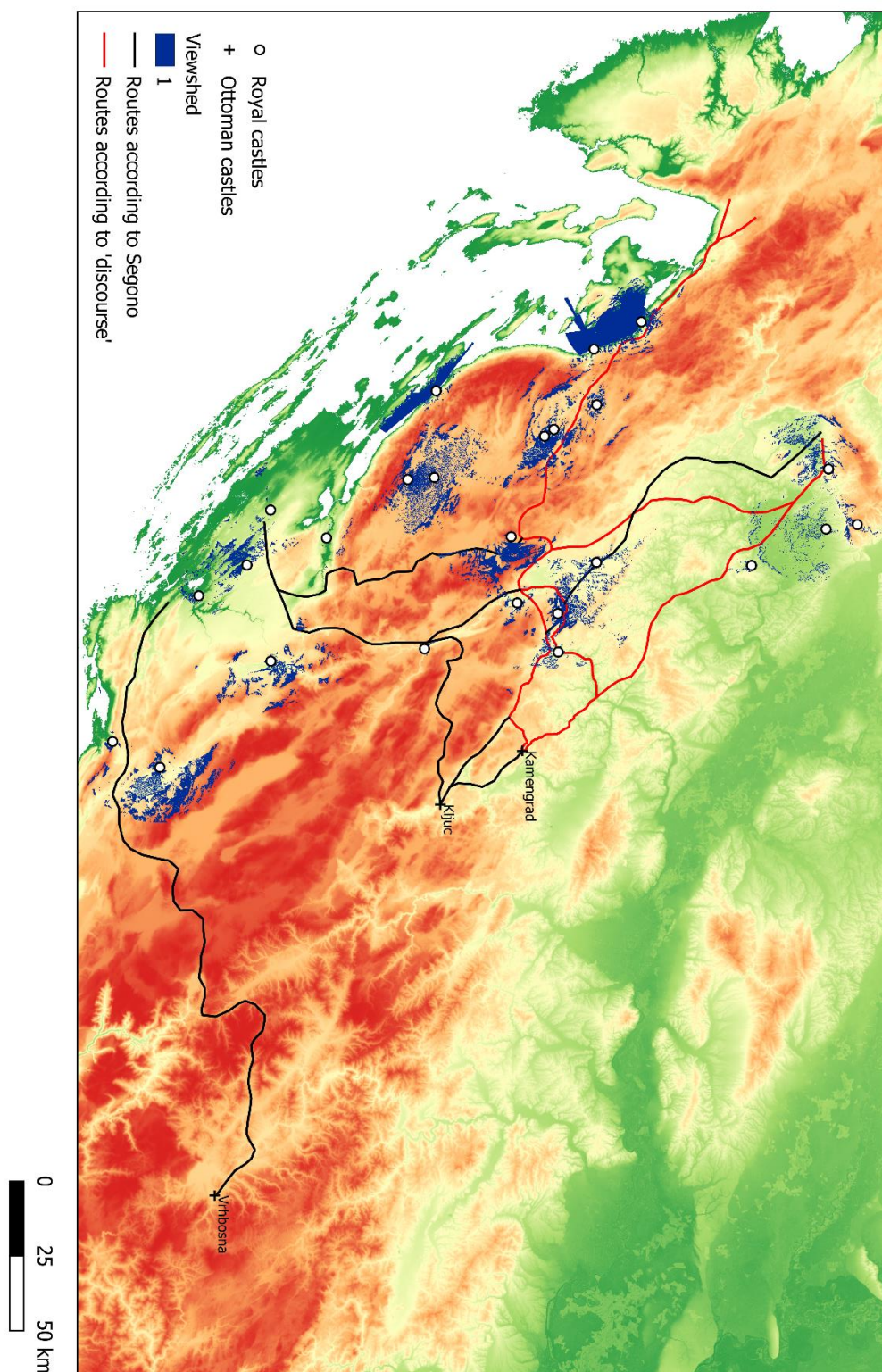


Figure 5 – The relation between paths used by Ottoman intruders and the viewsheds of Matthias's castles in Croatia

When positions of royal castles in 1490 are added to the map, as well as their viewshed, a striking pattern emerges. It seems that by the 1480s, when Matthias acquired the last castles in

Croatia, his garrisons controlled significant portions of roads or routes used by Ottoman raiders. It would appear that Matthias's goal was to check the movement of Ottoman troops across Croatia, along routes known from the 'discourse' and Segono, along the karst fields of Krbava and Lika, and particularly the fords of the Una, where Ottomans crossed into Matthias's lands. Much like in Bosnia, then, the defence of Croatia and partially Slavonia seems to have been influenced by terrain. It seems that there too the king's 'defensive system' was in place.

But, as logical as this may appear, there are significant issues that need to be addressed. The king did not acquire all of his castles in the area at the same time, let alone concurrently with his actions in Bosnia. In fact, most castles in Croatia, both those previously belonging to the Frankapans and the Kurjakoviće, were not acquired until the period between 1479 and c. 1483. The king had no meaningful control over central Croatia, the terrain around Knin, before the mid-1460s, and even from then onwards his captains had significant problems with preserving their authority over the area. In the early 1470s, in fact, the king was either unwilling or unable to consolidate his presence in the region around Klis. Further south the situation is far less clear. Not until 1465 did Matthias's men occupy any posts around the Neretva, and in the following period their objectives, strength, and position are quite vague. Not to say that several castles could not have been used against Ottomans, with the best of intentions. The king's motivation, as we shall see, is the most controversial issue, as very little would suggest that indeed Ottoman raiders were the direct reason behind his acquisitions in Croatia between the mid-1460s and mid-1480.

Matthias's acquisition of castles in Croatia, Slavonia, and around the Neretva was (at least) an eight-step process that lasted and oscillated between 1458 and the early 1480s. First, in 1458, came the castles of the so-called 'Tallóci inheritance' in Croatia and along the Cetina, those of Knin, Klis, Ostrovica, and probably Sinj and Petrovac. By 1464 the king laid his hands on the Frankapan Krupa; in 1465 and 1466 his captains not only established their presence on the Neretva, but had to renegotiate the situation in Croatia, where conflicts arose around Klis and the remainder of the former Tallóci domains. In 1469 the king famously captured Senj. The early 1470s were a time when serious problems again arose regarding Klis. In the late 1470s and the early 1480s the king, through negotiation and conflict with local lords, acquired further Frankapan and Kurjaković forts in the area between Senj and Zadar. Between 1471 and 1481, it seems, no Hungarian garrison was present along the Neretva. Only in 1481, following successful campaigns in Bosnia and Serbia (caused by Davud's *akins*), did Matthias manage to reintroduce Hungarian presence in the area. I shall return to each of these steps in detail, but



it is important to emphasize that even this brief overview shows that Matthias's 'defensive system' in Croatia, assuming anything alike indeed existed, was anything but a constant or even a planned undertaking. Importantly, it was only after 1479 that the most important clusters of castles that controlled routes used by Ottoman raiders, as shown on maps above, had fallen under the king's control.

When Matthias, a teenage boy at the time, was elected to ascend the Hungarian throne in 1458, Croatia had been for years entangled in a conflict over the inheritance of the Tallóci, the *homines novi* of King Sigismund's regime that lost the last fractions of their once formidable power in 1453, when Peter, one of the brothers, died and left behind him his wife and underage children.<sup>486</sup> Venice, the king of Bosnia, the Duke of Hercegovina, the Counts of Cilli, as well as local Croatian lords had their particular interests in this relatively minute area that roughly stretched between the rivers Cetina and Krka, including the central regions of the Kingdom of Croatia. While the king of Bosnia sought to marry his son to the widow of Peter Tallóci, and the Duke of Hercegovina was trying to marry her himself,<sup>487</sup> the castellans of Klis, Sinj, Petrovac, and Čačvina entered negotiations with the count of Split and Venice, who by January 1454 agreed to their propositions.<sup>488</sup> It was Venice, despite rumours of an open war in the area, that gained the upper hand in the winter of 1454, accepting to take the castles, the castellans, and the young sons of Peter under their protection. The castellans promised not to surrender either of the four castles, as well as Knin and Lab, to anyone without the consent of the Republic, to obey its will until the two sons were of age, to raise Venetian flags in the four castles, and to give them to Venice should they not be able to defend them. This accord would become the basis of Venice's later claims on the old Tallóci possessions, particularly Klis.

By the summer of 1456, however, men of Ulrich Cilli (possibly John Vitovec) captured Ostrovica, another Tallóci castle that the Venetians considered important for the security of their possessions in Dalmatia, between Split and Zadar.<sup>489</sup> Throughout the previous year the

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<sup>486</sup> On the Tallóci brothers in general see: E. Mályusz, 'A négy Tallóci fivér,' pp. 531-76; M. Perojević, 'Talovci - cetinski i kliški knezovi,' pp. 171-86. See also: T. Pálosfalvi, 'Cilleiek és Tallóciak: küzdelem Szlavóniáért (1440-1448)' [The Cillis and the Tallóci: the struggle for Slavonia (1440-1448)], *Századok* 134 (2000): pp. 45-98

<sup>487</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 23, pp. 25-6; Franjo Rački, 'Prilozi za sbirku srbskih i bosanskih listina' [Contributions for the collection of Serbian and Bosnian documents], *Rad JAZU* 1 (1867): doc. 18/e, pp. 154-5.

<sup>488</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 23, 27, pp. 25-6, 29.

<sup>489</sup> Franz Krones, ed., *Die Freien von Saneck und ihre Chronik als Grafen von Cilli* (Graz: Leuschner & Lubensky, 1883), pp. 115-6; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 94, pp. 88-9; cf. T. Pálosfalvi, 'Vitovec János. Egy zsoldoskarrier a 15. századi Magyarországon' [John Vitovec. A Career of a Soldier in Fifteenth-century Hungary], *Századok* 135 (2001): p. 436. Cf. Krunoslav Draganović et al., *Povijest Bosne i Hercegovine od najstarijih vremena do godine 1463*. [The history of Bosnia and Herzegovina from antient times until 1463] (Sarajevo: Napredak, 1998), pp. 534-6.

king of Bosnia requested Venice to engage against Cilli, to defend particularly Knin and respect their obligations towards the young sons of Peter Tallóci. But Venice, wary of entering into open conflict with Hungary, continued to urge Stephen Tomaš (the king of Bosnia at the time) to take over her role and enter Knin should its owners prove too weak to defend it.<sup>490</sup> By that time, the Kurjakoviće too had requested protection from Venice and entered their service as true *condottieri* against any foe except the king of Hungary.<sup>491</sup> Protection seems to have been necessary not only because of fear of Ottoman incursions, but against the assault of the Cillis. Along with Tomaš's requests for aid for Knin in June 1456, Venice received news of the possible alliance between the Duke of Hercegovina and the Count of Cilli and their joint push against the Tallóci.<sup>492</sup> King Tomaš apparently fought off the count's assault on Knin who, the king claimed, had received a royal mandate in Hungary to take Croatia. He was convinced that the duke had the approval of the Hungarians to go as far as Split, as well as that the Cillis would not refrain from going against Dalmatia should they take Knin. Although Venice returned a generic response, urging Tomaš to protect Knin in her name, in July 1456 the Senate arranged for Zadar's defences to be improved in fear of an attack from Ulrich's men.<sup>493</sup> By the end of summer the situation in the region stabilized, and Venice had to cede a part of its control, however indirect, over the Tallóci domains. It seems that Cilli's captains managed to capture most of it, as two of the three castellans that had in 1454 put their fate in Venice's hands surrendered and changed sides. Now, the Republic had to accept Cilli's new role in the Croatian *banate* and renegotiate the deal with the castellan of Klis.<sup>494</sup> He again sought protection in exchange for certain concessions, which Venice welcomed and accepted to put both him, the young Tallóci, and his castle under their protection as long as the castle is a part of the Tallóci's *comitatum* of Cetina, and not the Croatian *banate*.<sup>495</sup> One cannot be mistaken against whom this act was aimed, as the castellan explicitly asked for protection against Hungarians (i.e. Cilli and his men) which Venice, careful in her conduct in the area, could not accept. The Republic was happy to provide munitions, armament, or any other aid, but steered away from openly opposing the rights of the Hungarian crown in the region.

But peace was short-lived. Following the death of Ulrich Cilli in Belgrade in 1456, a power vacuum returned to Croatia. Soon again, especially after Ladislaus IV died in 1457, only

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<sup>490</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 59, pp. 46-7.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*, docs. 60, 66, 67, pp. 47-50, 56-7.

<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*, docs. 94, 95, pp. 88-90.

<sup>493</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 97, p. 92.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, docs. 103, 104, pp. 95-6.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, docs. 104, 106, pp. 96, 98-101.

Venice figured as the significant authority in the region. As early as April 1457 Ostrovica was again at the centre of Venetian interests. Its unnamed castellan, probably Andrew Kreiger who governed it in Ulrich's name,<sup>496</sup> offered the castle to the Republic, but first the Kurjakovićeš, who also sought to acquire it, had to be defeated.<sup>497</sup> Along with arms and soldiers, the Republic fought a legal battle against the Croatian magnates, claiming Ostrovica on the basis of old rights. Apparently not only historical reasoning was behind these claims, but also arguments based on recent accords with the Tallóciš from 1454. Further away the king of Bosnia again wished to pick up the pieces. Before May 1457 he attacked down the Cetina, obviously trying to take the remainder of the Tallóciš lands.<sup>498</sup> In September Venice again delegated her protection over Knin to the king, urging him to defend the castle should the Tallóciš' castellans not be able to keep it.<sup>499</sup> In the meantime the Duke of Hercegovina too returned to the theatre, pushing forward from the south, building a castle and allegedly wishing to construct a bridge across the Cetina.<sup>500</sup> When Venice protested, the duke responded that rumours about the bridge are not to be trusted, and maintained that he arrived in Radobilja only to counter the advances of the king of Bosnia. The latter, the duke claimed, conquered lands along the Cetina adjacent to his domains and thus jeopardized them. But it was not until the king had information that the duke would not intervene in Cetina that he initiated his campaign. And the duke abandoned his ambitions in Cetina for no other reason than fidelity towards the Republic, so he claimed, although even the sultan granted his approval for the duke to take the old Tallóciš inheritance for himself.<sup>501</sup> The Republic, now, inadvertently, dragged another power into the largely 'cold war' that was taking shape in Croatia. In January 1458, the Republic had to defend itself against allegations that had allegedly been presented by the duke to the sultan about the Republic's aggressive stance against him in Radobilja, Poljica, and Cetina.<sup>502</sup> No such aggression was ever intended, the Senate instructed envoys at the Porte to tell Mehmed. The Senate added that they did express their wish that the duke demolish his new castle, as it could cause only further scandals. The Republic beseeched Mehmed to urge Duke Stephen to abandon his plans that jeopardize their possessions in Poljica. At the same time, the king of Bosnia openly admitted his ongoing plans to take Croatia, offering Venice to join him and keep several castles to

<sup>496</sup> On his identity, see: T. Pálosfalvi, 'Vitovec János,' p. 448, fn. 110.

<sup>497</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 15, fol. 113v; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 110, 111, pp. 106-8.

<sup>498</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 112, pp. 108-9.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 117, pp. 113-5.

<sup>500</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 6, fol. 29r, 34v-35r; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 113, p. 109. Cf. M. Šunjić, *Bosna i Venecija*, p. 283-4, with an error in references, citing 'Mar, reg. IV' instead of 6.

<sup>501</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 122, pp. 119-23.

<sup>502</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 20, fol. 142r-v.

herself. Albeit approving of the king's intentions, the Republic rejected its involvement in this campaign.<sup>503</sup>

Throughout the years between 1453/1454 to 1458 Venice thus played a central role in the redistribution of influence and power in Croatia. Although the Republic was very careful not to overstep the authority that had been granted to her with the accord of 1454, especially not against the Hungarian king and his barons, it cautiously balanced between the involved parties with an intention to keep her hold over Klis and at least a modicum of influence over other parts of the region. Venice waited however, as in the immediate period after Ulrich's death, for opportunities to expand not only influence, but its territory further inland. Ostrovica, and especially Klis, which would remain a precarious problem for decades, continued to be the Republic's priorities. Venice perceived them, and rightly so, as gates to her possessions in Dalmatia. Both then and in the following decades, the Venetians jumped at every opportunity to extend their authority throughout Dalmatia and its hinterlands, but not at the cost of open conflict with Hungarian kings. When needed, such as in the case of Krk in 1480, they had at their disposal arguments to support claims on territories along the Adriatic's eastern shores, but generally acted towards Klis and other Croatian areas with great caution. While secret plans to purchase castles too close to her territories to be left in foreign hands were being developed and acted upon, Venice dispatched her envoys to Buda to display nothing but fidelity and good will. It was the common interest of Hungary and Venice, even Christendom, the Republic constantly claimed, that specific areas be preserved both against the Ottomans and other foes, regardless of who exercised authority over them. To Venice, at least nominally, it was all the same. The desire to protect her possessions in Dalmatia would continue to motivate Venice to interfere with royal authority in Croatia (and elsewhere) in the decades that followed.

Not even the presence of Matthias's *bans* would discourage local lords to seek a partner and lord in Venice, nor the latter to continue her policies in the area. In spring 1458, the young king finally authorized his captains with the task, in his own words, *pro recuperatione castrorum et dominiorum predictorum regnorum nostrorum Dalmacie et Croacie*.<sup>504</sup> This came at the right moment, it seems, as Ragusans in March warned the Hungarians that the former Tallóci castellans on the Cetina (who had changed sides and subjected themselves to Ulrich in 1456), were in grave danger, tempted by someone they hesitated to name (either the

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<sup>503</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 125, pp. 125-6.

<sup>504</sup> Ivan Krstitelj Tkalčić, *Povjestni spomenici slobodnog kraljevskog grada Zagreba* [Historical documents of the free royal town of Zagreb], vol. 2 (Zagreb, 1895), doc. 201, pp. 263-4.



king of Bosnia or the Duke of Hercegovina). The Ragusans were convinced it would not be long before the castellans surrender.<sup>505</sup> And while Matthias was still pondering whether to dispatch a contingent to the south, Cilli's men, apparently aware of the fate of their colleagues on the Cetina, offered Ostrovica to Venice.<sup>506</sup> It seems, nevertheless, that Matthias's troops finally managed to secure most of the region in May 1458, led probably by none other than John Vitovec, a former Cilli man who had already fought to capture the same castles a few years earlier.<sup>507</sup> But the introduction of Matthias's administration in the area did not go without opposition. Unsurprisingly, Venice was again at the centre of the problem. Still in July, the Bosnian king claimed Croatia was lordless and reminded Venice of her rights and obligations towards the old Tallóci domains. The Croats, he claimed, had already surrendered Knin to Hungarians without Venetian consent, and would soon certainly do the same with the remainder of Croatia, if Venice continued to be a passive observer. Venice, as per usual, did not want to get involved too much, but did remind the king that Klis was under their protection, alluding to the renegotiated deal with its castellan from 1456.<sup>508</sup> Just how little had changed with regard to the Venetian involvement and influence in the area even after the arrival of Matthias's officials is further demonstrated by a thus far little known document from the records of the Venetian Senate. On 8 October 1459, the count of Šibenik informed the Senate of his dealings with a certain 'Count *Laçchi*,' who at the time had Ostrovica and possibly Klis under his command. He had approached the Venetian administration in Dalmatia with a specific offer that the Senate now authorized the count to negotiate. On 16 November 1459, they instructed him to lend his ear to *Laçchi*'s requests and propositions and, should he come to Šibenik, of which they were certain, to enter concrete negotiations. Since *Laçchi* intended to give Ostrovica to Venice, the count was to offer 2000 ducats in exchange for the whole area, its castles and armament, as well as accept the former's request for a house in Šibenik. He had furthermore requested a yearly stipend of 400 ducats, but Venice was ready to offer only 300 for the remainder of his life. Nevertheless, should he stubbornly retain his position, the count was authorized to raise the offer up to 400 ducats in reasonable increments. Lastly, the Senate instructed the count to negotiate matters regarding Klis only if and when Ostrovica was

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<sup>505</sup> József Gelcich, *Diplomatarium relationum Reipublicae Ragusanae cum Regno Hungariae* (Budapest: MTA, 1877), doc. 357, pp. 605-6.

<sup>506</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 6, p. 8.

<sup>507</sup> See: MNL OL DF 233197; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 18, pp. 26-7; cf. T. Pálosfalvi, 'Vitovec János,' p. 448, fn. 110.

<sup>508</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 135, pp. 131-3.

surrendered under the above terms.<sup>509</sup> Whether, however, Klis was also in *Laçchi*'s hands (which seems probable) remains unclear.

It seems this *Laçchi* was a part of or at least working with Matthias's administration. Ostrovica was certainly in the king's possession by 22 May 1458, when he awarded Andrew Kreiger estates in the county of Zagreb in Slavonia in exchange for the castle.<sup>510</sup> The name, which could be interpreted as *Lacki* or *Lački* or *Laki*, allows at least two possibilities. One is that the document refers to John Láki Túz, whom Šime Ljubić, in his little-known overview of the history of Croatia (and the only other scholar to have consulted this document) identified with *Laçchi*.<sup>511</sup> For most of his career Túz was a faithful servant of the Hunyadi house. He started his career under Matthias's father and was at the time employed in the king's monetary administration at the court. By 1466 he would attain a far greater role by taking over the southern *banates* in Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia.<sup>512</sup> In 1459, however, he was still a middling court official, however close to Matthias and his royal council. The second possibility, and this seems to have been the case, is that *Laçchi* was in fact Ladislaus Tallóci, the son of Frank, brother of Peter over whose inheritance in Cetina various sides competed in this period. László (or Vladislav) was named *Lacko s Talovca, knez cetinski i kliški* (the count of Cetina and Klis) in contemporary documents written in Croatian.<sup>513</sup> The Senate's instruction of November 1459 named him *magnificus comes* (i.e. knez, count), further suggesting that this was indeed Lacko. Lastly, and most importantly, the Senate emphasized that they were particularly happy to listen to *Laçchi*'s proposition on account of their 'old love and benevolence towards the late *ban* Pirko (i.e. Peter Tallóci)' as well as towards his ancestors. This would seem very out of place, had *Laçchi* been anyone but Lacko. But there remains the question of Lacko's motivation and reasoning.

In June 1459, the Duke of Hercegovina suddenly took the castle of Čačvina 'from the Hungarians,' yet another Tallóci possession, located east of the Cetina towards the Duke's

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<sup>509</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 20, fol. 199r-v.

<sup>510</sup> MNL OL DF 233197.

<sup>511</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Ogledalo*, p. 59.

<sup>512</sup> On his background and career see: MNL OL DL 15406, 39297, 15316, 14662, 101741, 13919; DF 208615, 250257; D. Csánki, ed., *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai* [Hungarian counties and towns], *Somogy vármegye* [The county of Somogy] (Budapest: Országos Monográfia Társaság, s.a.), p. 378, *passim*; P. Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301-1357* [Hungarian secular archontology] (Budapest: História-MTA, 1996), p. 365; *idem*, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, s.v. 'Bő nem, Tuz (laki)'; A. Kubinyi, 'A kincstári személyzet a XV. század második felében' [The personnel of the treasury in the second half of the fifteenth century], *Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából* 12 (1957): pp. 25-49; Pál Lukcsis, *Diplomata pontificum saeculi XV* (Budapest: MTA, 1938), doc. 900, p. 234; N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 108; I. Tringli, 'Az 1481. évi szlavóniai közgyűlés,' pp. 301-2.

<sup>513</sup> See: Đ. Šurmin, ed., *Acta Croatica*, doc. 179, p. 280.

traditional domains.<sup>514</sup> The castle would become the focus of yet another squabble between the Duke and the king of Bosnia who not only dragged Venice into it,<sup>515</sup> but alarmed the pope, as well. In April 1460 Pius II was aware of a possibility that the king of Bosnia, condemned at the time throughout Europe for his role in the fall of Smederevo in 1459,<sup>516</sup> was ready to collaborate with the Turks to snatch Čačvina from the duke.<sup>517</sup> At the same time, in April 1460, the counts of Krbava were worried that the *ban* of Croatia, in whose hands Ostrovica had recently fallen, might jeopardize their estates, and asked Venice for permission to fortify them.<sup>518</sup> At approximately the same time Paul Špirančić, a controversial *ban* of Croatia installed by Matthias, appeared in the region. Whether, then, Lacko was afraid of losing his remaining estates in Croatia to Matthias's barons and whether he was (re)installed by the king remains unclear. It seems that around that time the king finally managed to extend his control over the area up to the Cetina with the arrival of Paul Špirančić, but that the region was far from pacified. In May the Frankapans warned Venice that since the counts of Krbava had captured an unnamed *ban* (probably Špirančić), both the king of Bosnia and the Duke of Hercegovina intended to enter Croatia and capture the *ban*'s castles, in other words the Tallóci's estates.<sup>519</sup> The Frankapans, who, it seems, had their own ambitions in the south (either in their own or in Matthias's name), requested that Venetian rectors in Dalmatia refrain from aiding either of the two.

The complex pattern of alliances and disagreements persisted independently of Matthias's efforts. Still the duke and the Bosnian king wished to secure pieces of the Tallóci inheritance, the counts of Krbava had their own interests regarding Ostrovica, and Venice glued it all together. It seems that it was primarily the Republic, rather than Matthias, that had the upper hand in the region. In other words, few of the local players (if any) wished to act against Venice's will or without her approval, and many seem to have looked towards the Republic rather than Buda for protection, including protection against Matthias. Neither Venice nor Matthias, however, seem to have been able to establish firm control. The region was thus rapidly developing into a contested frontier. The matter was further complicated with the

<sup>514</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 167, pp. 165-8; С. Ђирковић, *Херцег Стефан*, p. 238.

<sup>515</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 41, pp. 63-4.

<sup>516</sup> On the fall of Smederevo in 1459 and its consequences see a recent collection of papers: [Momčilo Spremić] Момчило Спремић, ed., *Пад Српске Деспотовине 1459. године* [The fall of the Despotate of Serbia in 1459] (Belgrade: SANU, 2011).

<sup>517</sup> Daniele Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum*, vol. 4 (Venice: Sebastiano Coleti, 1769), p. 263; I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 14, pp. 341-2.

<sup>518</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 153, p. 147.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid., doc. 157, pp. 154-6.

Ottoman influence over at least the king of Bosnia and the duke. Venice, as we shall see, had to cede control over Klis, Ostrovica, and the area adjacent to her state in Dalmatia, but only for the time being. Although this pattern oscillated in its magnitude, soon it would surpass the magnitude that it had in the previous period.

No one was happy with Špirančić, who seems to have disturbed the balance of power, as well as ambitions and plans of most parties in the region. By 1460 he had in his hands, and with Matthias's authorization, most of the Tallócis' castles, including Knin, Ostrovica, and Klis. He troubled everyone; Venice, the duke, the king of Bosnia, and the counts of Krbava. By the summer of 1461 certainly Duke Stephen had enough. In August, a grand alliance was in the making against him in the region. Venice was invited and happy to send envoys to negotiate with the other parties. These included the new young king of Bosnia, Stephen Tomašević, Duke Stephen of Hercegovina, and the counts of Krbava.<sup>520</sup> Venice was again careful. The duke was eager to attack and even claimed his campaign had every support from Matthias, as Špirančić disobeyed the king's direct orders to come to the duke's aid during a recent Ottoman attack.<sup>521</sup> By February 1462, the king of Bosnia initiated his campaign, while Venetian rectors in Dalmatia had information that the duke engaged not only Bosnians but Turks as well to help him against the *ban*, and against Klis.<sup>522</sup> And this is where Venice drew the line. Throughout this whole period, the Republic warned all parties, especially the duke, not to meddle with either Klis or Ostrovica and the Republic's rights in these regions. Venice could not care less about Špirančić's fate, but was very much interested in keeping Klis and Ostrovica.

And when the *ban* found himself in this challenging position, surrounded from all sides and under attack, either armed or diplomatic, by four different foes, he did not turn to Buda for help. At least since mid-August 1461 he negotiated with Venice.<sup>523</sup> Initially the Republic was very careful not to disclose any incriminating information, but from the onset Ostrovica and particularly Klis were at the centre of negotiations.<sup>524</sup> By the end of the year Špirančić requested aid from the Republic, seeking to put himself and his castles under its protection, just as so many had done before him.<sup>525</sup> Thus started a series of negotiations, first between Venice and

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<sup>520</sup> Ibid., docs. 178, 182, 184, 192, pp. 177-8, 179-80, 181, 192-3.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., docs. 186, 192, pp. 188, 192-3.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid., docs. 193, 200, pp. 193-6, 201.

<sup>523</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 21, fol. 56v.

<sup>524</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 187-190, pp. 188-191.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid., doc. 187, pp. 188-9.

Špirančić, and after his death in Ottoman captivity between his widow and the Republic, about the surrender of Knin, Klis, and Ostrovica. During negotiations, too complex to be narrated in detail here, Venice was happy to buy the castles, while Špirančić and his family sought protection from the Republic. These negotiations lasted for years, coming particularly close to realisation in 1462,<sup>526</sup> until 1466, when Matthias eventually, but only temporarily, ended the dispute around the Tallóci's old domains. It seems that as early as in 1463, at the dawn of the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, Matthias was well aware of Špirančić's infidelity and settled disagreements with him. According to information gathered by the count of Trogir before 26 April 1463, the *ban* had recently returned from Hungary, where he struck a deal with Matthias that granted him the old Tallóci 'county of Cetina,' Klis and Sinj included, in exchange for the surrender of Knin and Ostrovica.<sup>527</sup> But the Ottoman invasion of Bosnia, during which Mehmed, according to the *ban*'s own testimony, requested Knin, Klis, and Ostrovica,<sup>528</sup> interfered with whatever plans Matthias might have had with Croatia. During this whole time, especially during the calamitous 1463, Špirančić relied on Venice and her administration in Dalmatia for help.<sup>529</sup> In June 1463, the Republic took him and his castles under its wing, promising to protect him against anyone but Matthias.<sup>530</sup> At roughly the same time, certainly by winter 1462/1463, the Venetian Council of Ten discovered another plot that aimed at taking Klis from Špirančić's hands, thanks to a certain 'priest Jacob of Split,' who denounced the archbishop. The Council found this extremely dangerous, particularly because Klis would thus be left outside its immediate sphere of influence. It was the Duke of Herzegovina who agreed with the archbishop of Split to effectively buy the castle for 30 000 ducats, 5 000 of which the duke had already delivered to the archbishop by February 1463.<sup>531</sup> Venice upheld the plan to either keep Špirančić in the castle or acquire it from him, and punished the archbishop, who seems to have been the primary instigator (together with Špirančić) of the plan with the duke, for his reckless behaviour.

And so it went on until late 1466. As shown by the records of the Venetian Senate, in August 1466 Špirančić's widow, apparently in panic, sent an envoy to Venice to try, for one last time, to secure Venetian aid against Matthias. The Senate responded with encouraging words, hopeful that rumours of Matthias's assault on Klis and the remainder of her domains

<sup>526</sup> Ibid., docs, 200, 203, 219, pp. 201, 202-4, 221.

<sup>527</sup> M. Šunjić, 'Trogirski izvještaji,' doc. 1, pp. 145-6.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid., doc. 3, pp. 147-8.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., docs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, pp. 146-54.

<sup>530</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 244, 247, pp. 245-6, 247-9.

<sup>531</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 16, fol. 120r, 121v, 124r, 126v.

were false, but urged her to work closely with the count of Split and defend her castle as vigorously as possible. Although the Republic could not openly grant her protection against Matthias and would not enter open conflict against the Hungarian king, the Senate sent significant amounts of weapon and munitions to Split to be given to her in secret.<sup>532</sup> The Venetians even instructed their envoys at Matthias's court to discourage a direct assault on Klis. Klis was certainly important for the defence of their possessions in Dalmatia, which is why they would always be ready to aid the garrison against any foe. But other, more urgent considerations played a role as well. War against the Ottomans was one of them, but rumours also spread across Italy that even King Ferrante of Naples set his sights on Klis. Venice, the Senate declared, had no ambitions to take Klis, but merely came to *ban Špirančić's* aid when Ottoman troops came dangerously close to Klis and Cetina.<sup>533</sup> By mid-September, however, Matthias's captains were beneath Klis, and Venice finally gave up on helping the widow against them. The Republic's officials in Dalmatia were explicitly instructed to halt any aid to her, but also not to provide any provisions to Hungarian troops, at least not free of charge.<sup>534</sup> The contemporary Marino Sanudo, always well-informed about politics of his homeland, noted in his 'Lives of Venetian doges' that Špirančić's widow sold Klis to Matthias for 3 000 ducats.<sup>535</sup> Whatever the case, the king's captains did take possession of Klis, Sinj, Petrovac, and possibly other places by the autumn of 1466.<sup>536</sup> Then, more than eight years after his enthronement, Matthias finally established his authority in Croatia. Only from that point onward, and not before, could have Klis, Sinj, Petrovac, Ostrovica, even Knin, been considered royal castles and a part of the 'defensive system.'

However, Venetian influence in the area did not disappear in 1466, nor did Matthias establish a lasting presence there. For the remainder of Matthias's reign, his southwestern realm(s) and frontiers remained an area of questionable loyalty and multiple allegiances, oscillating between Venice (looking for her aid, even seeking outright conquest), Matthias, and the Ottomans. The king there relied on a number of loyal officials, who spent, it seems, more time quarrelling with Venetian rectors in Dalmatia and Greek *stradioti* in Venetian service, rather than Ottoman *akinji* or conquering armies. Just as before 1466, areas stretching along

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<sup>532</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 22, fol. 183v-184v.

<sup>533</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 386-7, pp. 375-6.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 388, pp. 376-7.

<sup>535</sup> M. Sanudo, *Le vite dei dogi, 1423-1474* [Lives of the doges], vol. 2, ed. Angela Caracciolo Aricò (Venice: La Malcontenta, 2004), p. 88.

<sup>536</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 14, 30/3, fol. 22r-v; J. Radonić, *Acta et diplomata*, docs. 306-8, pp. 680-4; L. Thallóczy, *Bosnyák és Szerb*, doc. 65, pp. 510-11.

the Adriatic, squeezed between Ottoman-controlled areas of western Bosnia and Venetian possessions in Dalmatia, continued to play different roles for different pretenders, seemingly owing allegiance to no-one and to all simultaneously. Venice did not give up her intentions to control the Dalmatian hinterlands and thus provide a buffer to Zadar, Split, Trogir, and Šibenik. Ottomans traversed these areas to reach Venetian possessions in Dalmatia or Friuli, and Frederick III's lands in Carniola and Carinthia. Matthias navigated in the context of this ever-changing network of interest, diplomacy, and conflicts, relying on his *aulici* and a handful of castles.

But even this form of Matthias's authority was jeopardized in a short period in the early 1470s that saw the greatest crisis in Hungarian-Venetian relations in this area to that date. A series of largely unpublished and thus far unknown documents from the archives of Venice, Zadar, and Budapest show how nearly identical patterns of unstable and changing allegiances continued after 1466, bringing anything but the stability of Matthias's 'defensive system' to the region. As early as 1467, Venice protested against the behaviour of the Hungarian castellan of Klis, who attacked Venetian subjects and plundered in a manner very much similar to that of the Ottomans.<sup>537</sup> Clashes and squabbles continued throughout the following years, leading eventually to a largely ineffective truce in 1469 between the *ban* of Croatia, Ladislaus Mark Terjéni<sup>538</sup> and Dalmatian cities.<sup>539</sup> The agreement regulated the liberation of captives, perambulation of borders, regulations regarding trade, and the introduction of peaceful coexistence. But in practice, nothing changed.<sup>540</sup> In 1470, Šibenik desperately requested aid from Venice against incursions of the *ban*'s men, while the Venetian Senate protested at Matthias's court and sought an ally in the region as their resources of manpower seem to have been rather slim.<sup>541</sup> Men of Poljica, learned in the ways of the region and its geography, seemed particularly suitable for fighting the *ban*'s incursions off.<sup>542</sup> Despite another agreement

<sup>537</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 410, pp. 393-4.

<sup>538</sup> On Terjéni's background and career, see: HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 152; MNL OL DL 13428, 44254, 13428, 14120, 13985, 13987, 50083, 66601, 45570, 25248, 44554, 45570, 58226, DF 289135, fol. 144v-145r; 242919, 236976; Josip Barbarić, Josip Kolanović, eds., *Monumenta historiam Sibenici et eius districtus illustrantia*. Vol. I. *Diplomatarium Sibenicense* (Šibenik: Muzej grada Šibenika, 1986); docs. 162-4; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 23, pp. 28-30; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, eds., *Codex diplomaticus comitum de Blagay*, doc. 200, pp. 377-80; Borbála Kelényi, 'Három Várdai-feleség végrendelete a késő középkorból' [Three Várdai wives' wills from the late middle ages] in *Micae Mediaevales*, vol. 2, ed. Bence Péterfi et al. (Budapest: ELTE, 2012), pp. 167-8; N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 2, p. 98.

<sup>539</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 464, pp. 440-2.

<sup>540</sup> See: Ibid., docs. 469, 483, pp. 448-1, 457-8.

<sup>541</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 32r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 25, p. 33.

<sup>542</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 113r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 130; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 38, p. 54.

between Ladislaus Terjéni and the count of Šibenik in 1470,<sup>543</sup> Venice was terrified of Hungarian plans in the region. This, of course, all took place after Matthias's capture of the Frankapan Senj in 1469 and the disruption in Hungarian-Venetian relations that it caused. The Council of Ten demanded an investigation against and the arrest of Friar Alexander,<sup>544</sup> having learned that he agitated against the state in Dalmatia and for the recognition of Hungarian rule.<sup>545</sup> Venetian subjects were explicitly forbidden to collaborate with Hungarians and Turks, travel to their domains or host them in their homes.<sup>546</sup> Galleys were sent to Dalmatia as soon as Hungarian officials came near the sea.<sup>547</sup> On the other hand, Croatian aristocrats, particularly the count of Krbava (nominally Matthias's subject), sought aid in Venice, equally against 'Hungarians and Turks,' as his envoy in Venice testified to the poor state of his domains *cum undique ab Hungaris et Turcis circumventus sit, qui omnes aspirant ad eius excidium* (being surrounded from all sides by Hungarians and Turks, who all wish to destroy him).<sup>548</sup> In such a climate, then, suddenly the tide (again) turned and previously existing, but weak alliances were disturbed.

One of the representatives of the Croatian *ban* during the negotiations that led towards the agreement of 1469 was a man identified by Venetian chanceries as *Tarpaval*, up to that point a relatively insignificant Hungarian official who would soon be in the centre of the crisis.<sup>549</sup> In January 1472 an envoy of the castellan of Klis, who controlled a number of other forts defending Croatia and Dalmatian cities against the Ottomans, suddenly appeared in Venice, bringing with him seven Turks (captives) as a present.<sup>550</sup> He relayed a message from his lord who wished to change sides, promising to come personally to Venice, display fidelity, and remain loyal to the Republic. The castellan's only concern and primary motivation was the poor state of Klis and other Hungarian castles in the area that could no longer maintain their

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<sup>543</sup> MNL OL DL, 50083; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 152; J. Barbarić, J. Kolanović, eds., *Monumenta*, doc. 164; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 23, pp. 28-30.

<sup>544</sup> For more information on this mysterious but apparently important person in Matthias's administration in Croatia at the time see Appendix 3.

<sup>545</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 17, fol. 143v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 46, p. 65.

<sup>546</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 17, fol. 162r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 58, p. 86.

<sup>547</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 90r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 60, p. 88.

<sup>548</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 41r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 126; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 35, p. 48.

<sup>549</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 464, pp. 440-2. On *Tarpaval* (Paul Tár), his career and background, see: MNL OL DL 14668, 14973, 68070, 50373, 88234, 88558, 88657, 50373; József Csoma, *Abauj-Torna vármegye nemes családjai* [Noble families of Abauj-Torna county] (Košice: Forster, Wesselényi & co., 1897), p. 5.

<sup>550</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 25, fol. 106r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 16; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 82, p. 117.



defensive role, seeking munitions, subsidies, and provisions from the Republic. Venice, as per her usual stance, fell short of accepting outright the castellan's proposition, but did promise help in improving the state of his castles, and aid in provisions and arms. Some two months later representatives of Žarko Dražoević, a distinguished nobleman from Poljica (officially a Venetian possession since 1444),<sup>551</sup> arrived in Venice with a similar problem. Žarko had recently taken the castle of Klis, because he did not wish the castle, which was in a very poor state, to fall into Ottoman hands. He further wanted to surrender it to Venetian control, and requested a stipend and subsidies for the defence of the area. The Senate was curious, continuing negotiations with his envoys, and surprised, arranging for two of their representatives to travel immediately to *Tarpaval* (Paul Tár) to say that the Republic had nothing to do with Žarko's deeds and that the count of Split, who apparently provided some help to Dražoević, was merely fearful that he, weak as he was, may lose the castle to the Ottomans. Venice was more than willing to leave the castle to Matthias, and eager to prevent the king's retaliation.<sup>552</sup>

Less than a week later, however, Venice instructed her envoy in the area, as well as the count of Trogir, to discuss the surrender of the castle to Venice with Žarko, bearing in mind his terms as well as the consequences that the capture of the Hungarian Klis may cause.<sup>553</sup> It is clear from these instructions that *ban* Paul Tár had already initiated assaults against Venetian possessions around Zadar and Šibenik in retaliation for what had taken place. Venice was again very careful, commanding her representatives in Dalmatia to refrain from elevating her flags in Klis, should the castle be surrendered. It was a very dangerous undertaking, as far as the Senate was concerned, but obviously one worth the risk. And surely Paul Tár struck Dalmatia with formidable devastation that unexpectedly, as we shall see, turned against him.<sup>554</sup> Soon Venetians became frustrated with Dražoević and his excessive requests and in May 1472 instructed the count of Trogir to effectively offer him a non-negotiable deal.<sup>555</sup> With Tár the Republic had at some earlier point struck a deal that allowed them to take Klis and keep the castle until the *ban* compensated Venetian subjects for the damage that they had suffered during

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<sup>551</sup> For an overview of the history of Poljica, see: Ivan Pivčević, *Povijest Poljica* [The history of Poljica] (Split: Zemaljska štamparija u Sarajevu, 1921).

<sup>552</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 124r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 23b; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 84, p. 119-20.

<sup>553</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 125r-126r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 178-181; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 85, p. 121-3.

<sup>554</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 132r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 88, p. 127.

<sup>555</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 135r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 182-183; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 89, pp. 128-9.

his incursions. Whatever was to be arranged with Dražoević, therefore, had to be relayed to Tár. Although the Republic seems to have been on track to acquire Klis, albeit careful not to provoke further incursions or even war, it was apparently believed in Venice that the discussions with Dražoević brought more damage than good. On 4 June 1472, the Senate quite dramatically concluded that *curandum est omni ingenio et arte quod incendium excitatum ab Tarpaulo in provincia nostra Dalmatie in maximum exitium subditorum nostrorum si fieri potest extinguatur* [it is to be seen to, with all talent and skill, that the fire raised by Paul Tár in our province of Dalmatia, to the great ruin of our subjects, is extinguished, if possible].<sup>556</sup> The negotiator with Dražoević, Dominic Stella, was instructed to cease his activities if still by the time he received these commands nothing had been achieved regarding the surrender of Klis. Stella was furthermore to request a meeting with the *ban* and inform him that, despite all his efforts, Dražoević remained stubborn. He was furthermore to say that Dražoević had taken Klis on his own, without any intervention by the Republic. If indeed the count of Split had offered him any favours, this was done without Venetian consent, and only out of fear that Dražoević, if left to his own devices, could surrender the castle to the Turks.

By late July/early August 1472 Paul Tár was dead, killed in a brawl with the count of Split and his retinue, despite several attempts at pacifying the situation in Dalmatia and Croatia.<sup>557</sup> Issues concerning Klis and Dražoević's proposal vanished as suddenly as they had appeared several months earlier, as he apparently settled the dispute with Matthias's men in the area. By the next spring, Venice perceived Dražoević as a potential threat to her cities in Dalmatia, considering him an agent of the Hungarian king.<sup>558</sup> For the remainder of the year, however, there seems to have been quite a commotion in the region after Tár's death. Duke Vlatko of Herzegovina wrote to Venice in December that it would be best if Klis ended up in

<sup>556</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 140r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 187; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 96, pp. 137-8.

<sup>557</sup> See: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 143v, 149r; HR-DAZD-317, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 188, 193; Rinaldo Fulin, *Errori vecchi e documenti nuovi* [Old errors and new documents] (Venice: Giuseppe Antonelli, 1882), pp. 115-20; Vladimir Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise: documents, extraits, notices, et études servant à éclaircir les rapports de la seigneurie avec les Grecs, les Slaves, et la Porte ottomane à la fin du XVe et au XVIe siècle* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1884), pp. 18-23; *idem*, 'L'Assassinat politique à Venise du XVe au XVIIIe siècle,' *Revue Historique* 20 (1882): pp. 105-20; Louis de Mas Latrie, 'De l'empoisonnement politique dans la République de Venise,' *Mémoires de l'Institut national de France* 34 (1895), pp. 197-259; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 97, 101, pp. 139-40, 146; M. Šunjić, 'Mletačka zavjera protiv hrvatskog bana Pavla Tara' [The Venetian conspiracy against the Croatian ban Paul Tár], *Godišnjak Društva istoričara BiH* 16 (1965): pp. 283-5; Mór Wertner, 'Magyar hadjáratok a XV-ik század második felében' [Hungarian campaigns in the second half of the fifteenth century], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 13 (1912): p. 219; Paolo Preto, *I servizi segreti di Venezia: Spionaggio e controspionaggio ai tempi della Serenissima* [The secret services of Venice: espionage and counterespionage in the time of the Serenissima] (Milan: il Saggiatore, 2010), pp. 330, 340.

<sup>558</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 65v-66r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 133, pp. 198-200.

his or the Republic's hands, safe from the Hungarians. He added that the Ragusans and the Vlatkoviće had intentions of inviting the king of Bosnia (Nicholas Újlaki) to take the castle.<sup>559</sup> In summer 1473, the Republic was happy to see a new *ban* in Croatia, Damian Horvat, with whom they exchanged gifts and arranged the means of collaborative defence against Ottoman incursions.<sup>560</sup> The castle returned to Hungarian hands and would remain there until 1537.<sup>561</sup>

A question remains as to whether the *Bannus qui tenet Clissam* (as the initiator of this whole endeavour was identified in Venetian documents) and Žarko Dražoević were one and the same person, or whether indeed the latter, as Venetian records suggest, (forcibly) occupied the castle. Ragusan sources mention the castle in 1471, but do not identify its governor. This certainly was not Paul Tár.<sup>562</sup> A brief entry from the register of civil litigations of Split, dated to 2 July 1470, provides, however, further invaluable information. While dealing with misconduct concerning grain granted by the state to the Dražoeviće, it was noted that this grain had been sequestrated *per vaivodam Xarchum in Clissa*.<sup>563</sup> It may be, therefore, that Žarko was in fact the castellan of the castle during Tár's administration in the region, and that he approached Venice in January 1472. But there are further issues to be addressed. In January, the unnamed *ban* of Klis and of other nearby forts offered to change sides, and at the time requested only subsidies for the defence of the castle, emphasizing its sorry state. In April, the Senate noted that 'not long ago' (*nuper*) Žarko's envoys came to Venice to report that he had *occupied (successum occupationis)* the castle of Klis. In other Venetian records of the time it is also noted that Žarko *Clissam occupavit et tenet*.<sup>564</sup> He, on the other hand, requested that Venice either provide for him and his family (in return for Klis) or secure aid, subsidies, and provisions for him to be able to defend the castle. Žarko's motivation, at least according to what he alleged, was also the poor state of the castle and fear of Ottoman occupation. It would seem, then, that two different persons offered their services and Klis to Venice, one in January, the other in April. This is especially implied by the fact that the offer from January did not

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<sup>559</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 155v-156v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 5, n. 1-8; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 118, pp. 171-5.

<sup>560</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 67v; Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 26, fol. 27v-28r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 134, 135, pp. 201-4; L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relativi,' pp. 14-17.

<sup>561</sup> Cf. Ivan Jurković, "'Veliki i osobit razbojnik" u službi pape – Petar Kružić, kapetan najjužnijeg dijela protuosmanskoga obrambenog sustava Hrvatske' ['A remarkable brigand in the pope's service' – Petar Kružić, the captain of the southernmost section of the anti-Ottoman defence system in Croatia], *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 25 (2007): pp. 153-81.

<sup>562</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 799.

<sup>563</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 14, 30/3, fol. 239r-v.

<sup>564</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 25, fol. 125r-126r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 178-181; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 85, pp. 121-3.

include the surrender of Klis, only the ‘*ban*’s’ fidelity. It seems, on the other hand, that Žarko was eager to get rid of the castle, but for a certain (and obviously high) price. It could be that he changed his mind in the meantime, but sources suggest that there were indeed two different individuals. It might have been Tár himself who in January offered his services to Venice. At the time, since at least January 1470, the *ban* of Croatia (and Dalmatia, Slavonia, and Bosnia) was Blaise Magyar, Matthias’s trusted soldier.<sup>565</sup> Tár was his vice-*ban* in Croatia, controlling the royal castles in the region, including Klis.<sup>566</sup> Lastly, the ‘*ban*’ that figures in documents dating from January might have been a third individual, a castellan who governed castles adjacent to Venetian possessions in Dalmatia in Tár’s name. For now, at least, this issue remains unresolved.

Similar problems between Matthias’s and Venice’s subjects – incursions, clashes, killings, and plundering – continued after 1472 and Tár’s death, but Klis remained firmly in Matthias’s hands from then on. It was from around 1473, therefore, that the king had uninterrupted control over this and other Croatian castles that had earlier belonged to the Tallóci brothers. And this, in fact, was Matthias’s intention the whole time. It was the return of royal control over the central regions of Croatia that Matthias sought, especially in 1466 when his captains, John Rozgonyi and John Túz, eventually entered Klis. In November 1465, the king authorized Rozgonyi and Vitovec to negotiate with John Horvat, the castellan of Klis, but this endeavour apparently came to naught.<sup>567</sup> In 1466, as testified by Matthias’s instrument dated to 1470, his captain explicitly *pro reformatione confinium predictorum Regnorum nostrorum Dalmacie et Croacie, ac castrorum nostrorum Klyz et Zyn expugnatione per nos deputatus fuisset*.<sup>568</sup> It was Klis and Sinj (in other words the Tallóci domains) that Matthias was really interested in, just as so many other people were. It was, furthermore, the influence of Venice, rather than the Ottomans, that he had to address and tackle.

Similar patterns developed nearly concurrently along the entire eastern Adriatic coast. Matthias’s arrangements with Duke Stephen of Herzegovina, which seem to have been put in place shortly after the recapture of Jajce, are fairly well-known in historiography, and I shall not discuss them in detail here.<sup>569</sup> The king’s plan was certainly to acquire further areas in

<sup>565</sup> MNL OL DL 86534; cf. N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 2, p. 103.

<sup>566</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 464, pp. 440-2.

<sup>567</sup> MNL OL DL 18138; L. Thallóczy, *Bosnyák és Szerb*, doc. 59, pp. 501-2; *idem*, *Studien zur Geschichte*, doc. 82, pp. 424-5.

<sup>568</sup> MNL OL DF 275108.

<sup>569</sup> On the Duke, his family, and the events of 1465/1466 in Herzegovina, see: В. Атанасовски. *Под Херцеговине, passim*; С. Ћирковић, *Херцег Стефан*, pp. 260ff; T. Pálósfalvi, ‘A szentszávai hercegek.’

Herzegovina in 1465, but was left only with the castle of Počitelj on the Neretva that would remain a Hungarian outpost for a short period until 1471, when Ottoman troops took it.<sup>570</sup> It is necessary, however, to emphasize that most of the primary material, largely from Dubrovnik and Venice, has not been published and reveals that here too the role of Venice was very important, if not crucial. In early November Matthias dispatched two of his men, Rozgonyi and Vitovec, towards the Neretva and Ragusa, who did not arrive in the area until early December.<sup>571</sup> Their army, around 5 000 men if rumours that circulated at the time were correct, arrived in the area at the earliest in January 1466, and never crossed the Neretva to take the castles that the duke had promised to give Matthias.<sup>572</sup> By March 1466, both the captains and the majority of their troops left the area for good.<sup>573</sup> The duke, for reasons that are not completely clear, at the same time sought aid from Venice, especially, as he lamented in March 1466, against the Hungarian expedition. Matthias was supposed to take, equip, and maintain five castles, according to Duke Stephen's claims, three of which had already fallen. Another two his men had taken by force on the Neretva, and the duke was convinced (having received friendly advice) that the Hungarians were after him personally and the remainder of his domains. He, then, requested aid from Venice and wished to put himself, his sons, and his possessions in the Republic's hands.<sup>574</sup> Venice was happy to accept the deal, but frustrated with Matthias's behaviour. According to Girardo dei Colli, Venice did not approve of Matthias's actions along the Neretva, as he was supposed to take the war to the Ottomans, and not his Christian neighbours.<sup>575</sup> There was more behind Venetian displeasure, however, than they were ready to admit.

As Ottoman armies were taking one of the duke's castles after another in the autumn of 1465, panic and opportunities seem to have arisen in Krajina, the region along the right bank of the lower Neretva, adjacent to the sea. Krajina was traditionally a part of Duke Stephen's 'state,' but caused problems to the duke since the 1450s when particularly the Vlatković family rebelled against their lord.<sup>576</sup> These are the rebels Stephen referred to in the above-mentioned

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<sup>570</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 800.

<sup>571</sup> MNL OL DF 290253; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 351, p. 343; Jovan Radonić, *Acta et diplomata Ragusina* (Belgrade: Srpska kraljevska akademija, 1934), doc. 299, pp. 669-70.

<sup>572</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 769ff; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziái emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 231, pp. 380-5; vol. 2, doc. 25, pp. 42-3.

<sup>573</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 773.

<sup>574</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 363, pp. 350-6.

<sup>575</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 4, pp. 165-6.

<sup>576</sup> See: С. Ђирковић, *Херцег Стефан*, pp. 147ff; [Mihajlo Dinić] Михајло Динић, *Дубровачки трибути* [Tributes of Ragusa], in *idem*, *Из српске историје средњег века* (Belgrade: Equilibrium, 2003), pp. 750-4; [Ljubomir Kovačević] Љубомир Ковачевић, 'Знамените српске властеле породице средњег века'

letter to Venice from 1457, where he accused the king of Bosnia of jeopardizing his domains east of the Cetina and allying with his rebellious subjects there.<sup>577</sup> As Matthias's contingent pushed south towards Krajina and the Neretva, apparently with the aim of fulfilling their obligations towards Stephen, representatives of 'Neretva' arrived in Venice before 25 November 1465 with concrete proposals.<sup>578</sup> Four days later, although the Senate was unwilling to proceed without Duke Stephen's approval,<sup>579</sup> they concluded a contract with these men. This instrument was in fact a confirmation of a contract that the men of Krajina and Hum had earlier arranged with the count of Split. As this contract found in the Venetian archives makes clear, leaders of this pro-Venetian party were the Vlatković brothers. In effect, it was their personal contract with the Republic as the distinguished men of the region, into which they included Krajina, Hum, and its petty nobility. In form, composition, and content the document is very similar to other *patti di dedizione* between the Venetian state and political entities of the Adriatic basin that throughout the early fifteenth century came under its rule,<sup>580</sup> although this time the *dedizione* seems to have indeed been voluntary. Žarko Vlatković, with support and approval from his brothers and Duke Stephen, thus surrendered Krajina and Humska zemlja ('the Land of Hum') to Venice in perpetuity in return for the Venetian confirmation, as per usual, of the old customs and rights of the land. Venice was to provide the rector, whereas the local nobility owed allegiance and certain taxes, but generally all would remain the same, now under Venetian sovereignty and the Vlatkoviće's intermediate authority.<sup>581</sup> In this, Krajina and Hum did not differ from other Adriatic communes that accepted Venetian rule at the time, under very similar conditions. From that point onward areas around the lower Neretva were Venetian, and certainly the Republic hurried to apply the stipulations of the treaty. Although it seems that the Senate was at least initially sincere in their attempt to gain the duke's approval for this undertaking, no such authorization, despite whatever Žarko may have told the count of Split, was awaited in Venice. In March 1466 Duke Stephen narrated these events from his perspective. He asserted that although he was happy to hear that his lands had fallen into

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[Notable Serbian aristocratic families of the middle ages], *Годишњица Николе Чунућа* 10 (1888): pp. 199-214; [Siniša Mišić] Синиша Мишић, *Хумска земља у средњем веку* [The Land of Hum in the middle ages] (Belgrade: Filozofski fakultet, 1996), pp. 94ff; Adis Zilić, 'Vlatkovići od progonstva sa baština 1456. do pada Počitelja 1471. godine' [The Vlatkoviće between expulsion from their domains in 1456 and the fall of Počitelj in 1471] in *Osmansko osvajanje Bosanske kraljevine*, ed. Sedad Bešlija (Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju, 2014): pp. 105-38.

<sup>577</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 122, pp. 119-23.

<sup>578</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 8, fol. 47r-48v.

<sup>579</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 353-5, pp. 345-6.

<sup>580</sup> On *patti di dedizione*, see: Antonio Menniti Ippolito, 'Le dedizioni e lo stato regionale. Osservazioni sul caso veneto' [Dedications and the regional state. Comments on the Venetian case], *Archivio Veneto* 162 (1986): pp. 5-30.

<sup>581</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 8, fol. 47r-48v. For the text of the document, see Appendix 2.

Venetian hands and not Ottoman or Hungarian - an option that he had discussed with the count of Split and was ready to accept in dire need - he did not grant his approval to the count (nor did he request it) to occupy these areas.<sup>582</sup> With Krajina and Neretva now taken, he was happy to temporarily surrender his authority to Venice, expecting that the Republic would return them if asked. But what displeased him, the duke continued, was that this all was Žarko Vlatković's doing, and him he considered *il mio rebello et inimico mortalissimo* (rebel and my mortal enemy). The Venetian Senate responded that they had gathered from the duke's correspondence with Marcello, the count of Split, that he wanted for Venice to take his possessions and save them from the fate that so many of his places had recently suffered, namely Ottoman occupation.<sup>583</sup>

Despite Stephen's complaints, by the beginning of December 1465 Venice sent their rector to Krajina, in accordance with the treaty.<sup>584</sup> At the same time, a Venetian envoy was instructed to meet personally with Matthias to justify the Republic's actions. Indeed Venice occupied the lands of the Neretva, the Senate stated, but by the will of the local people, with the duke's approval, and because rumours circulated that they were willing to subject themselves to Ottoman rule.<sup>585</sup> It remains unknown whether Matthias protested, although his envoy was expected in Venice in mid-December.<sup>586</sup> Throughout Italy and in Venice, nevertheless, it was clear that Ragusans and especially King Matthias were not overly pleased with this outcome, 'because these lands belong to the king's government,' as Gerardo dei Colli put it.<sup>587</sup>

It seems, however, that Matthias had a far more concrete reason to be frustrated. Pressed by the threat of Ottoman conquest, at least some of the elite of Krajina viewed Matthias as the answer to their woes. In September 1465, when rumours of Matthias's arrival in Dalmatia and the area around Ragusa already circulated there,<sup>588</sup> the men of Neretva negotiated with Ragusa and requested Matthias's royal standard, which the Ragusan Senate was more than happy to send.<sup>589</sup> It was at that time, barely two weeks later, that the count of Split, Jacob Marcello, informed Venice that he had taken possession of Neretva and Krajina. It was then, sometime

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<sup>582</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 363, pp. 350-6.

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 364, pp. 356-7.

<sup>584</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 228, pp. 375-6.

<sup>585</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 226, pp. 371-2.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 228, pp. 375-6.

<sup>587</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>588</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 345, 347 pp. 337, 340-1.

<sup>589</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 767.

before 25 September, that Žarko Vlatković had the ‘pact of dedication’, which the Senate later confirmed, written down in Split.<sup>590</sup> Either Vlatković changed his mind rapidly or there were two parties around the Neretva at the time, Hungarian and Venetian. In any case, by 23 December the opinion in Venice about the goal of Matthias’s two captains who had recently arrived in the area was that they had come *per pigliare lo stato del ducha Stefano, item per quelle terre, le quale si sono date noviter alla Signoria [...] chiamata la Montagnia de Cranea, e lo paese si domanda Narentha*. This information had come from a chaplain in the service of Girolamo Lando, the archbishop of Crete who had recently returned to Venice from his legation to Matthias.<sup>591</sup> At the end of January Gerardo dei Colli, the Milanese spy/envoy in Venice, narrated again the events that had been taking place in the preceding months. He stated that Duke Stephen promised his castles to Matthias but, deceitful as he was, he had given Neretva to the *Signoria*, and the rest of his Bosnian castles to one of his sons. When Matthias’s captain arrived there to take the castles, he was surprised to see what had taken place in the meantime and attempted to arrange a new deal with the duke’s son. While travelling to Ragusa, he passed the land of Neretva, took down the banners of St Mark that had been raised on the towers and threw them to the ground.<sup>592</sup> A similar ‘motif’, corresponding likely to what had indeed occurred, is found in a letter of Duke Vlatko (Stephen’s son) to Venice from December 1472. Discussing Žarko Vlatković, the duke said he had first run to Venice, but then ‘with his own hands threw your (i.e. Venetian) insignia into the mud of the Neretva, against the honour of your state and our house, with insistence of Ragusa and the king of Hungary.’<sup>593</sup> That the young duke probably told the truth is confirmed by the already mentioned deed by Janus Pannonius of August 1466, when he, in Matthias’s name, put the Vlatkovičs and their possessions in Hungary, Bosnia, Usora, and Hum under the king’s protection.<sup>594</sup>

Matthias was thus only partly successful in Herzegovina, Hum, Krajina, and Neretva. As mentioned, Hungarians seem to have only gained Počitelj, which remained in the hands of the king’s castellans and retainers of the *bans* of Croatia (largely Matthias’s *aulici*), until 1471.<sup>595</sup> The king further established relations with the Vlatkovičs who at least nominally

<sup>590</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 345, p. 337.

<sup>591</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 231, pp. 380-5. Cf. Dan Ioan Mureșan, ‘Girolamo Lando, titulaire de Patriarcat de Constantinople (1474-1497), et son rôle dans la politique orientale du Saint-Siège,’ *Annuario dell’Istituto Romeno di Cultura e Ricerca Umanistica di Venezia* 8 (2006): pp. 167-8.

<sup>592</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 4, pp. 165-6.

<sup>593</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 155v-156v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 5, n. 1-8; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 118, pp. 171-5.

<sup>594</sup> MNL OL DF 255781; E. Laszowski, ‘Prilozi za povijest bosanskih porodica,’ doc. 3, pp. 119-20.

<sup>595</sup> MNL OL DL 27494; J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, pp. 627, 769ff.



remained his allies, under Ragusan intermediacy, until the early 1470s and partially thereafter.<sup>596</sup> The Hungarian position in the south, around the Neretva and Ragusa, was very weak and after c. 1473 non-existent. With the fall of Počitelj and consequently the defeat of the Vlatkoviće in 1473 at the Neretva,<sup>597</sup> the Hungarian influence in the area southeast of the Cetina seems to have completely disappeared, but the region remained a frontier of sorts, very much like Hum where Paul Gregorić remained in charge under Ottoman command. The *defter* of the sanjak of Hercegovina from the late 1470s (1475-1477) shows that one of the Vlatković brothers, Tadija, remained in power in Krajina under Ottoman authority, while other local men of some standing also enjoyed a similar status nearby.<sup>598</sup> The area does not seem to have been yet fully incorporated into the Ottoman state. Its status seems to have been similar to the status that it might have enjoyed under Venetian authority, had the treaty of 1466 lasted. In other words, a supreme Ottoman rule was a framework within which traditional forms of governance persisted. This would remain in place for nearly a decade, until in 1481 Matthias succeeded in establishing another Hungarian outpost on the Neretva that would survive until 1491. This was the castle of Koš that first appears in Ragusan documents as a Hungarian possession in 1481.<sup>599</sup> Although the dominant view in historiography is that Koš was under Hungarian control simultaneously with Počitelj and that after 1471 the garrison from Počitelj only moved to Koš, this does not seem to have been the case. Koš obviously either fell in Hungarian hands (or was built) around 1481. As King Matthias himself put it in his letter to Sixtus IV from December 1480, describing his recent successes against Davud in Bosnia, many Vlachs from various border provinces of Bosnia and those around the Neretva had approached him and subjected themselves to his rule, having seen what had taken place. Matthias intended, furthermore, to send ‘these days’ his captains and troops to secure his control over those areas. In addition, he had already sent one of his captains to the Vlachs of Poljica and Radobilja, who also accepted his rule. But when his captain planned to return with a number of Vlach dignitaries, he was ambushed by Turks, former lords in these areas, who resented that they had lost them. Other Vlachs from provinces still under Ottoman control filled Ottoman ranks, met the Hungarian captain in battle, and suffered a heavy defeat. Eight thousand Turks and Vlachs fell in the battle, a few escaped wounded.<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>596</sup> For an overview of the family’s history at the time, see: A. Zilić, ‘Vlatkovići,’ pp. 116-35.

<sup>597</sup> Cf. В. Атанасовски. *Пад Херцеговине*, pp. 91-6.

<sup>598</sup> A. Aličić, ed., *Poimenični popis sandžaka vilajeta Hercegovina* [*Defter of the sanjak of Hercegovina*] (Sarajevo: Orijentalni institut u Sarajevu, 1985), pp. 91-5.

<sup>599</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 808.

<sup>600</sup> V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 48, pp. 76-80.

Not only does this show how and when Matthias's troops returned to the Neretva, but that indeed the area between Ragusa and the river Cetina were out of his reach between the early 1470s and late 1480. That crucial changes in the political landscape of the region took place is further suggested by steps taken by Tadija Vlatković to apparently cushion the blow of Matthias's offensive. Venetian records show that before 8 January 1481 *comes* Tadija, *subditus domini Turci*, suddenly appeared on the Venetian island of Hvar (just across Tadija's domains recorded in the *defter*) with his whole family and movable property. The *Collegio* received the difficult task to justify this to Mehmed, without provoking the Ottoman side to accuse the Republic of violating the peace treaty of 1479.<sup>601</sup>

The period between 1478 and 1480 was a violent time in the western provinces of Matthias's kingdom. Not only did his troops return for the first time since the 1460s in significant numbers to the Ottoman theatre, they also entered Croatia to finish what Matthias had started even before his coronation. The well-known Frankapan-Venetian-Hungarian struggle for the island of Krk took place at this time, and the king significantly increased the number of his holdings in Croatia at the expense of the baronial families of Frankapan and the counts of Krbava. His encroachment into Croatia beyond the traditional royal authority, and against the Frankapans and the Kurjakovića of Krbava, started in the mid-1460s and would result in the vast body of possessions listed in the 'Farkashida capitulations' of 1490. Although the fact that the king captured some castles in the area, particularly Senj, has been well-known for quite some time,<sup>602</sup> reasons for Matthias's action in Croatia, the chronology, as well as the concrete number of acquired castles were largely left out of analyses, both due to reliance on dated historiography and generic solutions (usually framed in the concept of royal 'centralization'), and the lack of primary material. As ever, Venetian records shed further important light on these events and in combination with the thus far unknown material from Hungarian and Croatian archives offer further invaluable information about Matthias's 'defensive system' in the area.

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<sup>601</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 165r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 58; *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 286, p. 446.

<sup>602</sup> See, e. g.: V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, pp. 257-62; also: B. Grgin, 'Senj i Vinodol'; *idem*, 'Modruš'; *idem*, *Počeci rasapa*, pp. 99ff; *idem*, 'Hrvatski velikaši u desetljećima pred Krbavsku bitku' [Croatian magnates in the decades before the Battle of Krbava] in *Krbavska bitka i njezine posljedice*, ed. Dragutin Pavličević (Zagreb: Hrvatska matica iseljenika – Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 1993), pp. 38-9; *idem*, 'The Centre and the Periphery – Medieval Croatia in the Realm of King Matthias Corvinus,' *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 44 (2012): pp. 197-208; G. Nemeth, A. Papo, 'Mattia Corvino e i Frangipane,' pp. 64-8.

The Frankapans enjoyed their fair share of good and profitable (as well as less amicable) relations with both the Cillis and Frederick III well before Matthias's times.<sup>603</sup> It seems that Martin Frankapan, whose person would be central to the king's northern Croatian politics for nearly two decades until 1479, did particularly well in the context of these relations.<sup>604</sup> But when Matthias came to power (such as it was in 1458), as he himself acknowledged, the Frankapans, particularly the two most powerful, Stephen and Martin, seem to have joined his cause. In 1460, the king lauded Stephen's conduct, his legation at the Diet of Mantua in 1459 in the king's name; he was first among the aristocrats of Croatia and Dalmatia to recognize and honour Matthias as his king; he was the shield and wall against the king's enemies in those parts.<sup>605</sup> In 1459, furthermore, Matthias recognized Martin's possession of the castle of Krupa. According to the charter, Martin had previously bought the castle from a 'certain Sigismund Sibryacher and Otto Semenych, *theothonicorum extraneorum hominum*' for 6 400 florins, so that it, as the king or Martin apparently wished to present it, would not fall into the hands of enemies and rivals of the 'sacred crown of our Kingdom of Hungary.'<sup>606</sup> Sigismund Sibreicher was noted as the royal castellan of Krupa in 1457, during Ladislaus V's reign, but was actually the retainer of the Cillis who since the late 1420s owned the castle.<sup>607</sup> It apparently remained in his hands after Ulrich's death in 1456. Although Matthias left the castle to Martin, he did not grant him full ownership, but proclaimed him the creditor of the pledge for the debt of 6 400 florins that was to be returned either by Matthias or future Hungarian kings if they wished to revive their possessory rights. This deal resembled that between Matthias and Kreiger regarding Ostrovica, another Cilli possession. He too had a similar deal with Ladislaus V for 2 000 florins, for which Matthias granted him estates in Slavonia.<sup>608</sup> In 1461, Matthias further acknowledged Martin's possession of the castle of Steničnjak, now without any conditions. The castle, as the charter has it, fell into Martin's

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<sup>603</sup> For recent research, see: Robert Kurelić, "'Prvi markgrofov rat" i Frankopani' [The 'First margrave war' and the Frankapans], *Modruški zbornik* 3 (2009): pp. 53-64; *idem*, 'Posljednji svjedok ubojstva: Frankopani i Celjski u petnaestome stoljeću' [The last witness to a murder: The Frankapans and the Cilli in the fifteenth century], *Povijesni prilozi* 50 (2016), pp. 205-31.

<sup>604</sup> R. Kurelić, 'Posljednji svjedok ubojstva,' p. 221.

<sup>605</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 37, pp. 36-9.

<sup>606</sup> [...] *ne ad manus inimicorum et emulorum sacre regni nostri Hungarie predicti corone deveniret*; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 33, pp. 33-4.

<sup>607</sup> MNL OL DF 83745; P. Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, p. 355; Radoslav Lopašić, *Bihać i Bihaćka krajina* [Bihać and its surroundings] (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1890), pp. 205-7; Suzana Miljan, 'Grofovi Celjski i Njemci, službenici njihovih utvrda u Zagrebačkoj i Križevačkoj županiji' [The Counts of Cilli and the Germans, officials in their castles in the counties of Zagreb and Križevci], *Godišnjak njemačke zajednice/DG Jahrbuch* 20 (2013): p. 18.

<sup>608</sup> MNL OL DF 233197.

hands with the death of Ulrich Cilli, its previous owner, but it is unclear under what circumstances.<sup>609</sup>

Then, in 1464, at Matthias's coronation in Székesfehérvár, everything suddenly took a different course. Before the royal council, Matthias and Martin arranged anew their relations and the status of Martin's estates. By his own will, without any persuasion, so the charter narrates, Martin surrendered the castle of Krupa to the king. No mention was made of those 6 400 florins. His castles of Steničnjak, Kostajnica, and Lipovec, furthermore, were to be surrendered to the king after Martin's death. Lastly, the king confirmed Martin's possession over these and additional castles in Skrad, Bužin, Kladuša, Ostrovica, Gradec, and Komogojna.<sup>610</sup> Krupa, a castle on the Una close to Kamengrad, was from then on in the hands of royal castellans.<sup>611</sup> What these four castles had in common was that none of them were originally (at least not in recent times) Frankapan estates. Krupa and Steničnjak had belonged to the Cilli, while Lipovec and Kostajnica (and Komogojna) Martin received from his wife in 1442.<sup>612</sup> The latter three were not listed in the Frankapans' division of 1449, but Martin nevertheless had to agree to leave them to his relatives after his death.<sup>613</sup> The king thus directly infringed upon the rights of other senior Frankapans, and that may have caused, as we shall see, significant problems later. Whatever the cause of this sudden change, Matthias certainly relied on his newly acquired legal instrument, proclaimed at the coronation (a day after he issued the charter for Martin), whereby all donations and accompanying instruments issued by himself or Ladislaus had to be confirmed anew within a year, otherwise would be deprived of all legality.<sup>614</sup> Martin was soon introduced to his 'old new' estates, excluding Krupa, and Matthias once more confirmed their deal merely three months after the first one, with further clarifications.<sup>615</sup> In a clause that closed the document, Matthias now clarified that Martin's castles would be transferred to him only if Martin dies childless.

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<sup>609</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, docs. 41, 45, pp. 43-4, 46-7.

<sup>610</sup> Ibid., docs. 61, 62; pp. 64-8.

<sup>611</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XV-6, D-XVI-59; MNL OL DL 88651, 83764; DF 255788, 219132; cf. V. Klaić, *Acta Keglevichiana annorum 1322.-1527.* (Zagreb: JAZU, 1917), doc. 20, pp. 20-1; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Blagay*, docs. 205, 215; pp. 388-92, 423-4; I. K. Tkalčić, *Povjestni spomenici*, vol. 2, doc. 324, pp. 405-8.

<sup>612</sup> MNL OL DF 218761; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 1, doc. 326, pp. 335-6.

<sup>613</sup> MNL OL DF 14263, 33987; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 1, doc. 370, pp. 370-2; Gusztáv Wenzel, *Kritikai tanulmányok a Frangepán család történetéhez* [Critical studies on the history of the Frankapan family] (Budapest: MTA, 1884), pp. 28-9, fn. 1.

<sup>614</sup> F. Döry et al., eds., *Decreta Regni Hungariae*, § XXIII, pp. 147-8.

<sup>615</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, docs. 66, 67, pp. 72-9.

In 1477 came another modification of the contract. Then, only two years before his death, still childless, Martin added three more of his castles that were listed among the Frankapan estates in their division of 1449 – Okić, Novi, and Bribir.<sup>616</sup> The king seems to have been well aware of this legal obstacle, as one of the clauses of the charter that confirmed this addition prevents the possibility of any of Martin's relatives to object to this transfer of possessory rights.<sup>617</sup> But in the meantime, between 1464 and 1477, significant events changed not only relations between the Frankapans and Matthias, but the geopolitical situation in the region dominated by this family as well.

In 1469 Matthias's troops took the town of Senj, the central and most important possession of the family, shared equally between all of its members. This event is well known in historiography and although archival sources reveal some new details, I shall not dwell on this particular issue here, as it does not impact my argument. But as Senj has long been viewed as the western centre of Matthias's defensive system against the Ottomans, in fact as the centre of the so-called 'captaincy of Senj' that reputedly governed the system's north-western sections, we need to turn to the context of its acquisition and Matthias's motives. It is generally understood, as Grgin summarized it in his synthesis of Croatian history during Matthias's reign (relying largely on older scholarship, primarily Klaić), that the king was driven by a wide array of strategic, economic, and political interests.<sup>618</sup> Senj, as it goes, was an important port, could have offered access to the Adriatic to the Hungarian king; it could have thus opened new, Italian horizons to him. Its capture, furthermore, would have weakened the Frankapans who were allegedly opposing his 'centralizing efforts,' as well as countered Frederick III's ambitions in the area, whose alliance with the Frankapans is thought to have been the direct cause of Matthias's action. Venice's role and benevolence towards the Frankapans is also often mentioned in connection with the 'Senj crisis,' but noted as secondary to other causes listed above. Most importantly, Senj could have served as a perfect centre for the western section of the anti-Ottoman defensive system. But there is no evidence, quite the contrary, that the Frankapans were in any way openly hostile to Matthias before 1469, and surprisingly even after that, following a short period of animosity.<sup>619</sup> Stephen had been serving the king since

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<sup>616</sup> Ibid., doc. 137, pp. 139-40; cf. Euzebijer Fermentžin, *Acta Bosnae potissimum ecclesiastica cum insertis editorum documentorum regestis ab anno 925 usque ad annum 1752* (Zagreb: JAZU, 1892), doc. 1175, pp. 295-8.

<sup>617</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 137, pp. 139-40.

<sup>618</sup> See note 602.

<sup>619</sup> Although Bonfini briefly noted, for the autumn of 1465, that the king, according to some opinions, had intended to assault the Frankapans and their domains, no other source speaks of this. It may be that the effort of the Duke of Modena mentioned in the following paragraph was related to this in some way, but Matthias did not move

1458, as we have seen; Matthias helped George (Juraj) with his problems with the division of the family estates; the king furthermore confirmed all possessions of Dujam (Domnius) Frankapan.<sup>620</sup> One can assume the Frankapans may not have been overly enthusiastic with Martin's and Matthias's deal, but certainly none of them expressed their grievances, violently or peacefully. After all, the king's ambitions with Martin's estates did not directly encroach upon the family's rights until 1477. A careful scrutiny of the known material, further contributions from unpublished sources that have not yet been consulted, and an analysis of Senj's geopolitical potential suggest that a very specific reason was behind Matthias's actions, not completely (or at all) related to the Ottomans.

As always, there was another factor. Since at least 1465, following initial Ottoman incursions in Frankapan domains in 1464, Venice observed this region with an interest higher than usual. In 1465, on the insistence, quite urgent and forceful, of the Duke of Modena whose late half-sister had been married to Stephen Frankapan, Venice took him and his son under her protection against all bar the 'crown of Hungary,' as the Senate put it.<sup>621</sup> The central reason was that 'this count Stephen has in his hands many passes of Modruš and other places' that would not work for the Republic's benefit if they end up in another's hands. Thus was introduced a geopolitical goal that would, in fact, become the central issue behind the conflicts around Senj in 1469. Venice's interest in controlling the area that Ottoman raiders used to reach Friuli, particularly throughout the 1470s, by any means available is what, as we shall see, caused the reaction of the Hungarian king. A fairly large amount of primary material, both known and thus far unknown, proves beyond any doubt that Venice's goal was to establish a defensive system in the area around the Frankapan Modruš in collaboration with anyone ready to help, be it Frederick III, the Frankapans, other Croatian aristocrats, or Matthias himself. In fact, the 'discourse' of 1475 seems to have actually been intended as a sort of a 'strategic analysis' of the area for the Venetian government. Having listed all known routes used by Ottoman raiders and emphasized that indeed the route across the Frankapan lands was the shortest to Italy, the author finished his report with a conclusion that the best solution to stop

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against them then, nor does the duke's motivation seem to have been related to Matthias's actions. Bonfini was quite confused about the king's intentions in Croatia in 1465, but now it is clear that he attempted to bring the Tallóci lands under his control and establish Hungarian presence around the Neretva and further in Hercegovina. Bonfini's testimony further shows that Matthias's goals in Croatia at the time probably had very little (if anything) to do with the Ottomans. He noted that the king moved his troops to Croatia in September 1465, but *expeditionis que causa fuerit, nondum satis compertum habeo* [What was the cause of this expedition I have not yet ascertained] – A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/1, p. 4.

<sup>620</sup> Cf. L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, docs. 74, 75, pp. 84-8.

<sup>621</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 1, doc. 191, p. 312.

Ottoman incursions into Venetian possessions and Habsburg lands would be to put six to seven thousand men, infantry and cavalry, around the Frankapan Modruš, 'as this place is able to resist the Turks.'<sup>622</sup>

It was the exceedingly difficult period in 1468/1469, when Ottoman incursions first significantly threatened Istria and Friuli, and Frankapan domains and the remainder of Croatia were particularly severely affected, that saw concrete Venetian measures in the area. Beginning with first steps as early as July 1468, the Republic wished to unite the Frankapans themselves as well as the Frankapans with the counts of Krbava (who were apparently hostile to each other at the time) in the defence of their domains and indirectly Venetian Istria and Friuli.<sup>623</sup> The first concrete measures came in early 1469. Venice now not only lobbied with Pope Paul II for aid for the counts of Krbava and the Frankapans, as they perceived this the crucial prerequisite for the defence of the whole of Italy (Senj, they claimed, was the gate of Italy), but for the first time also offered troops.<sup>624</sup> Specifically, by 20 January 1469, Venetians offered to do anything to aid the Frankapans, even to send a *condottiere* to defend Senj.<sup>625</sup> At the same time they approached Frederick III and urged him to join the cause and help in the establishment of a defensive belt in the northern Adriatic.<sup>626</sup> Matthias, at the time occupied with Bohemia, which Venice did not miss to mention to Paul II and accuse both Paul and Matthias of sacrificing Croatia for gains against Bohemia,<sup>627</sup> was, it seems, uninterested. Venice, in fact, considered the best solution to this crisis the king's return with his army from Bohemia to Croatia, which they wholeheartedly hoped for and attempted to influence Paul II to work on Matthias's return.<sup>628</sup> That indeed Matthias and his captains in the area did little or nothing to stop the Ottomans is further suggested by requests and information Venice received from Stephen Frankapan. In February he informed the Republic of his discussions with Janus Pannonius, the bishop of Pécs and the *ban* of Slavonia at the time, about help for the defence of Modruš and other surrounding areas. Venice responded that an envoy would be dispatched to help bring these discussions to a favourable conclusion.<sup>629</sup> Indeed on 15 April 1469 an envoy was

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<sup>622</sup> F. Cusin, 'Le vie d'invasione dei turchi,' p. 155; A. Pertusi, 'I primi studi,' p. 552.

<sup>623</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 431, 441, pp. 411, 420.

<sup>624</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 23, fol. 158v-159r; cf. Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10 docs. 446, 447, 449, pp. 422-3, 427-8.

<sup>625</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10 doc. 449, pp. 427-8.

<sup>626</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 23, fol. 164r-165r; cf. Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10 doc. 451, p. 429, an edition *in extracto* with a wrong date, 9 February instead of 11 February.

<sup>627</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 64, pp. 99-100. For a brief overview of Matthias's campaign(s) in Bohemia at the time see: A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, pp. 84ff.

<sup>628</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 64, pp. 99-100.

<sup>629</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10 doc. 453, pp. 430-1.

instructed not only to travel to the Frankapans and the counts of Krbava in search of a solution to the defence against the Ottomans, but to meet with Janus Pannonius. He was to explain the goal of his mission among the Croatian aristocrats to Janus, as well as beg him for aid for the Frankapans. If the *ban* and bishop was unavailable in person, he was to dispatch letters to him about this matter.<sup>630</sup>

At the same time Venice continued with concrete measures. In April they sent weapons and ammunition from the Arsenal to the Frankapans and the counts of Krbava, Matthias's allegedly faithful Martin among them, who personally requested it.<sup>631</sup> In addition, 1 000 ducats were to be sent to Croatia to those lords whose castles lay closest to Ottoman lands. Then in July 1469 came what seems to have been a turning point for all sides. According to the contemporary material, there was a particularly vicious Ottoman raid in the Frankapan area and the whole of the northern Adriatic that took place between mid-June and early July.<sup>632</sup> Early in July, probably as a direct result of these incursions, the Venetian Senate was presented with a proposal to write to the *provveditore* in Friuli to continue with concrete measures for the defence of Italy. As Stephen Frankapan had already offered Modruš to lodge Venetian troops, and the place was more than suitable for the defence against Ottoman incursions, the *provveditore* was to discuss with Stephen as well as other local lords in detail the necessary numbers, as well as ways in which incursions could be fought off.<sup>633</sup> The remaining local Croatian (and presumably other) lords were also welcome as the Senate had learned there was quite a number of other, similarly suitable strongholds in the area. The *provveditore* was also to inspect these places in detail; learn about their ability to hold an army, their position and distance from Friuli, etc. Lastly, he was to consult about this issue and the general defence against the Turks with Frederick's captains in the vicinity. No mention was made of Matthias. This mission, however, was immediately postponed, possibly due to the fear of Matthias's reaction. A few days later, having received news on 1 July about Ottoman attacks on Stephen Frankapan's domains, Venice nevertheless decided to send him a hundred infantrymen to help defend Modruš.<sup>634</sup> By the end of the month, however, news spread in Venice that Matthias's troops (allegedly, and unlikely, 9 000 cavalry) had already been ordered to move against

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<sup>630</sup> Ibid., doc. 461, pp. 435-7.

<sup>631</sup> Ibid., docs. 460, 461 pp. 434-7.

<sup>632</sup> F. Cusin, 'Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,' doc. 64, pp. 91-2; V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, docs. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 pp. 168-73, 208-10, 232-4, 235-6; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 76, p. 117

<sup>633</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 473, pp. 453-4.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid., doc. 474, p. 454.



Croatian lords,<sup>635</sup> while by the beginning of August Blaise Magyar was at the head of the assault against the Frankapans.<sup>636</sup> Senj fell before 23 November 1469 in, at least according to the Venetians, what seems to have been an opportunistic stratagem by Hungarian troops following an Ottoman incursion. Venetian garrison in the city helped preserve it against the Ottomans, but once they left, Hungarian troops entered.<sup>637</sup>

Following the fall of the city, the Frankapans, at least partly, continued their resistance and set upon retaking Senj, through diplomacy and arms.<sup>638</sup> There ensued a complex diplomatic effort, led by Venice, to return the Frankapans to their domains. Members of the family, Martin in particular, openly claimed he would have rather surrendered his castles and domains to the Turks than watch them being destroyed by Matthias, while requesting aid against the king from the Republic.<sup>639</sup> Venice warned Matthias, in one of the last diplomatic attempts at his court, that indeed Frankapan domains, in fact the whole of Croatia, may fall into Ottoman hands if the area is not pacified.<sup>640</sup> It seems, however, that Matthias, at least initially, was not completely determined on keeping Senj for himself. In February 1470, Venice was happy to lend 10 000 ducats to Martin Frankapan for the redemption of Senj, who came with the request after what might have been initial talks with Matthias.<sup>641</sup> That this may indeed have been the case is further suggested by a later note in the records of the Senate, dating from 1473. John Frankapan then sent an envoy to Venice to say that he had received promising words from Elisabeth Szilágyi, Matthias's mother, that Senj may be redeemed for a far smaller price than what the Republic was ready to loan earlier.<sup>642</sup>

Senj, nevertheless, remained in Matthias's hands for the remainder of his reign. While Matthias's motivation requires further interpretation, Venetian goals were quite clear. It seems that Venetians were sincere in their primary aim, i.e. remote defence of their possessions in the region of the northern Adriatic at the passes through the terrain of Croatia. Although the

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<sup>635</sup> F. Cusin, 'Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,' doc. 67, pp. 93-4; V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 6, pp. 173-4.

<sup>636</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 476, pp. 455-6.

<sup>637</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 486, p. 461.

<sup>638</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 84r, HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, no. 118; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, docs. 487, 488, 489, 490, 491 pp. 461-6.

<sup>639</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 89r; 91v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 113/114; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 21, 26, pp. 24-5, 34-5.

<sup>640</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 84r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, no. 118; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 13, pp. 15-6.

<sup>641</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 94r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 104; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 27, pp. 36-7.

<sup>642</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 26, fol. 63r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 141, p. 212.

Republic, for obvious political reasons, would have been happiest with the Frankapans controlling the region, they seem to have only been a suitable tool. That this was indeed so is shown by the fact that Venice already in July 1469, just when the recent Ottoman incursions emphasized the importance of northern Croatia and Matthias prepared for an assault against the Frankapans, initiated negotiations with the king about the construction of a defensive belt in Croatia.<sup>643</sup> By August, Venetian envoys started discussing with Matthias the details of such a system, as two principal passes in Croatia came in the focus of discussions. Venice was ready to provide a certain portion of troops that would, in need, guard the area for two or three months a year.<sup>644</sup> When in June 1470 the crisis eventually abated, Venice initiated discussions with Matthias's *ban*, Blaise Magyar, about the very same issue – models of resistance to Ottoman incursions.<sup>645</sup> Together with Blaise and representatives of Frederick III, the Venetian envoy was specifically instructed to discuss 'precautions that need to be implemented' to combat Ottoman raids, and measures 'that need to be adopted, which seem best for the passes used by Turks, as well as for the protection of the population, so that they do not get caught and taken away.' Venetian intentions are also clarified by the events of 1472 that, for a brief period, resembled those of 1469. In September 1472 another violent Ottoman incursion struck Venetian Friuli,<sup>646</sup> and the Republic's government responded with almost identical measures. On 10 October, the Senate instructed an envoy to travel to Rijeka, where he would be welcomed by representatives of Sixtus IV and King Ferrante of Naples. Thence they were to travel together to a place which still needed to be arranged with the Frankapans and the counts of Krbava, in order to meet with them and settle all the differences that the two families may still have had. It was again the Venetian view that their discord was the main reason that Ottoman raiders so easily reached Venetian possessions further west.<sup>647</sup> Having met with them, the same envoy was then instructed to discuss with the Frankapans, the counts of Krbava, Peter of Zrin (Zrínyi/Zrinski), and whomever seemed suitable, the changes that the attack of Uzun Hassan against Mehmed brought to the region. Uzun Hassan's attack weakened, or Venice so believed, the Ottoman Bosnia.<sup>648</sup> Even the recently enthroned (Hungarian) king of Bosnia, Nicholas

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<sup>643</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 4, pp. 170-1.

<sup>644</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 482, pp. 457-8.

<sup>645</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 47v-48r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 132-135; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 43, pp. 60-2.

<sup>646</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 163r-164r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 202-203; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 111, pp. 159-61.

<sup>647</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 168v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 204-205; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 112, pp. 162-3.

<sup>648</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 178r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 209; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 115, pp. 166-7.

Újlaki, whom Peter Zrínyi represented in Venice, sought the Republic's aid at the time for the recuperation of the remainder of Bosnia.<sup>649</sup> This time Matthias protested, and expectedly so. This all took place immediately after the death of Paul Tár. In February 1473 Venice had to justify her stance towards Croatian lords, revealing, fortunately, what else had been proposed in negotiations with them.<sup>650</sup> The Venetians emphasized that the mission organized by them, the pope, and King Ferrante had only one, benign role: to reconcile Croatian lords and unite them in defence against Ottoman raids. Having witnessed what had been taking place recently, all three deemed it necessary to motivate the Croatian nobility to stand together. Apparently, there was talk of a thousand Venetian cavalry and a thousand infantry to be stationed in Croatia, of which the king somehow learned. Venice emphasized, however, that this was a specific request presented by Croatian lords, and not proposed by Venetian envoys.

Here, more than anywhere else, Matthias's objections to Venetian politics in the region become clear. He apparently had issues, rightfully so, with Venetian meddling in matters of his lands, especially since Croatian lords, the Frankapans, the counts of Krbava, and everybody below or in-between, had since the beginning of his reign looked to Venice for aid and guidance of any sort, far more, it seems, than to Buda. Just as in central Croatian regions, Matthias here responded to a direct threat from Venice. Specifically, once the relatively minute area between the Una, the Kupa, and the Adriatic became so eventful in the late 1460s, and Venice (as around Klis, and at the Neretva) put significant effort into turning the region into a defensive belt through all available means, while Ottomans too threatened to either destroy or conquer it, Matthias was left with no option but to establish his authority and make sure that the area did not slip out of his hands. After the king largely reconciled with the Frankapans, Senj remained under his direct jurisdiction. Yet it had no strategic value for the defence of Hungary (or any other land of the Hungarian crown) against Ottoman incursions or conquest, surprising as this may seem. Situated on the shore, well hidden from the hinterlands that Ottoman raiders used to cross into Istria and Carniola by the massive northern slopes of the Velebit mountain range, still to this day connected to its hinterland only via the 700-metre high, and barely traversable pass of Vratnik, Senj was worthless in this sense. Had Szakály (and many other scholars) ever visited the town, I am certain he would have been better acquainted with Senj's surroundings, and the inadequacy of its position for the defence of any of Matthias's territories. I doubt he

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<sup>649</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 179v-180r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 208; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 117, pp. 169-70.

<sup>650</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 188r-189r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 123, pp. 182-4. Cf. L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relative,' pp. 10-14.

would have listed Senj among the most important castles of Matthias's defensive system. Any garrison that may have lingered in the town had first to traverse the gorge of Senj ('Senjska draga') and then the steep slope towards Vratnik in order to engage Ottoman troops passing nearby. Even today, along a tarmac road following the same path, a hiker (bereft of weapon or armour) would have to walk for at least four hours to traverse the Velebit there. Unsurprisingly, one cannot cast one's gaze on much else than the sea from Senj:

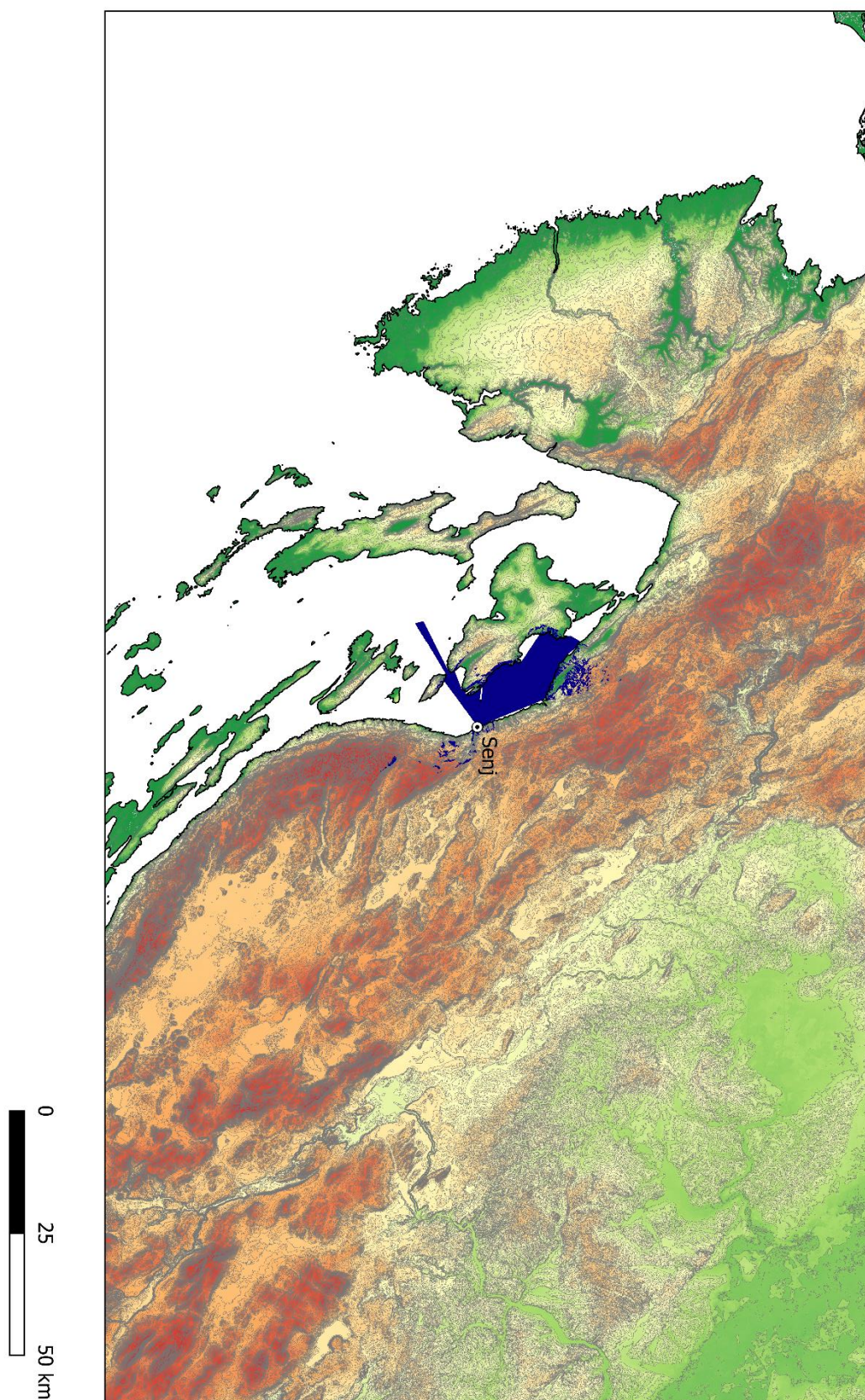


Figure 6 - The viewshed from Senj

Even if Matthias had any intention of including Senj among the ‘defensive castles’ in the south, and even if Senj and its garrison had any influence on Ottoman incursions, he could have only been doing a favour to Venice and Frederick III. The position of the town could not have stopped incursions into Slavonia or deeper into Hungary. Such a route, presumably from Ključ and Kamegrad towards Senj, and thence into Slavonia and Hungary makes no sense. As we have seen, however, routes nearby were the main (and only) routes towards Italy and Carniola. Another speculative issue which may have benefited Matthias, nevertheless, needs to be taken into account. As Ottomans had apparently captured Ključ, Kamengrad, and Livno around that time (and this seems to have been the prerequisite for the unprecedented incursions of 1469), thus cutting Hungarian Bosnia off from Croatia and Dalmatia, Matthias would have been left without direct connection to his kingdoms in the south, as well as the recently established outpost on the Neretva and among the Vlatkovičs. Had Venice managed to acquire control over Modruš, Croatia, where Matthias was so eager to establish his rule only three years earlier, was in danger of being dragged even further under Venetian influence. In short, Matthias did not wish to defend either Frankapan estates, Italy, or Hungary in Senj and its surroundings. He wanted control over that area, against Venice and Frederick III.

But in 1469, even with the capture of probably their most cherished possession, Matthias was not done with the Frankapans, nor the counts of Krbava. Just as famous as the assault on Senj is Matthias’s failed attempt to acquire the island of Krk in 1480, then in the hands of John Frankapan, a somewhat secluded member of the family, who had since the middle of the century been tightly connected to Venice.<sup>651</sup> Matthias’s assault on the island, led again by Blaise Magyar, has always been viewed in historiography as the king’s retaliation for John’s attack on the previously Frankapan possession in Vinodol, the region just across the sea, that Matthias had acquired not only through the capture of Senj, but also by arranging deals with Martin.<sup>652</sup> This view has been primarily based on the well-known report by Antonio Vinciguerra, the so-called *Giurisdizione antica di Veglia*, compiled shortly following the Venetian takeover of the island (1480) – a lengthy discussion on the recent history of the island that apparently justified Venetian occupation.<sup>653</sup> Vinciguerra, the Venetian secretary on the

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<sup>651</sup> On John Frankapan, see: V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, *passim*.

<sup>652</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 275ff; cf. *idem*, *Povjest Hrvata*, pp. 112ff; Giuseppe Vassilich, ‘L’ultimo dei Frangipani, conte di Veglia’ [The last of the Frankapans, count of Krk], *Archeografo triestino* 18 (1892): pp. 166ff

<sup>653</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Commissiones et relationes Venetae*, vol. 1 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1876), doc. 4, pp. 29-91.

island at the time,<sup>654</sup> described in his chronologically vague narrative the conflict between Matthias and John as a squabble initiated by John's irrational behaviour. When Bartholomew Frankapan died childless, noted Vinciguerra, John secured from Matthias instruments that granted him his late brother's castles. Shortly thereafter Martin, another childless Frankapan, also fell seriously ill. He, however, left his estates to Matthias. But John took for granted he would receive permission from Matthias for Martin's estates, and even before Martin died invaded Vinodol and took the castles of Novi and Bribir. Matthias protested, but John refused to depart from the area, requesting aid from Venice. Eventually, having tried a diplomatic resolution, Matthias sent Blaise Magyar to drive John and his troops away, which Magyar succeeded with little effort and in a short time, reacquiring the castles with 'all the munitions and artillery.'<sup>655</sup> Then followed the assault on Krk that famously ended with Venice's victory and the inclusion of the island in its *stato da mar*. Bonfini also offers a similar narrative, although here, as elsewhere, he seems to have been quite baffled by the succession of events. He noted that an outright rebellion broke out on the island against John, following some disagreement with its inhabitants, during which the rebels called Venice to come to their aid, while John turned to Matthias. The king's assault on the island, says Bonfini, was justified: Martin had left his castles on the continent as well as (his part of) Krk to Matthias, and John captured them against the king's will, thereupon requesting aid from Venice.<sup>656</sup> Both Vinciguerra and Bonfini agree about the cause of the war.

Vjekoslav Klaić, whose monograph on the Frankapan family (still the only study of such scope, larger than Wenzel's, Wertner's, and Vassilich's far more modest but just as old attempts)<sup>657</sup> remains the dated authority on the family's history, connected Matthias's assault on Krk with his earlier actions against another John (Anž/Angelo/Hans) Frankapan, a Frankapan whose central area was in Brinje, just southeast from Senj. With little evidence and more than sufficient space for speculation, Klaić carefully suggested that in 1479 Matthias may have moved against Anž on similar grounds, that is due to the latter's attempt to interfere with Martin's inheritance.<sup>658</sup> Klaić did correctly note that by the summer of 1479 Matthias's troops

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<sup>654</sup> See: 'Vinciguerra, Antonio' at <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/antonio-vinciguerra/>, accessed on 10 April 2020; ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 11, fol. 62v, Secrete, reg. 29, fol. 83v-84r, 84v-85r, 95v, Consiglio die dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 20, fol. 138v, 153v, reg. 21, fol. 37v.

<sup>655</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Commissiones*, doc. 4, p. 47.

<sup>656</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/6, p. 107.

<sup>657</sup> G. Vassilich, 'L'ultimo dei Frangipani,' pts. 1 and 2, *L'Archeografo triestino* 18 (1892): pp. 138-76, 312-31; G. Wenzel, *Kritikai tanulmányok*; Moriz Wertner, 'Ausländische Geschlechter in Ungarn. Die Frangepan,' *Jahrbuch der k. k. heraldischen Gesellschaft 'Adler'* 4 (1894): pp. 1-46.

<sup>658</sup> V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, pp. 268ff.



captured Anž's Brinje with its castle of Sokol, following less polite than usual correspondence with Venice over its involvement with Anž and aid that the Republic had allegedly granted Anž against Matthias.<sup>659</sup> Klaić did not dedicate any space, however, to the interpretation of either Venice's involvement or indeed the conflict itself, standing by his speculations that it either had to do with Anž's ambitions over Martin's domains or Matthias's plan to secure Senj's background by capturing Brinje. In fact, as we shall see, both the king's attack against Anž and against John had a wider background, revealed by thus far unknown Venetian records.

Troubles for the Frankapans returned much earlier than has been previously thought. In the autumn of 1477, another vicious Ottoman incursion struck Venetian Friuli, while in January 1478, Venice was informed by spies in Bosnia and Croatia that another such attack from Bosnia was in the making.<sup>660</sup> At that time, certainly before 24 February, history repeated itself. On that day, the Venetian Senate responded to requests presented by Stephen and Martin Frankapan, who sought aid against Ottoman incursions, as well as against other foes. They specifically requested that Venice send an expert to come visit their domains and test their defensive capabilities, since with a few Venetian troops stationed there the Frankapans, so they claimed, would be able to face and destroy Ottoman raiders.<sup>661</sup> Venice complied, while encouraging the Frankapans to unite and persevere in the fight. This was all too reminiscent of the late 1460s. Four months later, in June 1478, suddenly envoys of the inhabitants of the town of Modruš, Stephen Frankapan's possession, appeared in Venice.<sup>662</sup> They arrived with a very concrete problem and were even more open with their requests than their lord had been a few months earlier. Having told the Senate about a recent incarceration of Stephen Frankapan and his son Bernard by none other than Matthias, they spoke of the king's intention to come and take not only Modruš and other possessions of Stephen and Bernard, but also those of counts Anž and Dujam, Stephen's brothers. As they wished to defend these places 'with all their strength and their own blood' against Matthias's attack, the people of Modruš requested aid in gunpowder and guns. Afraid, though, of insulting the king, Venice decided not to get directly involved, but to allow them to buy whatever ammunition and weapon they needed in Venice and to freely export them across the Adriatic. On 17 July, the Venetian Senate responded to an envoy sent

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<sup>659</sup> Ibid., pp. 268-72.

<sup>660</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 28, fol. 67r, 71r-v, 85v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 207, 208, 212, pp. 316-19, 324.

<sup>661</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 28, fol. 90r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 213, pp. 325-6.

<sup>662</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 28, fol. 106r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 224, p. 339.



by Anž with further information that suggests a conflict of some sort was expected in the region. The envoy requested aid in ammunition and weapons for his lord, so that he may be able to defend his possessions (against an unnamed foe). This Venice granted, while emphasizing that they deemed the defence of Anž's castles just as important as the defence of their own possessions. Finally, the Senate decided to authorize this same envoy to discuss with Anž his service to Venice, which apparently Anž had offered. He was specifically to find out how many men-at-arms Anž was able to keep at the time, and how many he would be able to muster in future.<sup>663</sup> One month later, having received many eager requests from Anž, the Senate was ready to offer him a *condotta* for up to 400 cavalry, with a monthly salary of three ducats per rider.<sup>664</sup> That, as far as Venice was concerned, her recent contacts with the Frankapans were probably motivated by renewed Ottoman incursions and reinvigorated plans to defend Friuli in Croatia is suggested by similar negotiations that the Republic led with none other than Vuk Branković, one of Matthias's better known captains in the south. A brief note in Venetian registers dated to 1478 brings further implications about Vuk's biography, the strengths and weaknesses of Matthias's domestic policies, as well as the role and influence of Venice in the region. For now, we shall only focus on the fact that it was Vuk, the titular despot of Serbia, in Matthias's service at the time (before that in Ottoman),<sup>665</sup> who approached the Republic for the same reason as Anž. According to Venice, his 'name and reputation are great among the Turks, and great is the virtue in the art of war of Despot Vuk of Serbia, who desires to serve our dominion, and none would be as good in restraining and warding off the enemy's incursions as this captain with a good number of Rascian riders.' The Senate, therefore, decided to negotiate a *condotta* with Vuk through secret channels.<sup>666</sup>

By October, Matthias became aware of Venetian dealings with his subjects. As Klaić had already noted, the king addressed sharply-worded letters to the doge about the Republic's connections to Anž Frankapan and Charles, count of Krbava.<sup>667</sup> In one preserved letter – the king's response to the doge published by Fraknoi – Matthias revealed his frustrations. The content of the letter is important for a number of reasons. The king acknowledged the response

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<sup>663</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 28, fol. 116r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 226, p. 341.

<sup>664</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 28, fol. 123r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 228, p. 343.

<sup>665</sup> Briefly on Vuk, with literature, see: [Katarina Mitrović] Катарина Митровић, 'Вук Гргуревић између Мехмеда II и Матије Корвина (1458-1465)' [Vuk Grgurević between Mehmed II and Matthias Corvinus (1458-1465)], *Braničevski glasnik* 2 (2003): pp. 19-33.

<sup>666</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 28, fol. 123r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 44; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 229, p. 344.

<sup>667</sup> V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, pp. 269-70.

of the doge, who claimed that the Republic did nothing wrong by sending arms and gunpowder to Anž to defend his castles against the Turks that were in their vicinity, but responded with a number of questions that he felt were not adequately covered. Matthias wished to know whether Venice would respect their old treaties or would continue to aid rebels against him, not only Anž, but also Charles of Krbava, ‘who is an obvious thief and brigand.’ He wished to know this as he intended to ‘act against them, obviously unfaithful to us and rebels.’ He was also confused as to why Venice provided aid to Anž against him. There was no need to send Anž war machines against Turkish incursions, as it is well known that whenever they invade a foreign land, although they plunder, they do not besiege castles. But even if Anž was afraid that the Turks may storm his castles, it was his responsibility, claimed Matthias, to see to the danger posed to his kingdom, rather than the Venetians’. He, lastly, repeated his question: ‘Would you again provide aid to those that rebel against us?’<sup>668</sup>

A week before Matthias’s response was issued, the Senate hurried to abort negotiations with Anž about the *condotta*, dismissing his envoy due to Matthias’s complaints.<sup>669</sup> Then, on 27 October, Venice responded to Matthias’s latest correspondence (probably the letter above).<sup>670</sup> The Senate claimed that as Anž was afraid of the Turks that had recently raided across Venetian and imperial lands, he requested aid against them. Venice had no intentions of helping him against Matthias, but merely, ‘as Christians inclined to help other Christians,’ allowed him to purchase ammunition for the defence of his castles. The Senate cunningly countered Matthias’s blunt accusations by emphasizing that they helped Anž just as they had ‘on numerous occasions not only granted a similar license for royal castles, but donated victuals and ammunition of a fair amount of money, in order to help defend them against the Turks and keep them in the king’s hands.’ As regards the count of Krbava, no favours were granted to him at all. Anž, it seems, abandoned by Venice and in Matthias’s disfavour, came again to the city only to be rejected and left to solve his problems alone. In March 1479, having been dismissed by the Senate, he asked for some money to return home. As the Republic deemed it important that he returns to defend his domains, the Venetians granted him 200 ducats.<sup>671</sup> By the end of March or the beginning of April, Matthias moved against the Frankapans again with an attack on Anž and his castles. By 6 April, Venice instructed the captain and the count of

<sup>668</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, docs. 266, 267, pp. 391-3.

<sup>669</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 146, p. 148.

<sup>670</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 28, fol. 133r-134v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 232, pp. 347-50.

<sup>671</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 11, fol. 17v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 5, doc. 96; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 237, pp. 357.

Zadar to come to John Frankapan's aid with an adequate number of vessels and men, so that the island of Krk remains in his hands. These instructions were a response to John's request, who was afraid that Matthias's captain who had recently been sent to attack Anž might dispatch a portion of his troops to invade the island.<sup>672</sup> Venice promptly responded to the king's action, urging him in April to show mercy to the Frankapans, particularly to Anž, currently under attack. Matthias, the Senate added, might benefit from his virtues and youth, as he had a lot to offer in comparison to his much older and weaker relatives.<sup>673</sup> As noted, Anž's Brinje fell by 10 June 1479, when Matthias's castellans governed the castle.<sup>674</sup> The castle would remain in Matthias's hands for the rest of his reign, apparently under the control of the *bans* of Croatia.<sup>675</sup>

What exactly happened in Croatia in the spring of 1479 is far from clear, as largely only Venetian documents shed some light on these events. The so-called *Kolunićev zbornik*, a contemporary Glagolitic manuscript compiled by a certain deacon Broz Kolunić of Bužani (otherwise containing a *Quaresimale* and a tractate on capital sins), narrates in its datation that 'in that time the spiritual father was lord pope Innocent, the king of Hungarians King Matthias, and he put under his sway all Croatian lords, and he banished count Anž from his lordship and also count John of Krk, and in this time he ruled Senj and Otočac and many other castles.'<sup>676</sup> As other documents show, Otočac had until then been in the hands of Martin Frankapan, Matthias's capricious partner.<sup>677</sup> By this time, their contract of inheritance included Martin's castles of Novigrad, Okić, Bribir, Steničnjak, Kostajnica, and Lipovec, two of which were in Vinodol.<sup>678</sup> Vinciguerra noted in his report exactly these two castles as the cause of

<sup>672</sup> HR-DAZD-388, vol. 2, fol. 126r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 14, n. 324; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 240, p. 362.

<sup>673</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 264, pp. 390-1.

<sup>674</sup> R. Lopašić, *Spomenici hrvatske Krajine* [Documents on Croatian 'Krajina'], vol. 1 (Zagreb: JAZU, 1884), doc. 1, p. 1.

<sup>675</sup> MNL OL DL 26053; cf. a transcription in F. Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika*, doc. 44, pp. 272-3 and János Szendrei, 'Brinye vár javainak és hadiszereinek jegyzéke 1489 november 27-éről' [The inventory of the castle of Brinje from 27 November 1489], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 1 (1888): pp. 495-9, with a parallel translation of the Latin text into Hungarian.

<sup>676</sup> Matija Valjevac, ed., *Kolunićev zbornik. Hrvatski glagolski rukopis od godine 1486*. [Croatian Glagolitic manuscript from 1486] (Zagreb: JAZU, 1892). On Kolunić and his work see: V. Klaić, 'Županija Pset (Pesenta) i pleme Kolunić' [The county of Pset (Pesenta) and the Kolunić noble kindred], *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 15 (1928): pp. 1-12; Andrea Radošević, 'O prijepisima glagoljskoga korizmenjaka' [On copies of the Glagolitic *quaresimale*], *Fluminensia* 26 (2014): pp. 7-23; Petar Runje, 'Ambroz Kacitić iz Dubovika rodom Kolunić, javni bilježnik' [Ambrose Kacitić of Dubovik, Kolunić by birth, a notary], *Senjski zbornik* 13 (1988): pp. 157-60.

<sup>677</sup> E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1133, pp. 274-7; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2 doc. 135, pp. 137-8.

<sup>678</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, docs. 61, 62, 137, pp. 64-8, 139-40; E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1175, pp. 295-8.

disagreement between Matthias and John of Krk. Could it be, as Klaić suggested, that this was all due to John's and Anž's opposition to Matthias's and Martin's deals?

As early as February 1478, long before Martin's death (October 1479), Kostajnica was in Matthias's hands, guarded by the castellan, John Bevenjud, who had until then served Martin.<sup>679</sup> John Bevenjud was Martin's long-standing and loyal retainer. In 1471, when Anž detained both Martin and John in Brinje, for unknown reasons, John surrendered his castle of Skrad to Anž to secure their release. For this, Martin pledged him Kostajnica for 4 000 florins.<sup>680</sup> When in 1477 Martin decided to leave Okić (and two other castles) to Matthias, John protested, as he was due 1 500 florins on the basis of some unspecified rights in Okić.<sup>681</sup> In October 1478, by which time he had apparently already taken Kostajnica from Martin, Matthias settled this issue by leaving the castle in Bevenjud's hands as a pledge, until Matthias or his successors return the said 1 500 florins.<sup>682</sup> This suggests that by October Matthias had taken or had intentions to take Okić, as well. In other words, Martin had already started to transfer his possessions to the king in 1478.

Klaić was of an opinion that whatever argument Martin and Anž might have had in 1471 continued in the next years and was eventually settled by 1474, when Martin allegedly agreed to leave Anž the castles of Bribir and Bakar after his death.<sup>683</sup> Although Anž in 1474 indeed agreed to respect Martin's decision to allocate several of his estates to the Franciscans of Trsat from those estates that Martin had already assigned to Anž, as well as those that Anž hoped to acquire following Martin's death in some other way (which Klaić saw as evidence that Bakar and Bribir may have been these estates), there is no evidence whatsoever that Anž was to receive castles that were later (or by that time) reserved for Matthias.<sup>684</sup> Anž certainly may have protested in general against Matthias's acquisition of further Frankapan castles, but there is no explicit evidence to confirm this. There is, however, evidence that, as Vinciguerra and Bonfini asserted, Matthias indeed sent troops against John in 1479 precisely because he captured Martin's castles that had been allocated to Matthias. In March 1480, when the crisis around Krk had already largely abated and Venice took over the island, Matthias's envoys in Venice claimed that the king had sent his troops against 'several rebels in Croatia, among which

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<sup>679</sup> MNL OL DF 231679.

<sup>680</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, doc. 115, pp. 119-21.

<sup>681</sup> Ibid., doc. 137, pp. 139-40.

<sup>682</sup> Ibid., doc. 147, pp. 149-50.

<sup>683</sup> V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, p. 265.

<sup>684</sup> E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1154, pp. 282-4.

count John of Krk, who was often hostile towards the king and had occupied royal castles.<sup>685</sup> One other rebel was certainly Anž. Matthias obviously considered both him and the count(s) of Krbava to be ‘rebels,’ ‘unfaithful,’ ‘thiefs,’ and ‘brigands,’ but why this was so is not completely clear. It is clear from Venetian records, however, that Matthias was particularly unhappy with the fact that Anž entered negotiations with Venice in 1478 to become their *condottiere*.<sup>686</sup> On the other hand, it seems that the king had already by that time considered him a rebel, as shown by Matthias’s above-mentioned letter. Another issue that has to be addressed, as it was probably related to Matthias’s actions in Croatia, is that the inhabitants of Modruš already in June 1478 warned Venice quite explicitly about Matthias’s intentions to capture Frankapan estates. Anž was listed among the Frankapans against whom the king, apparently, planned a campaign. A month later Anž, then, sent men to Venice to see about a *condotta* and to request weapons for the defence of his domains. Lastly, this all took place after Matthias already initiated the takeover of Martin’s castles at the beginning of the year. Assuming the Frankapans, as a family, carried no grudge against Matthias at the time for some other reason, and there is no evidence to suggest that this was so, it seems that the king indeed fought for Martin’s estates. It is, in fact, difficult to imagine the family would be united for any other cause than the preservation of their inheritance (as listed in the treaty of 1449), as they could not even unite in defence against Ottoman incursions. Opposition to Matthias’s acquisition of Martin’s castles certainly came from most (if not all) members of the family and was dealt with differently. Anž suffered the loss of his castle(s), Stephen and Bernard, apart from the initial disagreement, do not seem to have suffered anything else, while John not only lost Martin’s domains on the continent, but in 1480 also his island of Krk. In March 1481, Matthias confirmed (*titulo novae donationis*) Stephen’s and Bernard’s possession of the castles in Modruš, Vitunj, Plaški, Ključ, Hreljin, Grobnik, Vinodol, Drivenik, Ozalj, Ribnik, Dubovac, and Zvečaj (as well as the port of Bakarac), scattered all over Croatia and Slavonia, across the whole Frankapan region.<sup>687</sup> Far more castles, then, remained in the Frankapan’s hands (or at least Stephen’s and Bernard’s) than Matthias’s. It is further interesting that the two Frankapans kept most of the castles that were located along the route used by Ottoman raiders, listed in documents discussed above. Modruš, Hreljin, Vinodol, Drivenik, and Grobnik were the most important strongholds along this route. Had Matthias had any intentions of saving Europe, or

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<sup>685</sup> I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 282, pp. 420-2.

<sup>686</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 146, p. 148.

<sup>687</sup> Ibid., doc. 157, pp. 158-60.

had these castles had any role in defending Hungary, he would have certainly kept them himself.

And while one part of the family made their peace with the king and the new situation, Anž finally enjoyed his *condotta* from Venice,<sup>688</sup> and John wandered in quest for redemption,<sup>689</sup> Matthias kept Krupa, Senj, Brinje (Sokol), Otočac, Steničnjak, Novi, Starigrad, Lipovec, and Okić.<sup>690</sup> In 1480 Matthias gave Kostajnica to Bevenjud and his family permanently, in exchange for that debt of 1 500 ducats and the castles of Ostrožin, Tržac, and Skrad.<sup>691</sup> Soon this arrangement too would be changed, as in 1482 the king requested Kostajnica and Dubica back, returning Ostrožin and Skrad to Bevenjud.<sup>692</sup> It is no surprise that Tržac was kept, as it (as well as Skrad) was previously in Anž's hands.<sup>693</sup> Kostajnica was later transferred to Despot Vuk Grgurević and members of his family.<sup>694</sup> Sources show that the castle

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<sup>688</sup> In April 1482, as testified by the Venetian *Commemoriali*, Anž managed to acquire a *condotta* for a hundred cavalry for one year. Remuneration for his services was set at 3150 ducats per year, very close to what he would have received earlier, had the *condotta* been materialized in 1478. See: R. Predelli, ed., *I Libri Commemoriali*, vol. 17, doc. 16, p. 270.

<sup>689</sup> Although sporadically mentioned, no study has yet been dedicated to John, especially not for the period following the loss of Krk. For sources related to the period after 1480 and his and the fate of his family, see: I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziái emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 293, p. 444; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 240, 246, 255, 261, 262, 269, 280, 287, 288, 291, 299, 317, 318, 324, 325, 350, pp. 362, 376-7, 391-3, 404-5, 419-20, 437, 447-8, 449, 454, 462, 484-7, 494-5, 496, 533-4. Particularly interesting are yet unpublished letters by John's wife, a Venetian Elisabeth Morosini, dating from the latter half of the 1470s: HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12.

<sup>690</sup> Krupa: HR-AHAZU-70, D-XV-6, D-XVI-59; MNL OL DL 83764, 88651; DF 255788; V. Klaić, *Acta Keglevichiana*, docs. 20, pp. 20-1; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Blagay* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1897), doc. 205, 215, pp. 388-92, 423-4; *idem*, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, docs. 61, 62, pp. 64-8.

Brinje: MNL OL DL 26053, 38820; J. Bratulić, ed., *Hrvatske glagoljične i ćirilčne isprave*, doc. 133, pp. 308-13. R. Lopašić, *Spomenici*, doc. 1, p. 1; F. Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika*, docs. 44, 59, pp. 272-3; 287-94; J. Szendrei, 'Brinye vár'.

Otočac: MNL OL DL 72054; D. Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum*, vol. 4, p. 131; M. Valjevac, ed., *Kolunićev zbornik*, pp. V-VI; cf. I. K. Sakcinski, *Acta Croatica* (Zagreb: Narodna tiskarnica, 1863), doc. 115, pp. 128-9; F. Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika*, doc. 59, pp. 287-94.

Steničnjak: MNL OL DL 26235; DF 233220, 255598; R. Lopašić, *Oko Kupe i Korane* [Around the Kupa and Korana rivers] (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 1895), pp. 275-6. Cf. A. Kubinyi, 'Magyarország déli határvárai a középkor végén' [Southern Hungarian border castles at the end of the middle ages] in *idem*, *Nándorfehérvártól Mohácsig - A Mátyás és a Jagelló-kor hadtörténete* (Budapest: Argumentum, 2007), pp. 71-9; there is also a German version of the paper in *idem*, *Matthias Corvinus: Die Regierung eines Königreichs in Ostmitteleuropa 1458-1490* (Budapest: Herne, 1999), pp. 188-201.

Novi and Starigrad: MNL OL DF 231724; D. Farlati, *Illyricum sacrum*, vol. 4, p. 131; E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1175, pp. 295-8; F. Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika*, doc. 59, pp. 287-94.

Lipovec: HR-AHAZU-70, D-I-67; MNL OL DL 26235.

<sup>691</sup> MNL OL DF 218980.

<sup>692</sup> MNL OL DF 231819; cf. DF 231820, 231823, 231824.

<sup>693</sup> MNL OL DF 14263, 33987; L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 1, doc. 370, pp. 370-2; G. Wenzel, *Kritikai tanulmányok*, pp. 28-9, fn. 1.

<sup>694</sup> MNL OL DL 33628; Matija Mesić, 'Pleme Berislavića' [The kindred of Berislavićes], *Rad JAZU* 8 (1869): pp. 57-8; *idem*, 'Građa mojih rasprava u Radu' [The source material of my studies in Rad], *Starine JAZU* 5 (1873): doc. 22, pp. 124-5.

of Okić (together with Lipovec) was certainly surrendered to the king by Martin's castellan, a certain Bernard Stučić (*Zthwczyth*), in or before November 1479, for which Matthias awarded Skrad, previously taken from Bevenjud, to Stučić.<sup>695</sup> Okić is not listed among John Corvinus's castles in 1490, and the sources do not reveal when, if at all, it was allocated by Matthias to someone. In 1480 Bribir, granted by Martin and apparently later forcibly taken from John of Krk, was pledged by the king for 2 000 florins to Marin Žunjević, the captain of Senj at the time.<sup>696</sup>

By 1471, Matthias had also apparently taken the Croatian castle of Rmanj from the Frankapans. In that year, the king pledged the castle to Paul Tár and Paul Sándor, vice-*bans* of Croatia at the time, as he owed them 2 000 florins for their services in keeping royal castles in Croatia.<sup>697</sup> Rmanj had been in the Frankapans's hands since the 1430s, when King Sigismund pledged it.<sup>698</sup> In 1449 it figured in the redistribution of the family's estates.<sup>699</sup> No evidence points to the exact date of the king's acquisition of the castle, but it must have been during the late 1460s, coinciding with Matthias's assault on Senj and the remainder of the Frankapan domains. Just as little, unfortunately, is known about its fate after 1471. As we have seen, Paul Tár was dead by August 1472. Paul Sándor, whom the king explicitly named the castellan of Počitelj, also died by 1 March 1472 when the king reallocated his estates in the counties of Doboka and Torda, as Paul had no children.<sup>700</sup> It may well be that Paul fell defending Počitelj, which the Ottomans captured in mid-September 1471.<sup>701</sup> Later evidence shows that the castle was governed by its *porkulabs* and vice-castellans during the 1470s and 1480s.<sup>702</sup> These officials were probably Matthias's (or his *bans*'s) men, but as the castle does not figure among those transferred to John Corvinus, it remains uncertain whether indeed Matthias kept it.

By the early 1480s, Matthias captured further castles in Croatia that previously belonged to another family whose members he openly called 'rebels' and 'thieves' – the counts

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<sup>695</sup> MNL OL DL 33489.

<sup>696</sup> HR-HDA-644, 22; HR-AHAZU-70, D-XVIII-89; MNL OL DF 275072; Josip Bratulić, ed., *Hrvatske glagoljične i ćirilčne isprave iz zbirke Stjepana Ivšića 1100.-1527*. [Croatia Glagolitic and Cyrillic documents from the collection of Stjepan Ivšić, 1100.-1527.] (Zagreb: HAZU, 2017), doc. 124, pp. 283-4.

<sup>697</sup> MNL OL DL 68070.

<sup>698</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, docs. 249, 253, 261, pp. 230-3, 235-7, 247-9. Cf. Stjepan Pavičić, *Seobe i naselja u Lici* [Migrations and settlements in Lika] (Zagreb: JAZU, 1962), pp. 89-91; V. Klaić, *Krčki knezovi Frankapani*, p. 213; G. Wenzel, *Kritikai tanulmányok*, pp. 30-1.

<sup>699</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus Comitum de Frangepanibus*, vol. 2, doc. 360, pp. 370-2.

<sup>700</sup> MNL OL DL 27341.

<sup>701</sup> J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 800.

<sup>702</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XVI-57; J. Bratulić, ed., *Hrvatske glagoljične i ćirilčne isprave*, doc. 100, pp. 230-2; I. K. Sakcinski, *Acta Croatica*, doc. 102, 117-8.

of Krbava. Throughout the period, just as before, the family maintained a fluctuating relationship with Venice, bound to both rely on her possessions in Dalmatia, adjacent to their domains, and quarrel over various issues – trading rights, delineation of estates, building of castles, pillaging, the migrating Vlachs, and so on.<sup>703</sup> Although Venetian records include far less information on them than for instance on the Frankapans,<sup>704</sup> they do show that the counts of Krbava, just as any family of some standing in the region, relied on Venetian assistance both against Ottoman incursions and against the Hungarian king and his agents. As the situation in Croatia worsened in 1469, the Venetian Senate decided to send an envoy to the counts of Krbava to discuss undisclosed matters of the Republic's possessions in Dalmatia.<sup>705</sup> When, on the other hand, Matthias's troops had fulfilled their tasks against Frankapan Senj, in April 1470, John of Krbava sent an envoy to Venice to seek aid against both Ottoman raiders and Matthias. He explained that as he was 'surrounded on all sides by Hungarians and Turks,' both of whom 'aspired to his destruction,' but had no means of defending himself, he wished to borrow 5 000 ducats from the Republic.<sup>706</sup> In 1472, Venice was happy to loan 3 000 ducats to John (for which he offered to pawn certain jewellery), so that he could redeem a certain castle of his, as well as to give him a house for his family on one of the Venetian islands in the Adriatic.<sup>707</sup> Around the same time the counts of Krbava, just as other Croatian magnates, were the target of renewed Venetian efforts at organizing a defensive buffer between Ottoman possessions in Bosnia and the Republic's territories in the west. Throughout the period, as we have seen, Venice worked both with the Frankapans and the counts of Krbava for their conciliation in an effort to unite them against Ottoman incursions. If Venetian claims were correct, Croatian lords, counts of

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<sup>703</sup> See: Mislav Elvis Lukšić, 'Prilog poznavanju mletačke pomorskotrgovinske politike prema Krbavskim knezovima sredinom XV. stoljeća' [A contribution to the study of Venetian maritime-trading politics towards the counts of Krbava in the middle of the fifteenth century], *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru* 45 (2003): pp. 39-69; *idem*, 'Pogranični prijepori između mletačkih vlasti i knezova Krbavskih u drugoj polovini XV. stoljeća' [Boundary disputes between Venetian authorities and the counts of Krbava in the second half of the fifteenth century], *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru* 46 (2004): pp. 295-226. For an overview of the family's history, the only such in existence, albeit very poorly researched and written, see: Ivan Botica, 'Krbavski knezovi u srednjem vijeku' [The counts of Krbava in the middle ages], unpublished PhD dissertation (Zagreb: University of Zagreb, 2011). Documents on the family's history in general in this period, and their relations with the Venetian state in particular, are largely kept in the archives of Zadar. For published documents, see: Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, *passim*, and D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, *passim*.

<sup>704</sup> That said, archives of Venetian cities in Dalmatia, particularly Zadar, naturally keep far more data on the Kurjakovičs than possibly on any other Croatian noble and especially magnate family.

<sup>705</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 1r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 1, p. 1.

<sup>706</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 41r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 126; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 35, p. 48.

<sup>707</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 148r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 191-192; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 99, pp. 143-4.



Krbava included, requested from Venice a thousand cavalry and just as many infantry in 1472 to help them in defending their domains against Ottoman incursions.

By 1478, the counts of Krbava were apparently in danger of Matthias's retaliation. But while relatively a lot can be learned about Matthias's actions against the Frankapans in 1478/1479, the lack of evidence on the counts of Krbava does not allow a detailed chronological overview. It is certain, nevertheless, that Matthias aimed at acquiring their domains. In 1480, according to John of Krbava, Matthias sent an offer, wishing to acquire John's domains through exchange or any other way. John was not willing at all to cooperate and sent envoys to Venice to seek the Republic's protection, wishing to change sides permanently. He also requested a licence to buy and export ammunition, guns, and ballista for the defence against Matthias's attack that he obviously expected.<sup>708</sup> Discussions, it seems, continued between the king and the family (or some of its members) in the early 1480s.<sup>709</sup> Still, as early as 1479 Matthias's men were in the possession of Mrsinj, previously in the hands of the Kurjakoviće (i.e. counts of Krbava). The castle was governed by castellans of the king's *bans* of Croatia, as shown by a peculiar complaint presented in 1479 by George Mikuličić, who claimed the castellan *castri regii Merzyn*, a certain Paul Vokojević, captured two of his Turks that he had bought for 1 500 florins.<sup>710</sup> It was probably during the assault against Anž that royal troops took this castle too. None of the other castles seem to have fallen in Matthias's hands by that time. Počitelj (in Lika, not to be confused with Počitelj on the Neretva) was still in the possession of John of Krbava in 1483, and so too, it seems, was Kličevac.<sup>711</sup> Bag, a valuable town beneath the Velebit, right on the shore, comparable to the Frankapans's Senj, was in Matthias's hands by 1481, when the king, on the inhabitants' request, confirmed privileges that had earlier been granted by the counts of Krbava.<sup>712</sup> All of these castles appear not only in the 'Farkashida capitulation,' but also in a charter issued by John Corvinus in 1490 that explicitly proves that they were first in Matthias's and thereafter in his son's possession. John then rewarded Peter Macskási, the incumbent captain of Senj, for his services in the defence of castles in Croatia following Matthias's death, particularly against the assaults of the counts of

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<sup>708</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 29, fol. 123v-124r; cf. I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomacziak emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 286, pp. 433-4.

<sup>709</sup> MNL OL DL 34230.

<sup>710</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XVI-59. For a more detailed discussion on this specific legal case, see: I. Tringli, 'Litigations for Ottoman Prisoners of War and the Siege of Buzsin (1481, 1522)' in *Ransom Slavery along the Ottoman Borders (Early Fifteenth – Early Eighteenth Centuries)*, ed. Géza Dávid, Pál Fodor (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 19-26.

<sup>711</sup> MNL OL DL 45964.

<sup>712</sup> I. Kukuljević-Sakcinski, *Jura Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae*, pt. 1, vol. 1 (Zagreb: Ljudevit Gaj, 1861), doc. 114, pp. 155-9.

Krbava. Castles listed in the document (as appurtenances of Senj) are Obrovac, Otočac, Počitelj, Prozor, Kličevac, *Weecz*, and Bag.<sup>713</sup> Most of them had previously belonged to the counts of Krbava. It seems that the king took the majority of the Kurjakoviće's possessions in the period after 1483. Why this was so, however, remains unclear. 1483 is the last time that John of Krbava was recorded in the primary material. It may be that negotiations of the late 1470s and the early 1480s were fruitful, and that Matthias, as with Martin Frankapan, acquired his estates after his death. This, however, is only speculation.

The king's motivation must remain a conjecture. It would appear that as early as the 1470s Matthias held a grudge against the family, 'rebels' and 'thieves,' but on what ground is nowhere explicitly noted. It could be that they too had some interest in the Frankapan inheritance. It could be that they were too intimate with Venice for Matthias's taste. It could be that they never gave up their ambitions regarding the Tallóci domains. Around this time, in addition to the accusatory letter discussed earlier, Matthias addressed another letter to the doge of Venice (undated, but probably from around 1478/1479, in parts very similar to the one noted above).<sup>714</sup> There, the king, in the midst of the crisis in Italy in the aftermath of the 'Pazzi conspiracy,' narrates the history of the largely negative Venetian stance towards Hungary and the rights of its crown. Among other issues, particularly the unjust Venetian occupation of Dalmatia and disregard towards the treaty of Turin of 1381, Matthias asserted that 'at last you (i.e. Venice/doge) insolently stretch your greedy hands all the way to the frontiers of our Kingdom of Croatia, some of our subjects in Croatia you take in your protection, to others you grant aid and favours to our detriment, and those that rebel against us and exiles you receive in your company.' With the capture of Bag, another port in the Adriatic, Matthias may have wished to secure a stronger background to his Italian politics. It has to be emphasized that the king does not seem to have been motivated by Ottoman actions in the Adriatic in 1480, i.e. their assault on Otranto, as his offers and requests for the possessions of the Counts of Krbava came long before the Ottoman fleet arrived in the straits.<sup>715</sup> This may have been an additional reason for his acquisition of particularly Bag, but he was certainly interested in acquiring the family's castles well before the Ottoman troops disembarked on the opposite coast.<sup>716</sup> With the

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<sup>713</sup> MNL OL DL 72054.

<sup>714</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1. doc. 283, pp. 420-5.

<sup>715</sup> On the Ottoman invasion of Otranto and the Hungarian involvement in its liberation, see the seminal collection of studies Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, ed., *Otranto 1480*, 2 vols. (Galatina: Congedo, 1986); L. Veszprémy, 'Magyar vonatkozású források Otranto ostromáról' [Sources on the Siege of Otranto concerning Hungary], *Hadtörténelmi közlemények* 103 (1990): pp. 105-12 and the (dated) literature listed there.

<sup>716</sup> For (recent) views that highlight the role of the Ottomans's Adriatic policies in their conflict against Hungary, and the place that the Ottomans's presence in the Adriatic took in Hungarian defensive efforts (with emphasis on

capture of Mrsinj, close to fords on the Una used by Ottoman raiders on their way towards Italy, Matthias maybe wished to check their incursions. It could be, furthermore, that the counts of Krbava, as well as Anž Frankapan, collaborated with the Ottomans to a degree that Matthias found detrimental to his rule. That this may have been the case is suggested by an undated fragment of a letter from the archives of Milan, published by Cusin, that narrates how Matthias sent his armies (either in 1469 or 1479) against Croatian magnates in the aftermath of Ottoman incursions, especially against those that helped the Turks on their way, with a task to take castles and passes. Those counts that came under the king's attack sought aid from Venice.<sup>717</sup> Matthias, lastly, may have wanted more control over areas as important as Croatia proved to be at the time, both with respect to Ottoman incursions, Venetian politics in the eastern Adriatic, as well as quarrels between Matthias, Venice, and Frederick III in the northern Adriatic, which intensified in the period between 1478 and 1480. As early as 1479, before the crisis of Krk, Venice was seriously concerned about the possibility of a direct Hungarian invasion of her territories.<sup>718</sup> One other issue that may have jeopardized once cordial relations was the fact that from January 1479 Matthias could no longer count on the Republic in his conflict with Mehmed II. It may be that news of rapprochement between Venice and the Ottoman Empire also influenced the king's politics towards his kingdom of Croatia that, he must have known it, relied so heavily on Venice for assistance, protection, even rule. Matthias learned about the Venetian-Ottoman peace very early in 1479. According to a Milanese envoy in Venice, in February Matthias dispatched another ambassador to the Republic, who, however, having heard about the Venetian-Ottoman peace, stopped at the borders of Friuli, unwilling to proceed without first informing Matthias and receiving further instructions.<sup>719</sup> In March of that year, Venice instructed their envoy in Hungary to make excuses before the king for the fact that they had not informed him earlier about the details of the peace treaty, of which he already knew.<sup>720</sup> Unfortunately, claimed the Senate, the courier that carried the letter had lost it, but as the envoy in Hungary learned about these details from other, private correspondence, he was free to inform Matthias. The king was certainly not happy and does not seem to have expected

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periods after Matthias's death), see: Attila Bárány, 'A horvát végek és a török adriai partraszállásának kérdése (1480-1526)' [The Croatian frontiers and the question of the Ottoman landing in the Adriatic] in *Elfeledett háborúk. Középkori csaták és várostromok (6–16. század)*, ed. László Pósan, László Veszprémy (Budapest: Zrínyi, 2016), pp. 331-62.

<sup>717</sup> F. Cusin, 'Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,' doc. 73, p. 101.

<sup>718</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 29, fol. 61r, 61v-62r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 251, 252, pp. 384-6.

<sup>719</sup> L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relativi,' p. 43.

<sup>720</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 29, fol. 14r-v; cf. I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 262, pp. 387-9.

such an outcome. It was exactly in 1479 that he initiated his campaign of denigrating Venice and praising Hungary before an international audience. As noted in the previous chapter, it was in Nuremberg in the winter of 1479 that Hungarian envoys ascribed a myriad of undesirable characteristics to Venice that Hungary, so they claimed, did not possess.<sup>721</sup> Venice, cowardly, gave up far too much for peace; they, ‘alas, extorted peace from the Turks with the ugliest conditions and sacrifice of the Christians’; they ‘gave to the Turk the best fortified castles, places, and cities, even provinces that the Turks would not have been able to capture for ten or fifteen years; they accepted that the Turks securely travel across land and sea without any hinderance; they promised to keep their ports open to the Turks, and give them victuals.’ Around the same time, Matthias also defamed Venice before Sixtus IV. Having already experienced incursions into Hungary in 1479, Matthias wrote to the pope that ‘as the Venetians and the Roman Emperor made peace with the Turk, all hatred of the monstrous enemy, his rage and attack, turned only against me and my Kingdom of Hungary.’<sup>722</sup> The king then continued: ‘In later letters, I wrote (to you) about a Turkish incursion, committed while I was absent from the kingdom and under Venetian guidance, via the Emperor’s lands into this kingdom through such routes and into such parts of my kingdom which I would never suspect (they would use and enter).’ Obviously Matthias had prepared different narratives for different audiences (and there is no concrete evidence that Venetians had anything to do directly with Ottoman incursions into Hungary in the summer of 1479 – after all, Frederick III’s domains also suffered), but the king was certainly not overly happy with a unilateral Venetian treaty with Mehmed.

It may be, therefore, that Matthias was also motivated by the Venetian ‘abandonment.’ Not only did he lose a partner in war against Mehmed, but (re)gained a formidable and traditional Hungarian opponent in Croatia and Dalmatia that throughout his reign in practice (although less so in diplomacy) continued to express interest in matters beyond the *stato da mar*. Matthias was certainly well aware of what Venice had attempted early on around the Neretva, Klis and the remainder of the Tallóci domains, then Senj and Modruš, and among Croatian magnates throughout the 1470s. As before, it seems that the fear of the loss of control over Croatia, and especially after 1476, of access to the sea, motivated the king just as much, if not more than any other reason. Bag, for instance, a small town that still (as Karlobag) stands

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<sup>721</sup> BSB, MS Clm 26604, fol. 9r; MS Clm 443, fol. 177r; MNL OL DF 293277; M. Freher, *Rerum Germanicarum scriptores*, vol. 2, pp. 315-8; I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 9/16, pp. 293-303.

<sup>722</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 303, pp. 449-51.

beneath the steep slopes of the Velebit right on the seashore, cut off from the rest of the territory of the Kingdom of Croatia by a massive mountain, had even less strategic value for the defence of either Croatia, Slavonia, or Hungary from Ottoman incursions than Senj may have had.

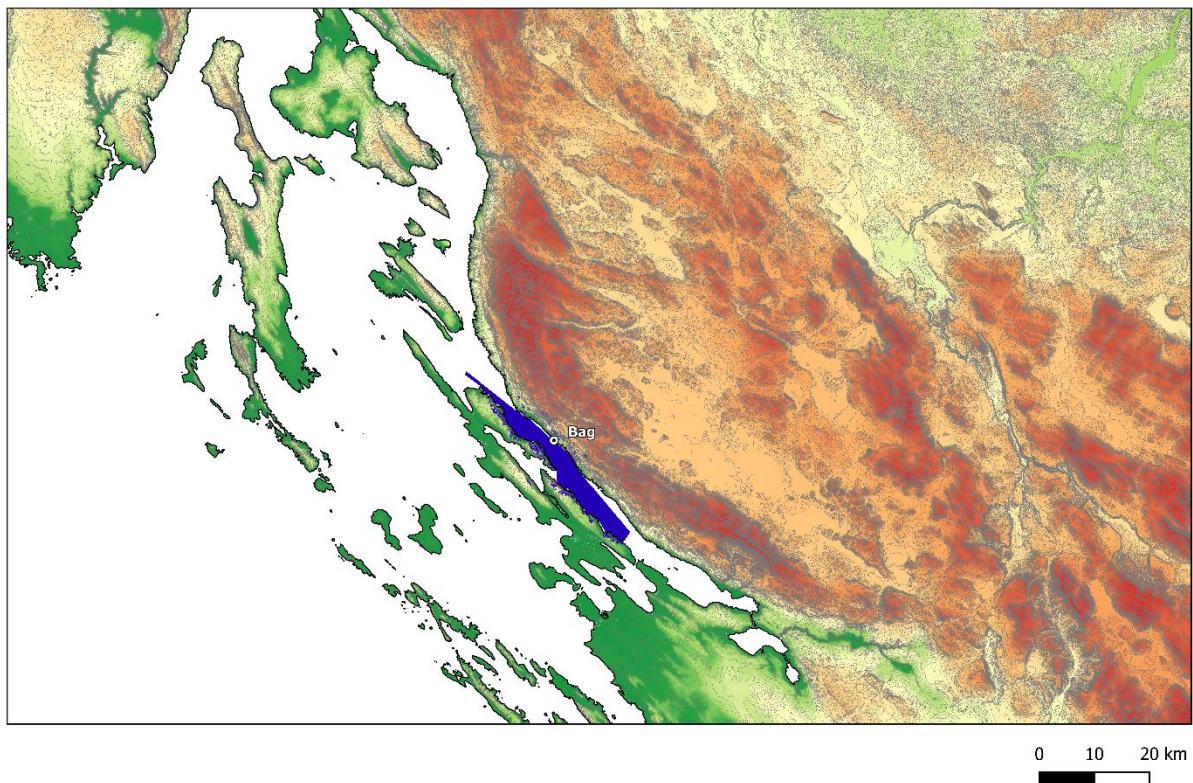


Figure 7 - The viewshed from Bag

Neither did the remaining castles taken from the counts of Krbava have a meaningful strategic role. Kličevac was far away from any routes used by Ottoman raiders and, even more problematically, nowhere near Ottoman Bosnia, unlike Knin, for example. Obrovac also, just northeast from Kličevac on the Zrmanja, could have played very little role in defending anything from the Ottomans, apart from Venetian Zadar. Počitelj, Prozor, and especially Mrsinj, on the other hand, did control both the karst fields that the Ottomans may have used on their way towards the north and the area adjacent to the fords on the Una near Bihać, which Ottoman *akinji* apparently used frequently.

No doubt, the king's *bans* garrisoned his castles in Croatia and Slavonia (just as in Bosnia), and continually, however insufficiently, improved their defensive capabilities. This is

proven, for instance, by the inventory of the castle of Brinje from November 1489,<sup>723</sup> and the invaluable (although undated) inventory and list of improvements and refurbishments done by three of Matthias's *bans* - Blaise Magyar, Ladislaus Egervári, and Matthias Geréb Vingárti, who successively held this post between 1476 and 1493.<sup>724</sup> Especially the latter source is valuable, as it lists two further castles – Vivodina and Mutnica – that the king had probably acquired in the late 1470s/early 1480s from the Frankapans and/or the Kurjakovićes.<sup>725</sup> It also notes that Matthias Geréb (*ban* of Slavonia between 1483 and 1489)<sup>726</sup> built, from scratch, *unum castellum, iuxta opidum(!) Jeztrabarczka* (i.e. Jastrebarsko, near Zagreb). But, again, we need to return to issues mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (and throughout) regarding the role of these strongholds in Matthias's policies towards the Ottomans.

As noted, the king did not acquire the majority of these forts until the 1480s. Central Croatian regions, Knin, Klis, Skradin, and the rest, were practically out of his reach until 1466. Further south, Matthias's position was hopeless. Počitelj, the only true Hungarian outpost from 1465 until 1471, and then Koš from 1480 onwards, was but a 'speck of dust' in an Ottoman-dominated frontier area. The sudden upsurge in the number of royal castles in Croatia as well as Slavonia came only after 1479 – in other words thanks to the death of Martin Frankapan and, it seems, conflicts that followed over his inheritance. And before that, the castles that Matthias did take, primarily Senj, had nothing to offer as regards defence against Ottoman troops. In addition, Matthias's conquest of Senj came as a direct result of his and his officials' unwillingness or inability to help defend these, primarily Frankapan areas. The Frankapans thus had to turn to Venice for help, for concrete aid in weapons and men, as well as support in negotiations with Matthias's *bans*, whom the Frankapans expected to counter Ottoman incursions. This is quite clear from the discussed material. The castles that had previously belonged to the counts of Krbava were, in most cases, taken only after 1483, when Matthias already established, or was about to establish peaceful relations with Bayezid. Lastly, it is very important to note that even when by the mid-1480s Matthias eventually established a relatively thick network of his castles in the south (outside Bosnia), a few of which could have played a meaningful role in defence, these castles' role could only have been to defend themselves. Croatia could not have been defended from Croatia, or at least not as successfully as from the outside. And Croatia alone could not have defended Slavonia and Hungary. The only castles

<sup>723</sup> MNL OL DL 26053; F. Šišić, *Rukovet spomenika*, doc. 44, pp. 272-3 J. Szendrei, 'Brinye vár.'

<sup>724</sup> MNL OL DL 26235.

<sup>725</sup> See: I. K. Tkalčić, *Povjestni spomenici*, doc. 324, pp. 405-8.

<sup>726</sup> On dates of his *banate*, see: N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 95.

that may have played such a role were Krupa and, possibly, Obrovac on the Una, maybe Ripač, located on the river Una. It may be that Matthias took Krupa from Martin Frankapan in 1464 precisely due to defensive needs. But then, why did a contract of inheritance satisfy him with regard to Martin's or the Frankapans' other castles? Could it be that the Ottoman exclave around Kamengrad and Ključ proved too difficult an adversary for Martin? Possibly, assuming it existed at the time. Certainly, more castles than Matthias kept, nearly all of which were left to the Frankapans, had a crucial role in controlling Ottoman incursions into Carniola and Italy. When the quite clear role of Venice, that I believe is illuminated sufficiently with the new material presented here, is taken into account, very little space, if any at all, is left for speculations about Matthias's motivation in acquiring and keeping castles close to the Adriatic. One can hardly make a case for Matthias's defensive motivation anymore. I would argue that while the king had no intentions of turning Croatia into a (part) of his defensive belt against the Ottomans, he was very much concerned with keeping his authority in that area. It was probably Venice, rather than Mehmed or Bayezid, that in collaboration with local 'subversive elements' posed the greatest threat to Matthias's authority in the south. He did not wish to create a defensive mechanism, but rather to keep his hold over what seemed to have been a region on the brink of separation from Matthias's realm(s). And this was nothing new. It was Matthias, in fact, who seems to have introduced the highest level of royal control in the south-west of his kingdom in comparison to any of his (recent) predecessors. One may even go as far as to say that his agenda to control, rather than to defend these parts of the country, also manifested in policies that were highly detrimental to Europe's and Christendom's fight against the Ottomans. There is certainly evidence pointing to their existence and application: in March 1478 a Milanese envoy in Venice learned that the Venetian government had information from a trustworthy source, probably their rectors in Dalmatia, that Matthias had ordered all his men in Croatia not to give any warning signal, with cannon fire or smoke, should Ottoman raiders pass towards Venetian territories.<sup>727</sup> Frederick III, as we have seen in the previous chapter, was also quite adamant in his belief that Matthias had a certain deal with the Ottomans regarding their free passage towards his domains. Bonfini himself, Matthias's loyal panegyrist, betrayed his lord's unseemly policies while attempting to criticize the perfidious Italians and their lack of support for Matthias's struggle against the Ottomans. While describing the causes of Ottoman incursions into Italy in 1478/1479, Bonfini noted that:

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<sup>727</sup> F. Cusin, 'Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,' doc. 83. pp. 111-2.

‘Most have been ignorant of the power of the Turks, and thought it was a dream or fiction, rather than reality. It therefore came to be that those who did not believe experience their savagery, so that they may feel how much preparation is needed against this dreadful enemy. And so, due to the severity of expenses and cowardice and greed of the Italians, [Matthias] withdrew from the frontiers of Illyricum troops that he had maintained in every castle. He only looked after his own provinces. When the fierce enemy learned that the defences of Dalmatia had been relaxed and the spirit of the Pannonians had subsided, he commanded troops in Illyricum, Mysia, and Macedonia to assemble at the frontiers of Dalmatia. When he learned that fifteen thousand riders gathered not far from Shkodër, he ordered them to surmount the mountains of Dalmatia and Carniola, invade Friuli and lay waste across the whole countryside. Turks, led by Ali-bey, crossed Dalmatia and did no damage to the province; they traversed long routes due to the swiftness of their horses. Having, at last, crossed Dalmatia and Carniola, they invaded the Friulan countryside, unexpectedly swam across rivers, surmounted the highest mountains [...]. When they descended in the province of Venice, they abducted so many men, with women and children, that they are said to have taken into slavery more than twenty thousand people.’<sup>728</sup>

What Bonfini described, then, is strikingly similar to the claims of the Milanese envoy in Venice. After all, it is known from Matthias’s own correspondence with Mehmed II about Davud and his misdeeds that Matthias was more than happy to provide, exactly in 1479, free passage to Davud’s *akinji* towards Frederick’s lands. As we have seen earlier, this was a usual

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<sup>728</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/5, p. 94: ‘Ignorabant plerique Turcorum vires et somnia potius figmentaue esse, quam rem veram existimabant. Passus est ergo, qui non credebant, illorum feritatem experiri, ut, quantus in dirum hostem apparatus fieri oporteret, ceteri sentirent. Itaque ex Illyrici finibus, quos dispositis oppidatim stationibus tuebatur, legiones ob impensarum gravitatem et Italorum ignaviam avaritiamque revocavit, suas tantum provincias curavit. Ferus hostis, ubi remissas Dalmatie custodias esse Pannonisque animum deferbuisse novit, diffusas per Illyricum, Mysiam Macedoniamque turmas ad Dalmatie fines convenire iubet. At, ubi quindecim equitum milia haud procul Scodra convenisse scivit, Dalmaticos Carnosque montes superare ac Forum Iulii incurmare agrumque late populari precipit. Turci Alibecho duce Dalmatiam traiciunt, nullum, dum iter faciunt, provincie detrimentum inferunt, equorum pernicitate longa itinera metiuntur. Dalmatiam et Carnos demum emensi Foroiulianum agrum invadunt, fluvios preter hominum opiniones tranant, montes superant editissimos [...]. Cum in Venetorum provinciam descendissent, tot homines cum uxoribus et liberis abduxere, ut supra quam viginti hominum milia in servitutem vindicasse dicerentur.’



clause in Hungarian-Ottoman treaties and a constant matter of negotiations. This is not to say that Matthias worked in collaboration with the Ottomans on the downfall of Venice or the Habsburgs, but it seems that the control over a strategically critical region for the Venetians brought further benefits in a larger field of geostrategy and foreign politics. From the late 1470s, it was primarily on Matthias's mercy, and not on Venice's ability to control and subsidize loyal Croatian magnates, that the Venetian buffer against the Ottomans in Croatia depended. This was not the case before.

The situation further to the east, however, was quite different. It is clear Matthias entered Bosnia in 1463 and 1464 with a goal of establishing a buffer towards the Ottoman-controlled areas. In this sense, the region between Belgrade and Slavonia/Croatia, comprising primarily the Hungarian-controlled Kingdom of Bosnia, was indeed a defensive mechanism built around the geographic characteristics of the region. Had Matthias not led his army into Bosnia, Ottoman troops would have been able to jeopardize Slavonia and the southern counties of Hungary much more easily. But Croatia, which seems to have largely played a secondary role as a transit area towards Friuli, Istria, and Carniola (and Venetian Dalmatia), was in grave danger regardless of Matthias's efforts in Bosnia. Clearly the Ottomans succeeded in establishing an exclave or a salient that penetrated otherwise Hungarian-controlled territory, which stretched roughly from Livno up to Kamengrad and Ključ. Matthias, or his captains, had no effective response to that. Still, the focus of both sides was further to the east. As noted at the beginning, it was Belgrade that figured as, indeed, the 'gates of Hungary' and was the point that had to be broken for Ottoman troops to advance further into the country. It was only there, on a relatively flat ground, that any significant number of troops, war machines, and most importantly supplies, may have crossed into Hungary.

What, then, the frontiers between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Ottoman Empire looked like, what they comprised of, and what was their extent largely depends on specific moments chosen for analyses. It is very difficult to summarize their appearance for the whole period of Matthias's reign. Still, by roughly the late 1470s/early 1480s, both sides relied on a belt of frontier(s), no man's land(s) of sorts, that separated central areas of the fully developed administrative structure of either state from the other. Bosnia, which never acquired the characteristic Hungarian legal-administrative framework despite Matthias's conquest, truly remained nothing more than an area of conflict and a buffer. Although the Ottoman side established the sanjaks of Bosnia, Hercegovina, and, by the 1480s, Zvornik, there remained a strip of land stretching from the Adriatic to the Drina, along the Hungarian frontier, that, as we

have seen, was controlled either by Vlachs, Ottoman-installed king(s) of Bosnia, local Christian petty nobles who had changed sides, or possibly even the *ulufeci*. Paul, son of Gregory, Matthias *Christianissimo*, the ‘royal Vlachs’ of the area around Maglaj, and those around Travnik, as well as the Vlatkovićes and at least some of the Kačićes of Krajina and the Neretva occupied these areas, under Ottoman domination, but not full jurisdiction (or at least with differing levels of jurisdiction). As the Venetian Senate put it, they were Ottoman ‘allies,’ but no characteristic Ottoman jurisdiction, that of the sanjak-bey and the accompanying *kadi*, seems to have yet been developed in these territories. By 1481, the Hungarians returned to the Neretva, reacquiring, for a short period (at the most until 1491), not only the outpost at the Neretva’s delta, but the loyalty of the local potentates who once again changed sides. The latter point will be discussed in more detail below. It was, therefore, a kaleidoscope of territorial arrangements, changes, multiple and oscillating (even overlapping) loyalties in which Matthias’s ‘defensive system’ did not exist in the form imagined by Ferenc Szakály and accepted by later scholarship. No doubt, Bosnia and the area around Belgrade figured as a part of the defensive system whose characteristics are now far clearer, I believe. Territories to the west were quite a different and, as we have seen, a rather complex story.

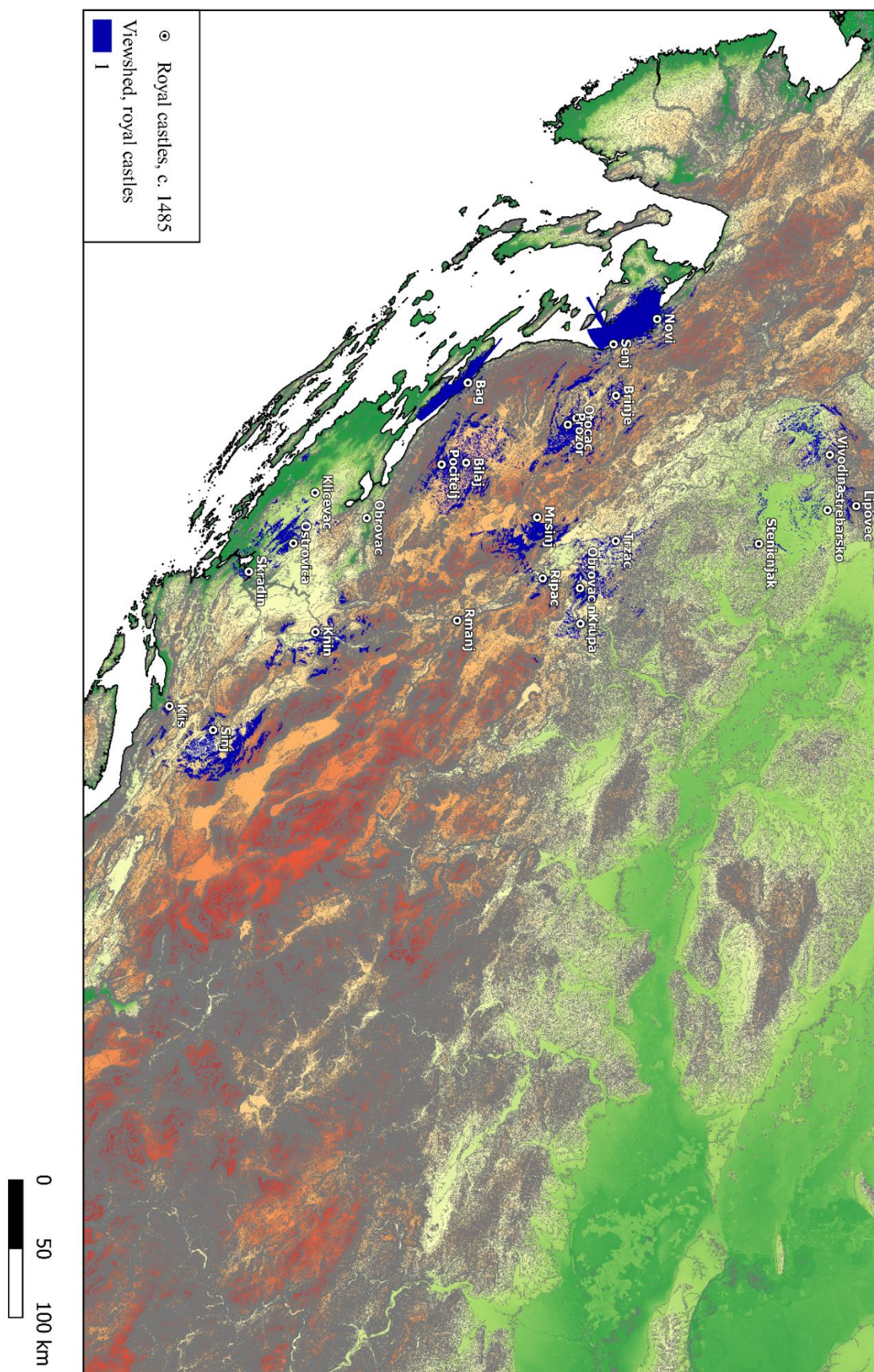
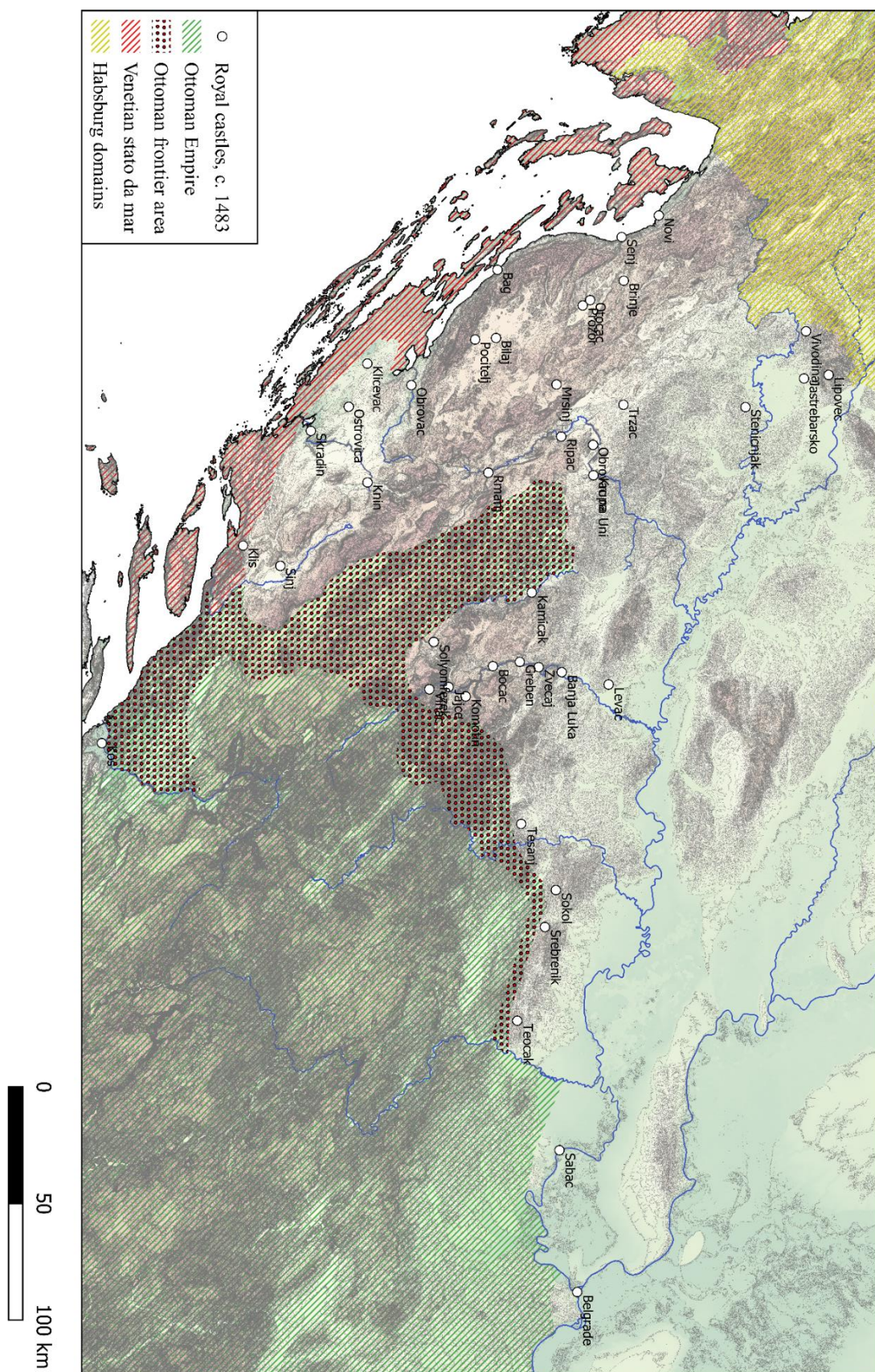


Figure 8 - Locations of royal castles in Croatia and Slavonia and their viewsheds





*Figure 9 - General situation along the Hungarian southern frontier - royal castles, outlines of Hungary's borders with the Ottoman Empire, Venice, and the Habsburg domains*



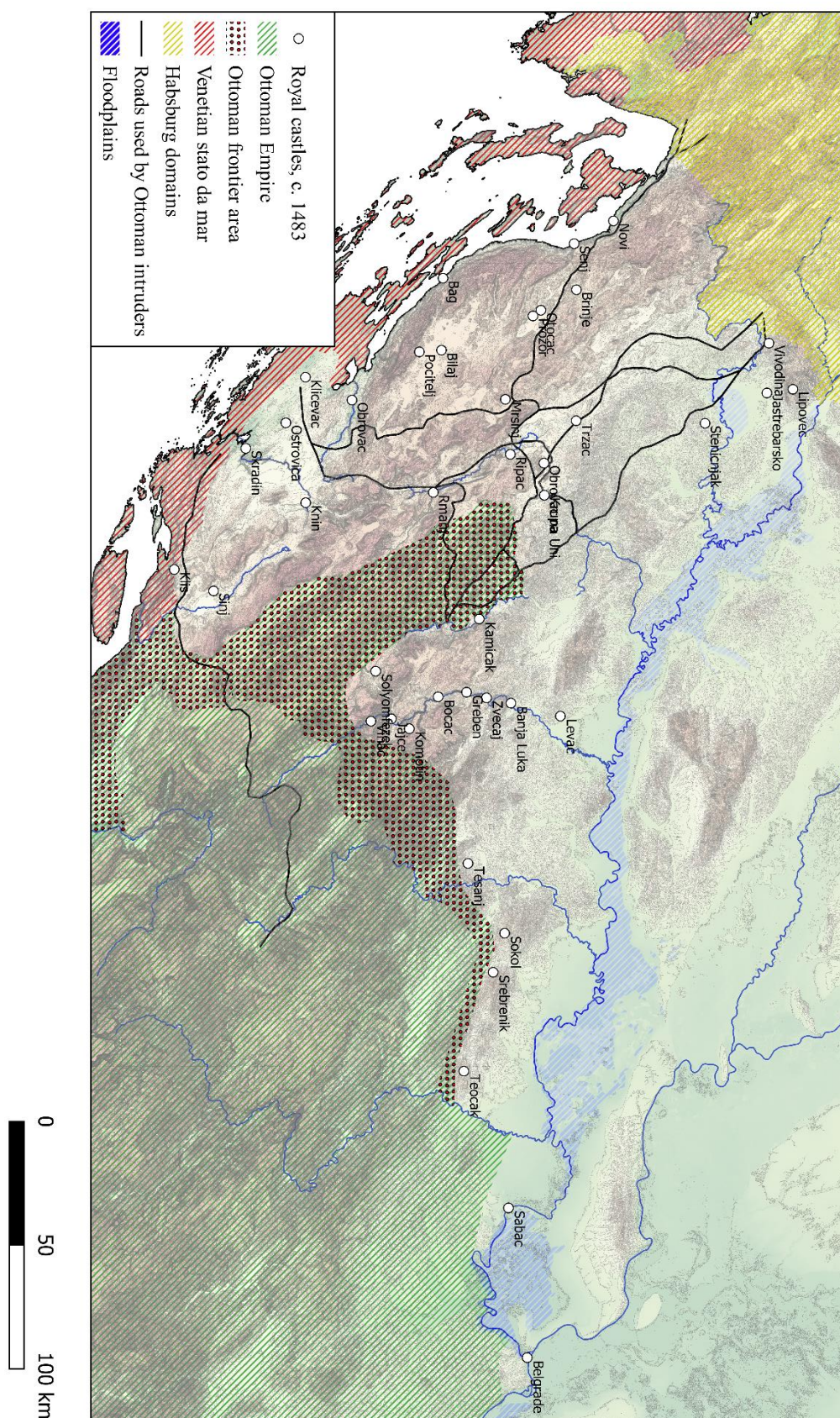


Figure 10 - General situation along the Hungarian frontier, detailed

## MANAGEMENT OF THE FRONTIER WITHIN THE EMERGING ENVIRONMENT OF THE *TRIPLEX CONFINIUM*

### Introductory remarks

Most of Matthias's men, who governed the southern frontier in the king's stead, were of modest background, men loyal to their king and connected to him either through family relations or their dedication to the Hunyadis. Men of Slavonian, Hungarian, Croatian, Transylvanian, even As background, with various roles in the frontier's administration, castellans, vice-castellans, vice-bans, captains, or bans in most cases started their careers in the king's *aula* or the *aula* of his father or brother. This is particularly true for the period after, roughly, 1477, but was largely the case throughout Matthias's reign. Damian Horvat, Ladislaus Terjéni, Paul Kinizsi, Stephen Bátori, Matthias Geréb, Blaise Magyar, Peter Dóci, Ladislaus Egervári, Andrew Dánfi Dobózi, etc., all owed their careers in the south primarily to their service in Matthias's *aula* (or in rare cases to their blood relationship to the king), and had previous careers in the kingdom's administration. The list of such men is quite long.<sup>729</sup> Just as Hungarian-Ottoman relations and the Hungarian borderlands in the south, so did the administrative framework change several times during Matthias's reign. Before the late 1470s, particularly through the 1460s, men who governed the frontiers and influenced Hungarian-Ottoman relations wielded incomparably greater political, economic, and military power than the cream of Matthias's *aulici*. The former were also far more independent and influential both in domestic and international politics, and thus shared a significant amount of the king's authority over the borderlands. John Vitovec, Emeric Szapolyai, and especially Nicholas Újlaki are prime examples. This was especially true in the period between 1471 and 1477, when Matthias effectively ceded control over the greatest portion of the frontier, Bosnia itself, to Nicholas Újlaki, a man with whom he had a complicated relationship and who, between 1458 and 1471, oscillated from figuring as Matthias's greatest enemy to his loyal ally and adoptive brother.<sup>730</sup> It was, then, only after Újlaki's death in 1477 that Matthias not only regained

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<sup>729</sup> See Appendix 3.

<sup>730</sup> No detailed biography of Újlaki or a monograph on his family has yet been published. Nevertheless, there is a fair number of works that discuss his role in Hunyadi Hungary. See: T. Fedeles, '*Bosniae [...] rex [...] apostolorum limina visit.* Újlaki Miklós 1475-ös római zarándoklata [Nicholas Újlaki's pilgrimage to Rome in 1475]', *Történelmi Szemle* 50 (2008): pp. 461-78; *idem*, 'Miklós király és Lőrinc herceg. Az utolsó két Újlaki vázlatos pályaképe' [King Nicholas and Duke Lawrence. An outline of the last two Újlakis] in *Személyiség és történelem. A történelmi személyiség - A történelmi életrajz módszertani kérdései*, ed. József Vonyó (Pécs-Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó, Magyar Történelmi Társulat, Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történelmi Levéltára, 2017), pp. 135-68; A. Kubinyi, 'Die Frage'; *idem*, 'A kaposújvári uradalom'; T. Pálosfalvi, 'Tettes vagy áldozat?

Bosnia, but for practically the first time established firm control, through his own loyal retainers and relatives, over the entire frontier region. The period between 1463 and roughly 1477 was characterised by inconsistencies and (unwanted) experiments in the administration of the frontier. It was a period of disloyal *bans*, ineffective captains, *ad hoc* solutions. And just as with personnel and overarching administration, Matthias also experimented with and constantly adapted models through which the frontier was manned, armed, funded, and defended. The existing literature, most in one way or another related to Szakály's interpretations, is heavily based on assumptions and incomplete research. A general idea, still dominant, is that Matthias manned and defended his frontier castles, those between Klis and Belgrade, by spending vast amounts of money collected, better than any of his predecessors, through a smart but dangerous application of tax reforms and extraordinary taxation, the use of regular and irregular troops, with a significant dependence on (Serbian) *hussars*, maybe even mercenaries.<sup>731</sup> A witty Matthias, versed in fiscal policies, or at least capable of selecting the right personnel for his treasury, a master in warfare and in juggling between different (external and internal) political forces detrimental to his rule (and Hungary) is an image that persists. Recently his monetary exploits, often related to his wars in Bohemia and against Frederick III (themselves sometimes perceived as a part of a grand anti-Ottoman strategy), have been blamed for the catastrophe that followed in the Jagiellonian period, thus softening the blame that has always been attached to this Polish dynasty.<sup>732</sup> This image, more or less dependent on a romanticized Matthias, is based on two closely related foundations. First, the lack of sources on the personnel, the administrative-military structure of the frontier and its background mechanisms. The lack of readily available and published sources has hindered research.

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Hunyadi László halála' [Culprit or victim? The death of Ladislaus Hunyadi], *Századok* 149 (2015): pp. 383-441; Ede Reiszig, 'Az Újlaki-család' [The Újlaki family], pt. 2, *Turul* 57 (1943): 56-60; Mór Wertner, 'Nikolaus von Ilok (Ujlak) König von Bosnien und seine Familie,' *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 8 (1906): 250-73; D. Salihović, 'An Interesting Episode'; *idem*, 'Nonnulla documenta pertinentia ad Nicolaum de Wylak, regem ultimum Regni Bosnae,' *Scrinia Slavonica* 17 (2017): pp. 403-18; *idem*, 'Exploiting the Frontier'.

<sup>731</sup> In addition to works listed in note 314 of the previous chapter, see: J. Bak, 'Monarchie im Wellental: Materielle Grundlagen des ungarischen Königtums im fünfzehnten Jahrhundert' in *Das spätmittelalterliche Königtum im europäischen Vergleich - Vorträge und Forschungen* 32 (1987): pp. 347-84; G. Bónis, 'Ständisches Finanzwesen'; E. Fügedi, 'Mátyás király jövedelme 1475-ben' [King Matthias's revenue in 1475], *Századok* 116 (1982): pp. 484-506, reprinted in *Mátyás király, 1458-1490*, ed. Gábor Barta (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), pp. 41-61; A. Kubinyi, 'The Battle of Szévaszentdemeter'.

<sup>732</sup> For a more critical stance towards Matthias's policies and reign, particularly in comparison to the Jagiellonians, see: T. Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Mohács*, pp. 445 ff; M. Rady, 'Rethinking Jagiełło Hungary (1490-1526),' *Central Europe* 3 (2005): pp. 3-18; *idem*, 'Fiscal and Military Developments in Hungary during the Jagello Period,' *Chronica* 9-10 (2009-2010): pp. 86-99; J. Szabó, 'A mohácsi csata és a "hadügyi forradalom." I. rész: A magyar királyság hadserege 1526-ban' [The Battle of Mohács and the "military revolution." Part I: The armed forces of Hungary in 1526], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 117 (2004): pp. 443-80; cf. *idem*, *Mohács: régi kérdések – új válaszok*, pp. 30-5.

Unpublished archival material is scattered in many different places; my research has uncovered a significant amount of new material on how Matthias managed his frontiers. Secondly, scholars often tried to counterbalance the lack of sources with an overly enthusiastic dependence on Thallóczy's monograph on Jajce and his collection of primary materials, which, however, date from the Jagiellonian period, rather than from Matthias's reign. Particularly important here are the registers of the Jagiellonian royal treasury, among which probably the best known is that compiled by Sigismund Ernuszt, the bishop of Pécs and treasurer, in the summer of 1496 in the midst of the nobility's revolt over the treasury's management of the country's resources. Especially important parts of this register are those that refer to the expenditure towards the maintenance of border castles and their garrisons. There are a lot of issues with the trustworthiness and usability of this compilation of the treasury's business, on which I will not comment in detail, the first and most important among which is that it has nothing to do with the period of Matthias's reign.<sup>733</sup>

Matthias's administration along the frontier went through several and largely unsuccessful experiments; moreover it existed, changed, adapted, and developed in coexistence with, in fact depended on, the ever-changing circumstances of the oncoming *triplex confinium* shared between Hungary, Venice, and the Ottoman Empire. Newly discovered, largely unknown material will show that Matthias, rather than organizing a straightforward administration and military structure funded from the royal treasury, navigated through and largely responded to (rather than initiated) changes in circumstances along the frontier, in order to employ various means of controlling the extent and role of his southern frontiers.

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<sup>733</sup> The register has long been known in historiography, but the only edition *in extenso* was by Johann Christian von Engel from 1797. A new, critical edition was recently published by T. Neumann, *Registrum proventuum Regni Hungariae* (Budapest: MTA, 2019). At the same time, Petr Kozák also prepared and published his own edition of the register: P. Kozák, ed., *Účty budínského dvora krále Vladislava II. Jagellonského (1494-1495)* [Accounts of the Buda court of Wladislas II Jagiello (1494-1495)] (Prague: Scriptorium, 2019). Thallóczy, in his *Jajca*, pp. 104-23, (re)published parts that referred to Bosnia and Jajce. On Ernuszt and the background of the composition of this register see the introduction remarks by Neumann to his critical edition. See, furthermore: A. Kubinyi, 'Ernuszt Zsigmond pécsi püspök rejtélyes halála és hagyatékának sorsa (A magyar igazságszolgáltatás nehézségei a középkor végén)' [The mysterious death of Sigismund Ernuszt, bishop of Pécs, and the fate of his heritage (Difficulties in the administration of justice in Hungary at the end of the middle ages)], *Századok* 135 (2001): pp. 301-61.



## The role of the Hospitallers' estates in the kingdom's defensive system

The first issue to investigate is the role of the estates of the Hospitaller priory of Hungary that were put to use by Matthias to provide subsidies for the maintenance of frontier castles in Bosnia. Since at least the Angevine period, the Hospitaller organization in Hungary had been slowly drifting away from its headquarters in the eastern Mediterranean, while its priors engaged in local politics and were often men of local (even completely secular) background. By the time of King Sigismund's reign, the king freely deposed and installed priors at will, with little regard for the rights or wishes of either Rhodes or Rome. Despite a brief respite around the Council of Constance, when Sigismund and the Convent compromised in the election of the prior and Hungarian *responsiones* reached the Order's treasury (possibly for the last time), in the 1430s the king transferred the priory and its estates to secular governors. Sigismund subordinated the priory's castles to the control of the Tallócis, his loyal governors of the southern borderlands (not yet as jeopardized by Ottoman presence). The Tallócis did not merely remain secular governors of the priory and its estates. John, one of the brothers, became the prior of Vrana (i.e. Hospitaller priory in Hungary) by 1439.<sup>734</sup> John Hunyadi, Matthias's father, who effectively governed the kingdom after the untimely death of

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<sup>734</sup> See: Neven Budak, 'Ivan od Paližne, prior vranski, vitez Sv. Ivana' [John of Palisna, the prior of Vrana, a knight of St John], *Historijski zbornik* 52 (1989): pp. 57-70; cf. *idem*, 'John of Palisna, the Hospitaller Prior of Vrana' in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, eds. Zsolt Hunyadi and József Laszlovszky (Budapest: CEU, 2001), pp. 283-90; Hrvoje Gračanin, 'Ivan Paližna u povijesnim vrelima i historiografiji' [John Palisnai in sources and historiography], *Radovi Zavoda za znanstvenoistraživački i umjetnički rad u Bjelovaru* 4 (2011): pp. 237-67; Zsolt Hunyadi, 'The Hungarian Nobility and the Knights of St John in Hungary' in *La noblesse dans les territoires angevins à la fin du Moyen Âge*, eds. Jean Michel Matz, Noël Coulet (Rome: École française de Rome, 2000), pp. 607-18; *idem*, 'The Hospitallers in the Kingdom of Hungary: Commanderies, Personnel, and a Particular Activity up to c. 1400' in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, eds. Zsolt Hunyadi, József Laszlovszky (Budapest: CEU, 2001), pp. 262-3; *idem*, *The Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary, c. 1150-1387* (Budapest: METEM-CEU, 2010), pp. 47-92; *idem*, 'The Military Activity of the Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary (Thirteenth to Fourteenth Centuries)' in *The Hospitallers, the Mediterranean, and Europe. Festschrift for Anthony Luttrell*, eds. Karl Borchardt, Nikolas Jaspert, Helen J. Nicholson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 193-203; *idem*, 'Entering the Hospital. A Way to the Elite in the Fifteenth Century?' in *Élites et ordres militaires au Moyen Âge: rencontre autour d'Alain Demurger*, eds. Philippe Josserand, Luís Filipe Oliveira, Damien Carraz (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2015), pp. 101-10; *idem*, 'Royal Power and the Hungarian-Slavonian Hospitaller Priors before the Mid-Fifteenth Century' in *The Military Orders*, vol. 5, *Politics and Power*, ed. Peter W. Edbury (Abingdon-New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 321-8; *idem*, 'Törésvonalak: a johannita magyar-szlavón rendtartomány a szkizma idején' [Fault lines: The Hospitaller Hungarian-Slavonian Province in the Period of the Schism] in *Hadi és más nevezetes történetek: Tanulmányok Veszprémy László tiszteletére*, ed. Mária Katalin Kincses (Budapest: Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum, 2018), pp. 216-21; Anthony Luttrell, 'The Hospitallers in Hungary before 1418: Problems and Sources' in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, eds. Zsolt Hunyadi, József Laszlovszky (Budapest: CEU, 2001), pp. 276-7; E. Mályusz, 'A négy Tallóci fivér' - cf. a revised and shortened English version: *idem*, 'The Four Tallóci Brothers,' *Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae* 3 (1998): pp. 137-75; *idem*, *Kaiser Sigismund*, pp. 162-4.

Wladislas Warneńczyk in 1444, continued this practice. By 1447 Hunyadi entrusted the priory to his close relative, as well as the *ban* of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia, John Székely Szentgyörgyi (probably Hunyadi's brother-in-law).<sup>735</sup> By doing so, Hunyadi seems to have established a 'dynasty' of sorts, as John was followed by Thomas Szentgyörgyi, who held the priory throughout the 1450s and early 1460s, and later another John Székely.<sup>736</sup> Although they all seem to have been related, it is open to discussion in what manner and how closely. Both Thomas and John occupied these offices well into King Matthias's reign, and Thomas briefly occupied the *banate*, as well.

It has been shown early on that these policies were the result of a defensive mechanism introduced during King Sigismund's reign, aimed at facilitating the defence of the kingdom against an ever-rising threat from the Ottomans. This was especially true in the Tallócis' case during the 1430s, when the king not only entrusted them with the estates and income of the Hospitallers, but also with those pertaining to other vacant ecclesiastical posts, including the bishoprics of Várad (Oradea) and Zagreb. These appointments were planned to compensate for the brothers' expenses, related primarily to their defensive activities along the southern frontier.<sup>737</sup> A relatively crude system, it was in essence based on the idea of *honores*, developed into a framework of state administration during the Angevine rule in the fourteenth century, whereby administrative posts of various levels were coupled with income from royal castles and their appurtenances.<sup>738</sup> Thanks to a later copy of a list that had been probably originally compiled in 1439 – and contains *castra pro honore tempore condam domini Sigismundi imperatoris data et tandem per Albertum regem immutata* – we know which of the Priory's castles had been granted by Sigismund to the Tallócis, and what their role was.<sup>739</sup> The lack of

<sup>735</sup> V. Klaić, 'Tri Sekelja (Zeckel, Székely), rodjaci Ivana Hunjada' [Three Székelyis, relatives of John Hunyadi], *Vjestnik kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 3 (1901): pp. 120-3; P. Kovács, 'A Hunyadi-család' [The Hunyadi Family] in *Hunyadi Mátyás: Emlékkönyv Mátyás király halálának 500. évfordulójára*, eds. Gyula Rázsó, László V. Molnár (Budapest: Zrínyi, 1990), pp. 29-51; A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, p. 11; Radu Lupescu, 'Matthias Hunyadi: From the Family Origins to the Threshold of Power' in *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and Renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court 1458-1490*, eds. Péter Farbak et al. (Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2008), p. 41; E. Mályusz, 'A magyar rendi állam Hunyadi korában: első rész' [The Hungarian corporate state in the age of Hunyadi: First part], *Századok* 91 (1957): p. 68

<sup>736</sup> N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, pp. 58-9.

<sup>737</sup> See: P. Engel, *Magyarország archontológiája*, p. 77; E. Mályusz, 'A négy Tallóci fivér,' pp. 551-2

<sup>738</sup> On the system of *honores* see: P. Engel, 'A honor (A magyarországi feudális birtokformák kérdéséhez)' [The honor: The question of feudal forms of property in Hungary], *Történelmi Szemle* 24 (1981): pp. 1-19; *idem*, 'Honor, vár, ispánság: tanulmányok az Anjou-királyság kormányzati rendszeréről' [Honor, Castle, County: Studies on the System of Government of the Anjou Kingdom], *Századok* 116 (1982): pp. 880-922. Both studies reprinted in: P. Engel, *Honor, vár, ispánság*, ed. Enikő Csukovits (Budapest: Osiris, 2003), pp. 73-162.

<sup>739</sup> MNL OL DL 13137; transcribed and briefly discussed in P. Engel, *Királyi hatalom és arisztokrácia viszonya a Zsigmond-korban (1387-1437)* [Relations between royal power and aristocracy in King Sigismund's time (1387-1437)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), pp. 194-204; Lajos Thallóczy, 'Magyar várak 1437 körül' [Hungarian castles, c. 1437], *Archaeologiai Közlemények* 12 (1878): pp. 112-5.

such an explicit piece of primary material, as well as the lack of research in general, left our understanding of Matthias's dealings with the Hospitaller possessions on a very elementary level. Although it is fairly well-known, thanks primarily to studies by György Pray, Ivan Kukuljević, and especially Ede Reiszig,<sup>740</sup> that secular governors controlled some of the Priory's estates during Matthias's reign, it is not known exactly why, when, and to whom Matthias granted the Hospitaller estates, and which lands precisely. As we shall see in the following paragraphs, his ideas were practically identical to those of his predecessors. Nevertheless, Matthias's measures involving the Hungarian priory were very short-lived and, it seems, ended up as a failed experiment that in the end largely benefited the local prior, completely estranged from the Convent on Rhodes, and in only to a much lesser extent his *bans*.

Although in the late 1440s, Pope Nicholas V tasked a Lombard fr. Michael of Castellacio to reform the Hospitaller provinces of Bohemia, Germany, and Hungary, the latter seems to have only managed to extract fairly small amounts of *responsiones* and subventions, in total 324.5 florins from the prior of Vrana and the preceptor at Székesfehérvár, but otherwise had to make his peace with the poor state of the Order's affairs in Hungary.<sup>741</sup> Michael was left with no other option, but to try to retake the Priory's estates from various 'secular and ecclesiastical persons' and to find suitable local noblemen to control them, preferably those who would not refrain from fulfilling their monetary duties to the Convent. He apparently failed in this just as he failed in rectifying procedural errors in the behaviour of the local brethren, who had a particular propensity to elect their leaders among the kingdom's nobility (in reality accept those installed by Hungarian kings). Nicholas completely failed at installing the Convent's candidate, a certain James de Soris, in the priory.<sup>742</sup> As the Order's *Libri bullarum* show, the Convent was well aware of the true situation in the kingdom. Despite electing '(anti-

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<sup>740</sup> I. Kukuljević-Sakcinski, 'Priorat vranski sa vitezi templari i hospitalci sv. Ivana u Hrvatskoj' [The Priory of Vrana and the Templars and Hospitallers of St John in Croatia], *Rad JAZU* 81-82 (1886): pp. 1-80, 1-68; G. Pray, *Dissertatio historico-critica de Prioratu Auranae* (Vienna: Joseph Kurzböck, 1773); E. Reiszig, *A jeruzsálemi Szent János lovagrend Magyarországon* [The Order of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem in Hungary], 2 vols. (Budapest: Nemesi Évkönyv, 1925-1928); also *idem*, 'A magyarországi János-lovagok a Hunyadiak korában' [The Hungarian Knights of Saint John in the Hunyadi Period], *Századok* 52 (1918): pp. 22-55.

<sup>741</sup> AOM 364, fol. 162r-v; MNL OL DL 106517; A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 407, pp. 243-9; cf. P. Lukcsics, *Diplomata pontificum seculi XV*, vol. 2 (Budapest: MTA, 1938), p. 262; cf. András Ribi, 'A várnagy és a püspök - fehérvári johannita preceptorok karrierje a 15. század második felében' [The castellan and the bishop - The career of Hospitaller preceptors of Székesfehérvár in the second half of the 15th century] in *Középkortörténeti Tanulmányok 10. - A X. Medieviztikai PhD-konferencia*, eds. Brigitta Szanka et al. (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 2018), pp. 95-11; Jürgen Sarnowsky, 'The Convent and the West: Visitations in the Order of the Hospital of St John in the Fifteenth Century' in *On the Military Orders in Medieval Europe, Structures and Perceptions* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2011), IX, 154-5.

<sup>742</sup> A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta*, doc. 407, pp. 243-9.

priors,' by the time Matthias ascended the throne, the headquarters knew very well that it was Thomas Székely, a Hunyadi man, who ran things in Hungary.<sup>743</sup> By 1474, by which time Matthias abandoned his plans with the priory's estates, but nevertheless changed the situation to the further detriment of the Convent's rights, Rhodes and the priory seem to have lost all connection. When in that year the master, Giovanni Battista Orsini, tasked the preceptor of Augusta to travel to Bohemia and Hungary, he instructed him to practically beg for money from the brethren in these two countries, who were apparently ignorant of the Convent's struggle against the Ottomans. Hungarian and Bohemian Hospitallers, as the master explicitly noted, made no contributions to the Convent's treasury for a very long time.<sup>744</sup> The scale of the Hungarian priory's estrangement from the Convent is probably best exemplified by the fact that in 1477 John Székely was noted as the addressee of the master's bull, and the head of the brethren in Hungary.<sup>745</sup> However, John had been dead for nearly a decade by 1477.<sup>746</sup> By that time, when all Matthias's plans regarding the priory either failed or were abandoned, another person appropriated the priory's estates. He, as we shall see, was the product of these failed endeavours.

Matthias first considered employing the Hospitaller estates in the kingdom's defences immediately following his campaign in Bosnia, at some point after January 1464. An undated draft of a letter found in the so-called Héderváry Codex, probably compiled by Janus Pannonius himself, published several times, testifies both to Matthias's intentions and, if read carefully, the type of estates he was after.<sup>747</sup> Matthias claimed that, considering the difficulties which he had encountered not only in acquiring Bosnia, but also defending it, he found it important to give further offices, including the governorship over the priory, to Emeric Szapolyai, who at

<sup>743</sup> AOM 364, fol. 3r; 367, fol. 3r.

<sup>744</sup> AOM 382, fol. 149v-150v; A. Ribí, 'A várnagy és a püspök', doc. 3, 108-9.

<sup>745</sup> AOM 385, fol. 7v.

<sup>746</sup> He was certainly dead by November 1468: MNL OL DL 16727, 16728.

<sup>747</sup> MNL OL DL 50404, the facsimile edition of the codex is available in György Rácz, ed., *Mátyás király leveleskönyve a Héderváry család egykori könyvtárából* [King Matthias's epistolarium from the former library of the Héderváry family] (Budapest: MOL, 2008). The letter was transcribed and published several times, in G. Schönherr, *Mathiae Corvini Hungariae regis epistolae*, doc. 51, pp. 71-2; V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, doc. 99, 133-4; G. Pray, *Dissertatio*, 55-6; I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 8/15, pp. 117-8. All authors dated the letter to 1465, with Pray being the one who established the *datatio*. However, the copy of the letter found in the Héderváry Codex does not contain any dates, so dating depends on the relative chronology. In my view, the letter could have been compiled and sent already in 1464, since Emeric Szapolyai appears in the sources as the governor of Bosnia and ban as early as February 1464, and he certainly assumed the governorship over the Hospitaller estates in the same year, since he was accused by the brethren of the preceptory of Székesfehérvár in 1465 to have illegally occupied their estates in the counties of Somogy, Tolna, and Fehér already in 1464. On the epistolarium, see: G. Mayer, 'King Matthias's Corvinus Epistolaria,' pp. 226-36; G. Schönherr, 'Mátyás király leveleskönyve a gróf Khuen-Héderváry család könyvtárában' [A Collection of King Matthias's letters in the library of the Counts Khuen-Héderváry], *Magyar Könyvszemle* 16 (1891): pp. 169-75.

the was time the governor of Bosnia, and the *ban* of Slavonia and Croatia.<sup>748</sup> The priory's castles, the king claimed, were particularly important to the defence of Bosnia. That is why he asked the pope to endorse his intentions to transfer the priory to Szapolyai. Whether or not the king received an answer remains unknown, but Szapolyai certainly took the priory's domains in 1464, together with the governorship in Bosnia and the *banati*. In 1465, the preceptory of Székesfehérvár protested before the palatine that Szapolyai had in 1464 unlawfully occupied their castles and estates in the counties of Tolna, Fejér, and Somogy.<sup>749</sup> Szapolyai seems to have used to his own advantage a long-lasting strife between the priors (or governors) of Vrana and the preceptors of Székesfehérvár over the possessory rights over several Hospitaller estates throughout Hungary and, having received the governorship, occupied these places.<sup>750</sup> In the 1450s, despite claims from Székesfehérvár, it was Thomas Székely (i.e. the prior) who controlled the most important of these domains.<sup>751</sup> It is important to emphasize here that Szapolyai, in 1464, practically became the sole lord of the southern borderlands, having been made the governor of the Hungarian-controlled portions of Bosnia, the *ban* of all southern kingdoms, as well as the governor of the priory's estates. This, as we shall see, seems to have been a pattern that Matthias followed more than once in the following years.

In 1471, in order to tackle the nobility's dissatisfaction with his defensive efforts in the south and compensations the country had to make for his endeavours in the north (against Frederick III and the Poles),<sup>752</sup> Matthias not only made Nicholas Újlaki his adoptive brother, the king of Bosnia, and the *ban* of Slavonia, but, just as he had done with Szapolyai, transferred the Hospitaller estates to him.<sup>753</sup> Although Nicholas kept his Bosnian kingship until his death in 1477, he did not keep hold of the priory's estates. It has already been noted that in 1475 a new prior appeared on the scene. Ever since Kukuljević published his studies on the Hospitallers (in 1886), it has been accepted that in 1475 Bartholomew Beriszló, a member of a middling Slavonian noble kindred, assumed the role and thereafter ruled the priory.<sup>754</sup> It has

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<sup>748</sup> N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, pp. 93, 139.

<sup>749</sup> MNL OL DL 106587, 106588.

<sup>750</sup> For a detailed discussion on this quarrel, and its role in Matthias's policies, see: D. Salihović, '*Pro sustentatione castrorum*.'

<sup>751</sup> MNL OL DL 14659, 14786, 93284, 103549.

<sup>752</sup> D. Salihović, 'Exploiting the Frontier.'

<sup>753</sup> The earliest piece of information about this is found in a Ragusan report to King Ferrante from November 1471: V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 10, pp. 95-6.

<sup>754</sup> I. Kukuljević Sakcinski, 'Priorat Vranski,' pp. 23-4; cf. E. Reiszg, *A jeruzsálemi Szent János lovagrend*, vol. 1, p. 178; Z. Hunyadi, 'Entering the Hospital,' p. 109; *idem*, 'Royal Power', p. 327; M. Karbić, 'Vranski prior Bartol Berislavić' [Bartholomew Beriszló, prior of Vrana] in *Humanitas et litterae. Zbornik u čast Franje Šanjeka*, eds. Lovorka Čoralić, Slavko Slišković (Zagreb: Istina-Kršćanska sadašnjost, 2009), pp. 304-6. On Bartholomew's family in general, although relations withing the family are not correctly interpreted, see: M.

never been questioned why this took place; how it was possible that suddenly, after nearly a decade, another prior (and not governor) appeared. Neither is the date of his takeover of the priory, as we shall see, correct. It was István Katona, a Hungarian Jesuit interested in diplomatics, who in 1793 published what proved to be a valuable, but almost completely disregarded document. It is an instrument, still kept in the archives of Budapest, by which Matthias in December 1477 transferred to Beriszló all Hospitaller estates that had once been granted ‘for life’ (*vita comite*) to the recently deceased Újlaki.<sup>755</sup> But the charter reveals crucial information that scholars have failed to notice. Matthias narrates that ‘We give, donate, and confer upon Bartholomew, for life, the said priory of Vrana of our kingdom, which we had once given to the late Illustrious Nicholas, king of the Kingdom of Bosnia, for life, who then conferred it upon said Bartholomew for his services and other merits.’<sup>756</sup> It was Újlaki, then, who long before 1477 granted the priory’s estates under his control to Beriszló. Matthias merely confirmed what had already been the case for some time.

When this took place, however, is more difficult to establish, although not impossible. The earliest material that connects Újlaki to the priory dates from 1472.<sup>757</sup> In 1473, he was dismissed from the *banates* by Matthias. Fortunately, the king’s letter that testifies to the change in Slavonia’s administration has come down to us. Issued in November 1473, addressed to the *regnicolae* of the Kingdom of Slavonia, the letter informed them that Matthias had

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Karbić, *Plemički rod*. Many, Karbić especially, speculated on Bartholomew’s background and offered various solutions that revolve around the idea that no concrete evidence on Bartholomew’s status in the family has come down to us. He is thought to have been a son of an unknown male member of the family. However, the extant material reveals Bartholomew’s background explicitly. MNL OL DL 26008, 26009; *regesta*, with imperfections, in: Tamás Kőfalvi, *A pécsvárad konvent hiteleshelyi oklevéltára 1254-1526* [The collection of charters of the monastery of Pécsvárad’s place of authentication 1254-1526] (Szeged, 2006), docs. 800, 801, pp. 389; 26009 in *extracto* M. Mesić, ‘Građa mojih rasprava,’ p. 120, note, even if vaguely, that Bartholomew was a brother to Nicholas, Martin, and Beriszló Grabarjai. That this was indeed the case is proven without doubt in a charter issued by King Matthias in 1475 that aimed at preserving the rights of the preceptory of Székesfehérvár against the priory, its priors and governors, particularly Bartholomew. The charter, MNL OL DL 106632, narrates that the main culprits were *venerabilis Bartholomeus electus prior Aurane ac egregius Nicolaus Desew de Graborya, frater eiusdem*. Doubt that lingers, however minute, as to Bartholomew’s true background may still be based on the fact that the Hungarian legal thesaurus covered several forms of *fratres* (e.g. carnalis, uterinus, proprius), depending on both legally and biologically defined relations. It may be, therefore, that Bartholomew was only a half-brother to these men.

<sup>755</sup> MNL OL DL 18001; ELTE Egyetemi Könyvtár [ELTE University Library], Hevenesi gyűjtemény [Hevenesi Collection], vol. 36, 7-10; I. Katona, *Historia critica regum Hungariae*, vol. 16, pp. 136-8; cf. D. Salihović, ‘Nonnulla documenta,’ pp. 412-4.

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*: *Bartholomeo [...] prioratum Auranae regni nostri predictum, quem nos alias condam Illustri Nicolao Regi Regni Bozne vita comite dederamus, qui tandem eundem prioratum pro serviciis ac aliis meritis dicti Bartholomei eidem contulerat, nunc vero [...] similiter vita sibi comite [...] damus, donamus et conferimus.*

<sup>757</sup> MNL OL DL 107938; L. Thallóczy, *Studien zur Geschichte*, doc. 91, 433-4. Cf. very brief notes in E. Reiszig, ‘A János-lovagok Sopronban’ [Knights of St John in Sopron], *Századok* 44 (1910): p. 635; Jakab Rupp, *Magyarország helyrajzi története fő tekintettel az egyházi intézetekre* 1. *Az Esztergomi egyház-tartomány* [Hungarian topographical history with focus on ecclesiastical institutions, vol. 1. The province of Esztergom] (Pest, 1870), p. 506.

decided to replace Újlaki and his colleague, Damian Horvat, with John Ernuszt, Matthias's trusted financial adviser who was to enjoy his *banate* for life.<sup>758</sup> Documents related to a legal quarrel between the Garai and the Beriszló families, initiated in February 1475, reveal that Bartholomew had been considered *electus prior Aurane* since at least December 1474 (and not, as previously thought, only from 1475).<sup>759</sup> These dates, November 1473 and December 1474, are therefore *termini ante et post quos* Nicholas probably gave up the priory's estates in Bartholomew's favour. Considering that Bartholomew was described as the mastermind behind the Beriszlós attack on the Garai estates – *egregius Nicolaus Desew de Grabarya, ex speciali inductione et voluntate Bartholomei electi prioris Aurane, [...] fratr[is] eiusdem [...] fecisset* – it is very unlikely that Bartholomew was either elected prior or received the priory's domains late in 1474. This must have taken place before December, certainly sometime during 1474, possibly immediately after Újlaki lost the Slavonian *banate* in November 1473. Never again during Matthias's reign<sup>760</sup> would the priory's castles be to such an extent paired with offices of the southern borderlands and the defence of the kingdom. Bartholomew would pay his annates through a creditor in Rome in 1482,<sup>761</sup> keep his priory and the majority of the Hospitaller estates until his death in 1512 and would continue to quarrel with the preceptory of Székesfehérvár over domains that the preceptory had claimed since the times of Prior Thomas.<sup>762</sup> Matthias himself completely ceased to intervene in this quarrel and, it seems, the whole medley of Hospitaller-related policies and problems by the mid-1470s. In 1475, the king made his final contribution to the solution of the quarrel between the priory and Székesfehérvár over the division of their rights and possessions. Although he seriously threatened Bartholomew and solemnly defended the preceptory's possessory rights, his decisions had absolutely no effect.<sup>763</sup>

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<sup>758</sup> HR-HDA-2, 39.

<sup>759</sup> MNL OL DL 26008, 26009.

<sup>760</sup> In November 1512, following Bartholomew's death and the fall of Hungarian castles in eastern Bosnia into Ottoman hands, King Wladislas II confiscated his castles that had originally belonged to the Priory (although it seems several of Bartholomew's private domains were also included). The king's intention was to transfer them to Peter Berislavić (from Trogir, unrelated to the Beriszlós of Slavonia), the bishop of Veszprém and soon-to-become (late 1512/early 1513) the *ban* of Slavonia, Croatia and Dalmatia, as well as Bosnia. Wladislas shared Matthias's (and Sigismund's) motives. See: HR-HDA-877, 693; MNL OL DF 268266.

<sup>761</sup> József Körmeny, ed., *Annatae e regno Hungariae provenientes in Archivo Secreto Vaticano 1421-1536* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), p. 92; Menyhért Érdűhelyi, 'Kutatásaim a római levéltárakban' [My research in Roman archives], *Katolikus Szemle* 10 (1896): p. 636. Cf. Alfred Krarup. Johannes Lindbæk, *Acta Pontificum Danica*, vol. 4 (Copenhagen, 1910), p. 289.

<sup>762</sup> See: MNL OL DL 106632, 106660, 106667, 106679, 106680, 106739, 22341.

<sup>763</sup> MNL OL DL 106632.



Although evidence related to Szapolyai and Újlaki is quite explicit, albeit scarce, very little is known about the fate of these estates between roughly 1465 and 1471, between Szapolyai's governorship and Újlaki's kingship in Bosnia. It seems that, even if intermittently, Matthias continued to allocate the priory's domains to his officials in the south. In 1472, the king confirmed rights of a certain John Kisfaludi to two estates in the county of Somogy, apparently near Csurgó, that had been granted to his family by Prior Thomas Székely, thus before late 1462/early 1463.<sup>764</sup> The accompanying charter narrates that, however, John's domains had recently been occupied by Blaise Magyar and attached to the castle of Csurgó. At the time when the charter was compiled, furthermore, they were in the hands of a certain *voivode Honzky*.<sup>765</sup> Csurgó, an old Hospitaller possession, had been taken by Szapolyai in 1464 (before that it was in Prior Thomas's hands).<sup>766</sup> Blaise Magyar, most importantly, was the *ban* of Slavonia in 1470-1471, as well as the *ban* of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia.<sup>767</sup> His jurisdiction, therefore, was the same as Szapolyai's and Újlaki's had been. All this suggests that Magyar also, on the same grounds, enjoyed the priory's domains through the virtue of his office. It is not completely clear what happened between Szapolyai's governorship and that of Magyar. It seems that Szapolyai was succeeded by John Székely, another prior, who was dead by 1468.<sup>768</sup> On the other hand further evidence suggests that John Vitovec, the *ban* and captain of Slavonia between 1466 and 1468,<sup>769</sup> acquired the Hospitaller castle of Bela during his *banate*. The castle was in the Order's hands until at least 1463.<sup>770</sup> In 1469 it was in possession of Vitovec's sons.<sup>771</sup> In 1469, the preceptory of Székesfehérvár complained against Janus Pannonius, *ban* of Slavonia at the time together with John Túz, for similar reasons it had complained about the behaviour of Szapolyai and his predecessors.<sup>772</sup> Whatever the true chronology, it seems certain that at least Szapolyai, Magyar, and Újlaki held the priory's domains before Bartholomew Beriszló eventually acquired them. Evidence that Matthias stuck to his initial measures towards the Hospitaller lands throughout the 1460s is therefore scarce, but he did allocate them to his captains in the south, apparently following King Sigismund's practice.

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<sup>764</sup> MNL OL DL 61796; Imre Nagy et al., eds., *Hazai okmánytár* [Homeland cartulary], vol. 1 (Győr: Victor Szauervein, 1865) doc. 238, pp. 367-8; cf. N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 58.

<sup>765</sup> Ibid.

<sup>766</sup> MNL OL DL 106587, 106588, 14659, 14786, 93284, 103549.

<sup>767</sup> See Appendix 3. For dates: N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 94.

<sup>768</sup> MNL OL DL 16727, 16728.

<sup>769</sup> N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 93.

<sup>770</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XIII-87.

<sup>771</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-X-73; MNL OL DL 14417; T. Pálosfalvi, 'Vitovec János, p. 441.

<sup>772</sup> MNL OL DL 106600, 106601, 106605.



What exactly the role of these estates was in the defence of Bosnia and the remainder of Matthias's realm is not completely clear from the material discussed thus far. Obviously, Matthias believed that one could not successfully defend Bosnia without them, but the details are unclear from the king's correspondence. The Hospitaller castles, scattered throughout Slavonia and Hungary, had no tactical advantage over another random set of forts, nor could they provide any help to Bosnia, farther south, or the kingdom in general, for that matter. As always, snippets of information from little known and unpublished material provide evidence as to Matthias's true goals. On 20 November 1472, when Nicholas Újlaki had already been in command of both Bosnia and the priory for at least a year, the king addressed a letter to the count, the vice-counts, and the judges of the county of Sopron. The purpose of this letter was to encourage them to protect the Hospitaller estates of Bő and Keresztyén from Nicholas's wrongdoings. According to claims that had obviously come from the brethren, Nicholas exacted unbearable taxes and requested provisions from them, seizing the opportunity, as the king put it, since he had been granted the goods of the priory of Vrana *pro sustentatione castrorum Regni eiusdem Bozne, ex rationabilibus causis*. But Nicholas, the king continued, was not awarded all Hospitallers domains, especially not those pertaining to the Hospitaller churches and houses which he nevertheless harassed. He was allocated only those estates that pertained to the priory's castles.<sup>773</sup> This letter not only shows that both Szapolyai and Újlaki received, at least as far as Matthias was concerned, only the priory's castles and the appertaining domains, but also that these domains were intended to provide resources for the maintenance of Hungarian castles in Bosnia. Matthias's system, therefore, very much resembled Sigismund's. In other words, what the king tried to do was to provide a *honor* of sorts for his captains in Bosnia, to help them sustain the Hungarian buffer there.

And no wonder he had to confiscate the priory's resources, as it seems he had significant problems with either providing money for the defence of castles in the south or remunerating his captains. Paul Sándor and Paul Tár, both of whom were Matthias's *aulici* of modest backgrounds who certainly expected stipends for their services along the frontier,<sup>774</sup> probably

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<sup>773</sup> MNL OL DL 107938.

<sup>774</sup> On their background see Appendix 3. On *aulici* at Matthias's court in general, their roles, remuneration, etc., see: A. Kubinyi, 'Die Staatsorganisation der Matthiaszeit' in *idem, Matthias Corvinus: Die Regierung eines Königreichs in Ostmitteleuropa* (Budapest: Herne, 1999), pp. 12-19. Particularly informative about the status of *aulici* are the registers of Ippolito d'Este, the young archbishop of Esztergom installed by Matthias in 1486, kept at the archives of Modena. Especially interesting is ASMo, Amministrazione dei principi, 752 that lists *expensa et solutio pro nobilibus aulicis videlicet domini Reverendissimi facta 1488*, containing not only names, but salaries and numbers of riders maintained by each man. The system at the king's court could not have differed enormously. On the d'Este registers see: A. Nyáry, 'Az esztergomi érsekség és az egri püspökség számadási könyvei a XV–XVI. századból' [Books of accounts of the archbishopric of Esztergom and the bishopric of Eger from the fifteenth

never received the money the king owed them for the defence of Croatian castles and Počitelj. In 1471, years after Matthias's celebrated fiscal reform that allegedly filled the royal treasury to levels that had been unheard of at the time, he had to transfer the castle of Rmanj in Croatia to them, as he did not have 2 000 florins to cover the expenses the pair had been covering with their own resources for some time.<sup>775</sup> Much later, in 1480, when one would expect his monetary measures must have showed results, he had to give the castle of Kemlék (Kalnik) to Ladislaus Egervári, the *ban* of Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia for practically identical reasons.<sup>776</sup> Matthias noted that Ladislaus had spent 4000 of his own florins (he had been the *ban* for four years by this time) *in coservacione castrorum nostrorum finitimorum ac sustentatione certarum gentium pro necessaria defensione prefatorum Regnorum nostrorum Dalmacie, Croacie ac Sclavonie, ac partium maritimarum contra Turcos nostros [...] hostes infestissimos*. It is obvious that Matthias did not have the money to pay Ladislaus, and that the *ban* was on his own in employing, commanding, and paying his subordinates, i.e. garrisons in frontier castles. An interesting *littera*, a documentary testimony to a series of lawsuits that a number of middling and petty noblemen and women of Slavonia initiated in the mid-1470s, is one of the rare sources that show how this functioned in practice. In 1474, two men, Stephen, son of Dezső of Csernek, and John of Crkvenjak complained before the palatine that at the time when *ban* Damian Horvat governed Bosnia (in 1471),<sup>777</sup> he gave the Bosnian castles of Levač, Sokol, Zvečaj, and Kamičak to Stephen, and Jajce to John, to govern and defend them for a period and price specified in the contract.<sup>778</sup> Stephen was to receive 625, and John 150 florins, along with salt. Both claimed they have received only a minute fraction of this money. Nearby, as we have seen, about the same time, Nicholas Székely had to sell the castle of Kozara and two other smaller forts in its vicinity, as, even though he and his men had shed blood in defending them against incessant Ottoman incursions, 'no stipend, subsidy or help' came from

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and sixteenth centuries], *Századok* 1 (1867): pp. 378-84; *idem*, 'A modenai Hyppolit kódexek' [The Hyppolit codices of Modena], *Századok* 4 (1870): pp. 275-90, 355-70, 661-87, *Századok* 6 (1872): pp. 287-305, 355-76, *Századok* 8 (1874): pp. 1-16, 73-83. For introductory remarks on the registers, see the recent work of Hajnalka Kuffart: H. Kuffart, 'Piero Pincharo de Parma, un ragioniere italiano in suolo ungherese' [Piero Pincharo de Parma, an Italian accountant on Hungarian soil], *Verbum: Analecta Neolatina* 13 (2012): pp. 504-12; *idem*, 'Introduzione ai libri contabili di Ippolito I d'Este esaminati dal punto di vista ungherese' [An introduction to the account books of Ippolito d'Este, examined from the Hungarian point of view], *Quaderni Estensi* 6 (2014), an online, open-access journal, available at [http://www.quaderniestensi.beniculturali.it/QE6/QE6\\_lavori\\_kuffart.pdf](http://www.quaderniestensi.beniculturali.it/QE6/QE6_lavori_kuffart.pdf), accessed on 26 September 2019.

<sup>775</sup> MNL OL DL 68070.

<sup>776</sup> József Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon*, vol. 12, doc. 649, pp. 133-5.

<sup>777</sup> In addition to the material on Horvat noted above, see for dates: N. Tóth et al., eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, pp. 94, 139.

<sup>778</sup> MNL OL DL 74714.

Matthias for nearly ten years.<sup>779</sup> As Nicholas received the castle in 1464, this means that no aid had ever been sent by the king.

The extant evidence, published and unpublished, shows that Újlaki and others in similar position may have controlled around eight Hospitaller castles and their appurtenances.<sup>780</sup> Depending on the model of exploitation, either through the collection of royal taxes or seigneurial dues, both of which were possible, and none of which are attested in the sources, these men may have collected c. 2 500 florins at most, even at the best of times.<sup>781</sup> Considering that, according to Ernuszt's register of 1496 and other later material, the defence of the southern frontier required anywhere between six and fifteen thousand florins a year (and even this was probably the bare minimum),<sup>782</sup> it is clear that the Hospitaller castles could have provided only a small fraction of this sum. Even this small amount seems to have been further reduced by an inconsistent allocation of the Hospitaller domains. It does not appear that all governors enjoyed the same breadth of privileges, as suggested by the case of the castle of Bozsjakó, an old Hospitaller possession (inherited from the Templars).<sup>783</sup> Once in the king's hands, in 1464/1465, the castle was not left to the Order, nor was it immediately after Szapolyai's deposition transferred to other secular governors. In 1465 it was given to Duke Ladislaus of Hercegovina in exchange for Livno, and then again taken by the king in 1467.<sup>784</sup> It seems that from that date onwards it was in the hands of the *bans* of Slavonia. Despite Újlaki's governorship and his allocation of the priory's estates to prior Bartholomew, the castle was governed by the retainers of Damian Horvat in late 1473 and later by his successors in the

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<sup>779</sup> L. Thallóczy, S. Horváth, *Alsó-szlavóniai okmánytár*, doc. 134, pp. 208-11.

<sup>780</sup> Pakrac, Bozsjakó, Csurgó, Krassósztmiklós, Csáktornya, and possibly Bela (Béla), Hresno, Gora. For details and material, see: D. Salihović, 'Pro sustentatione castrorum.'

<sup>781</sup> The number is based on tax registers of 1495, 1496, 1507, and 1512: J. Adamček, I. Kampuš, eds., *Popisi i obračuni poreza*, pp. 1-75; J. C. von Engel, *Geschichte des Ungarischen Reichs und seiner Nebenländer*, vol. 1 (Halle: Johann Jakob Gebauer, 1797), p. 28. Cf. the number that P. Engel proposed in his 'The Estates of the Hospitallers in Hungary at the end of the Middle Ages' in *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity*, eds. Zsolt Hunyadi, József Laszlovszky (Budapest: CEU, 2001), pp. 291-302. Although not far from numbers presented here, Engel was not aware of the exact number of Hospitaller estates that had been given to secular governors, nor did he make a significant effort to investigate this problem in detail.

<sup>782</sup> J. C. von Engel, *Geschichte*, pp. 127, 129, *passim*; F. Šišić, 'Rukovet spomenika,' doc. 59, p. 289; L. Thallóczy, *Jajcza. Oklevelek*, doc. 67, 104-23.

<sup>783</sup> For a general overview of the history of Bozsjakó and its relation to the Order, although lacking in primary material and with significant errors, see: E. Reiszig, *A jeruzsálemi Szent János lovagrend*, vol. 2, pp. 15-6; cf. J. Adamček, *Povijest vlastelinstva Božjakovina i okolice* [History of the seigniory of Božjakovina and its surroundings] (Zagreb: Kajkavsko spravišće, 1981); Lelja Dobronić, 'Posjedi i sjedišta Templara, Ivanovaca i Sepulkralaca u Hrvatskoj' [Estates and Centres of Templars, Hospitallers, and the Order of the Holy Sepulchre in Croatia], *Rad JAZU* 11 (1984): pp. 27ff; P. Engel, 'The Estates of the Hospitallers,' pp. 295-6; Z. Hunyadi, *The Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary*, pp. 47ff.

<sup>784</sup> MNL OL DF 233461.

*banate*.<sup>785</sup> The inventory of royal castles from the late 1480s, discussed above, and other contemporary material show that it remained in the hands of the *bans* of Slavonia until Matthias's death.<sup>786</sup> In the mid-1480s Matthias even offered the castle (along with other domains in Slavonia) to Victor Poděbrady, the Duke of Mürstenberg, in exchange for the Duchy of Opava (Troppau) intended for John Corvinus.<sup>787</sup> Béla, as noted, may have never been in the hands of secular governors or only for a very brief period of Vitovec's administration in Slavonia. Dubica too, otherwise a Hospitaller domain, does not seem to have been governed by Újlaki or his colleagues. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the castle was taken by the king from John Bevenjud in 1482. The charter(s) that pertain to the agreement note that the castle had been given to Bevenjud along with Kostajnica in exchange for some of his own domains.<sup>788</sup> As Kostajnica was exchanged for Skrad, Ostrožin, and Tržac in 1480,<sup>789</sup> Dubica also must have been granted to Bevenjud around the same time. It certainly was not in Bartholomew Beriszló's hands at the time. Matthias, therefore, kept some of the Hospitaller domains for his *bans* of Slavonia (Dubica too seems to have been transferred in 1482 to *ban* Blaise Magyar), and did not grant them to either Újlaki or Bartholomew. Whether his intentions were the same in both cases is not very clear, but probably the *bans* enjoyed their *honores* from those castles, such as Boszjakó or Dubica, that did not end up in Újlaki's possession.

### Management of defences and royal authority in the wavering frontier regions

While Matthias was extending his immediate authority in the south with the acquisition of the Frankapans' and the Kurjakovičes' castles in the late 1470s and the early 1480s, further opportunities arose, in quite different forms, for the expansion of the king's control over the farthest ends of the frontiers. By 1480, as we have seen, he managed to restore his presence around the Neretva, disrupting what seems to have been quite feeble Ottoman supremacy in the borderlands northwest from the river, towards the Cetina. As he himself boasted, in 1480

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<sup>785</sup> See: NAZ, *Acta capituli antiqua*, 2/49/9, 2/49/4, 2/49/5, 88/2, 2/41/15, 2/41/26, 2/49/6; J. Lučić, 'Banovac Andrija Banfi', doc. 1, 402-3.

<sup>786</sup> MNL OL DL 26235; NAZ, *Locus credibilis II*, 266.

<sup>787</sup> V. Fraknoi, *Hunyadi Mátyás kiraly* [King Matthias Hunyadi] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1890), pp. 356-7; Ede Margalits, *Horvát történelmi repertorium* [The repertory of Croatian history] (Budapest: MTA, 1902), pp. 723-4; František Palacký, *Geschichte von Böhmen*, vol. 5 (Prague: Friedrich Tempsky, 1865), pp. 309-10.

<sup>788</sup> MNL OL DF 231819; cf. DF 231820, 231823, 231824.

<sup>789</sup> MNL OL DF 218980.

peoples from these regions welcomed his troops and expressed willingness to change sides, put themselves under his administration and escape Ottoman control. Vlachs, as the king identified them, of Poljica, Radobilja, Neretva, and other frontier regions negotiated their terms, but welcomed his captains enthusiastically.<sup>790</sup> Matthias's endeavour along the southern borderlands is a prime example (among several) of how his Hungary played a role in the ever-changing circumstances in the borderlands, where three different powers (Venice, the Ottoman Empire, and Hungary) competed for direct control and influence. A complex network of multiple simultaneous, but nevertheless oscillating loyalties of the peoples of the borderlands, constant conflict and appertaining remedies, directed the attitude of these three states towards communities that especially after 1463 incessantly sought a way to preserve their domains, lives, and traditions. These areas, situated roughly between the rivers of Zrmanja and Neretva, truly transformed after 1463 into what would later be recognized as the *triplex confinium*. Matthias used the opportunity to establish what control he could over the region that had largely until 1480 been under a similar kind of Ottoman control or allied to Ottoman sanjak-beys in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Largely the same people, having witnessed the circumstances change yet again, changed sides and served Matthias instead of Mehmed. Others escaped Venetian control once they felt that the terms of their loyalty no longer satisfied their needs. Disruptions in the balance of power and the will of local communities left room for Hungary to join the Ottoman Empire and Venice in their 'cold' contest for the hinterlands of Dalmatia. And no moral guidelines or requirements aided Matthias in his expansion. Allies of the Ottomans or not, participants in their incursions and *akins* or not, the king could not care less. It was the loyalty of those people, however weak, that he sought. As before, it was primarily control and only secondary defence that he was interested in, but nevertheless aimed against the Ottomans.

It has long been known, although largely disregarded, that in 1480 two ambassadors of Poljica, a semi-autonomous *comitatus* in Split's hinterlands that had since 1444 been a Venetian possession, approached Matthias to negotiate their submission to his rule.<sup>791</sup> According to the charter with which Matthias approved this and granted certain privileges to Poljica and its leaders, today kept in the archives of the Croatian Academy, the king promised to preserve their traditions and customs, confirmed their possessory rights, promised to finance the military service of propertied men of Poljica with yearly stipends of forty florins, as well

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<sup>790</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 48, pp. 76-80.

<sup>791</sup> See, for instance, [Ivan Božić] Иван Божић, 'Племени људи Пољичани у XV веку' [The 'noble men' of Poljica in the fifteenth century], *Glas Srpske akademije nauka i umetnosti* 15 (1971): pp. 88-9, *passim*; I. Pivčević, *Povijest Poljica* p. 49, fn. 4.

as to allot a hundred florins a year for all those who were eager to serve the king, but had no resources to do so. Matthias further promised that he would allow them to keep a certain number of troops within the *comitatus* for their own defence, should their loyalty prove stable. In addition, he undertook to build a castle for their defence, and to put it under the control of the Vlatkoviće. Lastly, he promised that, should Poljica be overrun by the Ottomans, he would accept its peoples into his kingdoms and settle them in appropriate areas, where they would be allowed to remain until hostilities ceased and improved conditions allowed their return.<sup>792</sup>

In February 1444, leading men of Poljica, largely those who belonged to the so-called ‘aristocracy’ (as opposed to the other, more numerous petty nobility, widely considered to be the ‘indigenous’ population – the so-called ‘didići’), the descendants of the Dražojeviće and the Rajčiče, negotiated and accepted Poljica’s submission to Venetian rule. The process was practically identical to that experienced by the people of the Land of Hum in the 1460s – the count of Split played a central role in both cases, while the contract followed the same structure and was composed to achieve the same goals characteristic for Venetian *patti di dedizione*. All rights would be preserved, even privileges granted in exchange for the acceptance of Venetian rule.<sup>793</sup> One of the most important sections of the contract that, in fact, took most space, was the list of rewards that the leading men of Poljica were to receive for their loyalty. A handful of men and their relatives were granted yearly stipends, some even houses in Split and estates in its surroundings, others were given various smaller gifts. The most important grant, however, was the ‘provision,’ the yearly stipend that ranged between twenty and sixty *lire parvorum*. The men of Poljica who were lucky enough to acquire the stipend relied on it for the remainder of their lives, as well as for the livelihood of their descendants. Individuals requested increased rates throughout the latter half of the century, others who had not been so lucky requested the same or similar stipends from the Republic, sons and relatives inherited their predecessors’ subsidies. It was one of the central issues in the relations between Poljica and Venice.<sup>794</sup> Despite the contract, privileges, and subsidies, men of Poljica proved to be quite unreliable subjects. As we have already seen, Žarko Dražojević, a member of one of the distinguished families of the *comitatus* whose relatives enjoyed the Republic’s stipends and were at the vanguard of the party that sought submission to Venice, proved to be quite a difficult negotiator when he captured Klis and thus caused the mayhem that led to the death of *ban* Paul Tár. One

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<sup>792</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XVI-41.

<sup>793</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 1, fol. 215r-216r.

<sup>794</sup> See, e.g., ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 144r, 157v; reg. 10, fol. 50v; reg. 11, fol. 70v, 127r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 108, 123, 159, 270, 296, pp. 156, 185, 244, 421, 459.

of Tár's closest collaborators and, as far as the Venetian Council of Ten was concerned, the most savage of his retainers who was captured during the brawl that ended with Tár's death in 1472, Paul, son of Gregory, also seems to have been from Poljica.<sup>795</sup> The greatest problems the Republic had with Poljica, at least until that point, came in 1473, when Venice became aware, and quite afraid, of a plan of the men of Poljica to capture Split (and possibly other Dalmatian cities) for Matthias. At the centre of this plan was none other than Žarko Dražoević, and his principal collaborators were Radoš Petrović, John Gregorić, and Matthew Dražoević.<sup>796</sup> Just how complex the situation in the area was is probably best demonstrated by Radoš's role and behaviour. He was the main negotiator with the count of Split in 1444 and apparently the central figure in Poljica's submission to Venetian rule; he acquired a house, an estate, as well as a stipend from the Republic.<sup>797</sup> During the 1460s he was the leading member of the local aristocracy and the primary liaison for Venice, who in 1470 personally begged the Republic to save Poljica's women, children, and elderly in case of a major Ottoman attack.<sup>798</sup> In the same year he offered Venice more than a thousand men of Poljica to fight for her, especially against the *ban* of Croatia.<sup>799</sup> The Venetian Senate acknowledged that Venice had granted him the status of *miles*.<sup>800</sup> John Gregorić was the other principal negotiator in 1444, and just as important in bringing Poljica under Venetian administration. He too received a hefty stipend.<sup>801</sup> Due to the difficult position in the region, in summer 1473 Venice decided to send a special agent to Dalmatia with a task to investigate the situation in Poljica, rumours of rebellion, and its recent dealings with the Hungarian king.<sup>802</sup>

An article of the Statute of Poljica, dating from 1476, that mentions 'leagues and parties' that had appeared among the people of Poljica,<sup>803</sup> as well as Matthias's charter from 1480, previously appeared to scholars as evidence that a 'Hungarian party' developed in Poljica in the 1470s, which, allegedly, then caused all this trouble in 1473.<sup>804</sup> The same party allegedly

<sup>795</sup> V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, pp. 184-5; cf. И. Божић, 'Племенисти људи,' pp. 71-2.

<sup>796</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 65v-66r; V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, p. 184; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 133, pp. 198-200.

<sup>797</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 1, fol. 215r-216r.

<sup>798</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 27r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 15, p. 18.

<sup>799</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 24, fol. 113r-v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 130; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 38, p. 54.

<sup>800</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 65v-66r.

<sup>801</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 1, fol. 215r-216r.

<sup>802</sup> V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, pp. 185-7.

<sup>803</sup> Miroslav Pera, ed., *Poljički statut* [Statute of Poljica] (Split: Književni krug, 1988), § 88, pp. 490-2.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-4; cf. Ante Banić, 'Adopcija nekih obitelji među poljičke didiče godine 1482. u Donjem Dolcu' [The adoption of some families by the didičes of Poljica in Donji Dolac in 1482], *Poljica* 8 (1983): p. 62; Ante Nazor, 'Granica između Splita i Poljica i splitsko-poljički sukobi u XIV. i XV. stoljeću' [The boundary between

approached Matthias in 1480. This interpretation rests solely on the view, well-established in historiography, that Matthias's agreement with the Poljicans came to naught and that Venice managed to pacify the area. It is the weakness of this 'Hungarian party,' a one-off irregularity, that was in the background of the collapse of their project, according to present views. This, as we shall see, is far from the truth. Even article 88 of the Statute of Poljica (from 1476), after close inspection, shows that one would have to invest significant amounts of imagination in order to connect it to either Matthias or the culprits from 1473. It deals only with internal issues of the community – with conflicts between either individuals or 'parties' that sought settlement outside the established legal framework. But far better evidence comes from documents that have thus far been completely unknown. They not only show that the agreement of 1480 very much took effect, but also how both Matthias and the Poljicans managed their agendas along the frontier.

The first document, a part of a partially surviving codex which I discovered in the State archives in Zadar, is entitled *Provisiones Pollicianorum*.<sup>805</sup> The document, dating from 1475/1476, is significantly damaged, with around a fifth of its content completely missing due to damage from either humidity or other causes. In addition, one needs to possess considerable photographic skills in order to reveal the remaining faint text by altering the colouring of the image of the manuscript. Once the image is properly prepared, six folia (54r-59v) reveal names and a list of stipends that the *camerlengo* of Split delivered throughout the year to the men of Poljica under the mandate of the count of Split and the Venetian government. This account book shows that the city's *camerlengo* regularly (at least in 1475 and 1476) paid the stipends to various members of Poljica's 'aristocracy' for set, but not always the same intervals – ranging between a couple of months up to a couple of years. So-called 'augmentations' of stipends were also noted, paid to most individuals as an addition to the basic rate they were due, and allotted for the same period as 'provisions' themselves. It is not clear whether these 'augmentations' were a customary practice, whether they were requested by the Poljicans, or were granted as an award for certain services. Most importantly, the list shows that not only did most men (or their families) who appear in the contract with Venice from 1444 indeed receive their stipends, but also that these same men, Venetian *provisionati*<sup>806</sup> who so eagerly

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Split and Poljica and the Split-Poljica conflicts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries], *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 21 (2003): pp. 74-5.

<sup>805</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 16, 33/3, fol. 55r-59v.

<sup>806</sup> Identified as such in several other documents of Venetian provenance. See: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 24, fol. 113r-v; Mar, reg. 9, fol. 144r, 157v; reg. 11, fol. 70v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 130; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 38, 108, 123, pp. 54, 156, 185.



accepted Venetian rule and money, approached Matthias in 1480 and, according to the king's charter, secured provisions from the other side. Count Radoš and his brother John were the first among them. Nearly all men (apart from three, whose names may have been noted in the missing parts of the manuscript) who received Venetian provisions approached Matthias and changed sides.

Another invaluable and thus far unknown document, also kept today in the archives of Zadar, reveals further not only that Matthias's agreement with the men of Poljica was indeed enacted, but also, albeit vaguely, how their service to the king worked in practice. The document is in fact a *salvus conductus*, as is also noted in its margins, inscribed in a codex containing notes about civil suits in the city of Split at the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>807</sup> Issued by the count and captain of Split on 21 May 1482, it grants free passage and security to the Poljicans who may wish to enter the city. The count and captain narrates that, as he was motivated by appeals of many penitent noblemen (both 'aristocrats' and 'didići') of Poljica who, greedy for money, rather than loyal to Venice, had illegally accepted stipends from the *ban* of Croatia, he pardoned them and granted them his grace as long as they stay away from such illicit provisions. However, many were said to be afraid and distrustful of the count's intentions, so in order to show his sincerity, he granted the *salvus conductus* to all men who had been receiving a stipend from Matthias's captains, as well as their brothers and other family members. These men, according to this letter, belonged both to the Poljican 'aristocracy' and petty nobility. This is completely in line with the content of Matthias's charter, which tells that not only would aristocrats receive yearly stipends (far greater than what Venice had been giving them), but that money would be sent to Poljica for those who were eager, but far too poor to serve the king. As expected, the king acted through the *ban* of Croatia, at the time Ladislaus Egervári and Blaise Magyar (in fact probably through their vice-bans), with whose office the Poljicans were well acquainted. During the period of Matthias's reign, as we have seen, they both collaborated with his *bans* and stood against them, often at the same time. A partnership that proved most detrimental to Venetian possessions in Dalmatia was that between Paul Tár and at least one Poljican nobleman, Paul Gregorić. Records of the Venetian Council of Ten show that even when Venice was ready to release other Tár's other collaborators, they did not wish to show any mercy towards Paul, whom they considered especially dangerous and the guiltiest of all.<sup>808</sup> What Tár, Gregorić, and the rest were considered particularly guilty of was

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<sup>807</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 18, 35/1, fol. 474v.

<sup>808</sup> V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, pp. 184-5.

collaboration with Ottoman raiders, whom they led into Venetian Dalmatia and thus sent more than four thousand people into Ottoman slavery.<sup>809</sup> That the Poljicans indeed not merely worked with the Ottomans, but directly participated in their raids is further shown by a contemporary article of their Statute. Article 23 dictates that all men of Poljica, of whatever status, who either follow the Turks or the *martolos* in war or accompany them in their raids, should suffer capital punishment.<sup>810</sup> As the Statute has it, these men would ‘surrender to the Turks or go *among* the Turks,’ a phrase structured in such a way in the Slavonic language of the time as if ‘going among the Turks’ was just another activity or even trade one can occupy oneself with. Maybe the closest translation of the original ‘*poći u Turke od svoje volje*’ would be ‘willingly become a Turk,’ but one must handle such a translation with care. The meaning this phrase bears, if indeed it is to be understood in this way, is that ‘being a Turk’ was an occupation, not an ethnic identity, just as being a locksmith or a mason. One would thus ‘become a Turk’ by joining their ranks and participating in raids. I shall not dwell too much on this particular problem (as it would require a study of its own), but it is worth noting that other contemporary evidence also points to this phenomenon. In 1470, when Ottoman raiders gathered to strike territories northwest of Croatia, contemporary observers noted that 20 000 Turks had gathered around Modruš, among which there was a rising number of ‘gypsies, Morlachs, Bosnians, and other nations.’<sup>811</sup> In July 1469, raiders who attacked Frederick III’s lands were described as a group composed of Turks, gypsies, Bosnians, and other nations led by a paša.<sup>812</sup> At the same time, Bosnians, particularly Vlachs who dwelled along the Bosnian frontiers towards Croatia, were considered to be Ottoman allies, guides to the *akinji* across the Dinarides towards Venetian territories.<sup>813</sup> Michael dei Colli noted that in 1469 Bosnians and Morlachs in fact acted as guides to the 14 000 Turks led by *Exibeg*.<sup>814</sup> In addition to occasionally taking part in Ottoman raids, Poljicans paid tribute to nearby Ottoman captains to prevent raids against their cherished *comitatus*. This is shown by a series of documents, noted at the very beginning of this thesis, that record Venetian-Ottoman bordering which followed the treaty of 1479. In instructions prepared for Trevisan, the Senate noted that at the height of the Venetian-Ottoman war (1463-1479), Poljicans were granted permission by the Republic to

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<sup>809</sup> Ibid., pp. 184-5, 19-23.

<sup>810</sup> M. Pera, ed., *Poljički statut*, § 23a, 23b, pp. 422-3.

<sup>811</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 5, pp. 166-7.

<sup>812</sup> Ibid., doc. 4, pp. 170-2.

<sup>813</sup> F. Cusin, ‘Documenti per la storia del Confine Orientale,’ doc. 64, pp. 91-2.

<sup>814</sup> V. Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium*, vol. 2, doc. 5, pp. 172-3.

negotiate with the Turks and pay them an annual tribute in exchange for peace.<sup>815</sup> The Ottoman stance was that tribute implied submission to Ottoman rule, which Venice argued was incorrect, as many of their subjects had similar arrangements with the Ottomans, but did not automatically pass under Ottoman authority. Further material shows that ‘although Poljica had been *liberated* by the Sultan from tribute and *services*,’ local Ottoman officers continued to molest its people, against which the Republic protested.<sup>816</sup> The matter was eventually put to rest (at least temporarily), when in January 1481, following another Venetian protest,<sup>817</sup> Bayezid II instructed the sanjak-bey of Hercegovina to give up Poljica in accordance with the agreement with Venice; to stop all wrongdoing against the *comitatus* and to ask nothing from its people anymore.<sup>818</sup>

When in 1480 Matthias attracted the ‘Vlachs of Poljica and Radobilja’ to his side, the king highlighted in his letter to the pope that the Turks had previously been the rulers of these areas, and had attacked his captain with the help of the people of these borderlands that *still* remained their allies.<sup>819</sup> Turks, or their activities, certainly had a significant influence and role in the region. Paul Tár was accused by the Venetians of not merely aiding, with his own incursions and destruction, the onslaught brought by Ottoman raiders, but of attempting to surrender royal castles to the Ottomans.<sup>820</sup> While this was at least partially a Venetian propagandistic fabrication (they wrote this about Tár in a letter sent to Matthias that justified his death), other evidence of similar behaviour is more convincing. Records of the Venetian Council of Ten show that discussions about a solution for troubles the Republic had with Tár started in the summer of 1472. The Council of Ten, whose work as a true foreign intelligence service was the most clandestine of all Venetian administrative bodies,<sup>821</sup> took into consideration at least two options. As early as 9 July 1472, an unnamed Croatian nobleman approached the Republic and offered to kill Tár, his *ban*, as he sought revenge for what Tár

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<sup>815</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 28v-31r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 245, pp. 369-75.

<sup>816</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 100r-101v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 271, pp. 422-3.

<sup>817</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 29, fol. 157v-158v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 284, pp. 442-4.

<sup>818</sup> I. Pivčević, ‘Nekoliko poljičkih isprava iz XV. stoljeća’ [Several fifteenth-century documents about Poljica] in *idem, Sabrani radovi o Poljicima*, ed. Ivan Banić (Omiš: Društvo Poljičana Sveti Jure, 2008), doc. 16, pp. 207-8.

<sup>819</sup> V. Fraknói, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 48, pp. 76-80.

<sup>820</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 25, fol. 156r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 11; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 107, pp. 154-5.

<sup>821</sup> For a recent overview of the Council’s jurisdiction and activities see: Ioanna Iordanou, *Venice’s Secret Service: Organizing Intelligence in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 9-15, *passim*.

had done to his family.<sup>822</sup> By 24 July, the rectors of Zadar informed the Council that Tár could change sides and accept employment by the Republic for 3 000 ducats. In addition, up to four hundred Turks could be acquired through Tár by the Venetian *dominium* with such an agreement and a little bit of astuteness.<sup>823</sup> The Council, however, opted for assassination, as Tár was far too treacherous to be trusted. The single most important reason because of which the Council spent time discussing his case was that Tár, according to trusted sources in Dalmatia, had long been the leader (*caput et ductor*) of the Turks. He was the primary cause of *totius ruine et vastationis et incendii et captionis fidelium nostrorum illius provincie Dalmatie, et nisi fiat aliqua relevata provisio contra personam dicti perfidi Tarpaval hostis nostri, brevi spacio omnis illa provincia erit penitus perdita et ad nihilum deducta* (all the ruin, destruction, and burning, and abduction of our subjects of the province of Dalmatia; and unless some appropriate measures are taken against this perfidious Paul Tár, our enemy, soon the whole province of Dalmatia will be completely destroyed and reduced to nothing).<sup>824</sup> Unlike accusations noted in other material (such as in correspondence with Matthias), these entries are far more trustworthy. They were not intended for anyone outside the Council and the inner government of Venice. They were not to enter any instructions, commands, letters, or anything similar; they could not serve any propagandistic goals. This particular piece of writing is merely a record of the Council's minutes, and therefore (probably) contains information that the Republic completely believed in. Another document that contains similar information, certainly dating from this period and related to Venetian discussions about Tár, was discovered and published by Vincenzo Miagostovich in 1913.<sup>825</sup> The document, compiled in Veneto rather than Latin, contains a narrative about both Ladislaus Terjéni's and Paul Tár's misdeeds (in the period between the late 1460s and 1472) as well as proposals for the defence of Venetian Dalmatia against the *bans* and their men presented by the citizens of Šibenik to the Venetian government. Šibenik's envoys stressed that especially Tár, who received information about Venetian possessions in Dalmatia through relatives of Šibenik's exiles who had settled in

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<sup>822</sup> V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. The original that slightly differs from Lamanski's transcription is ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 17, fol. 209r.

<sup>824</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>825</sup> Vincenzo Miagostovich, 'Per una cronaca sebenicese' [For Šibenik's chronicle], *Nuovo Archivio veneto* 25 (1913): pp. 466-73. This document probably corresponds to ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 25, fol. 147r-v (D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 98, pp. 141-2), dated to 22 June 1472 – a decision by the Venetian Senate to subsidize Šibenik's rural population, in accordance with requests presented by the city's envoys. The Senate decided to send timber for reparations of rural settlements, and food (wheat and millet) for the affected peasants, as well as money for the city's garrison and their ammunition. The whole record perfectly corresponds to requests noted in Miagostovich's document.

Croatia following the Venetian takeover of the city, had been working together with the Turks, leading them towards and through Šibenik's surroundings 'to the destruction and ruin of this poor city and its district.' Envoys also found it particularly important to stress that altogether 1257 rural settlements had been destroyed up to that point, leaving peasants without a proper shelter and home. As a refugee crisis was looming, and there was talk among many about fleeing Dalmatia and settling either in Apulia or Marche, envoys asked Venice to help with both building materials and food.

In December 1472, the Venetian Senate instructed rectors in Dalmatia to capture all men who had led the Turks and Morlachs into Venetian Dalmatia, should they enter their districts, especially one of the castellans of the *ban* of Croatia, a certain John Čubretić, who *duxit Turcos in Comitatum Sibenici*.<sup>826</sup> Čubretić seems to have been Matthias's trusted subject. As early as December 1463, while Čubretić obviously stayed with the king beneath Jajce, Matthias granted him the Vlachs Tulićes who had settled in Čubretić's domains around Vrhrika in central Croatia.<sup>827</sup> In May 1475, the Republic commanded the rectors of Zadar to offer a bounty for the head of John Benković, a Croatian petty noble who had once been a Venetian *provisionatus*. His punishment was justified as he had led the Turks against Venetian Dalmatia in the winter of 1474/1475.<sup>828</sup> Other primary material shows that Benković was in close contact with the counts of Krbava, also, as we have seen, Venetian associates in the area.<sup>829</sup> While, in 1484, one section of Matthias's garrisons in Croatia fought against incursions by Ottoman Vlachs, the other granted them *salvus conductus* to freely roam the Venetian territories and return home safely.<sup>830</sup>

Especially during Tár's tenure, but steadily throughout the whole period of Matthias's reign, Croats, Hungarians, and other subjects of the Hungarian king who populated the region developed a reputation in Venice that did not differ from that of the Ottomans. As early as the 1470s, Matthias's subjects and the Turks were the same as far as Venice and particularly her people in Dalmatia were concerned, just as dangerous, if not more. Apart from the above-mentioned perception of Tár and accusations against him and his men, further evidence shows how their activities differed little from those of Ottoman raiders. Venetian mills were

<sup>826</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 152r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 5, n. 78; sv. 14, n. 321; HR-DAZD-388, vol. 2, fol. 100v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 119, 120, pp. 176-9.

<sup>827</sup> MNL OL DF 218887; cf. R. Lopašić, 'Cetinski i lički Vlasi' [The Vlachs of Cetina and Lika] in *Vlasi u starijoj hrvatskoj historiografiji*, ed. Ivan Mužić (Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika, 2010): p. 22.

<sup>828</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 10, fol. 45r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 158, p. 234.

<sup>829</sup> HR-DAZD-388, vol. 2, fol. 112v; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 14, n. 327.

<sup>830</sup> HR-DAZD-16, kut. 19, 1.2, fol. 11v.

completely destroyed in Tár's raids, to the detriment of her cities,<sup>831</sup> the cities' districts and their settlements were burned down. Venice had to provide both funds for the reconstruction and food for the affected peasants.<sup>832</sup> An undated list that can be connected to a letter sent by the count of Šibenik to Venice in 1475, whose copy was then forwarded to the Venetian envoy at Matthias's court, sheds important light on the details of these incursions. The count's original letter, unfortunately, I have not been able to locate, but instructions prepared by the Venetian Senate for their envoy in Hungary, based on the letter, nevertheless contain important information. The count's letter as well as the instruction were intended to present to Matthias the magnitude of destruction and plundering that his subjects had been causing in Dalmatia. Importantly, the Senate wrote to their envoy that *rapinae, incendia, caedes* (plundering, burning, and killings) committed by Matthias's men were no different from those caused by the Turks ([...] *non aliter, ac per perfidos Turchos [...] illatis*).<sup>833</sup> The list (that probably accompanied these letters), entitled *Damni fati a contadini de Sibenico da poi la cedola di damni mandada da Sibenico in Ungaria*, noted the damage done through robbery, either of cattle or other 'things.'<sup>834</sup> A note at the very end of the list tells that *questi sono i damni de le robbe solamente, non metando li homeni che sum sta amazadi e feridi et anche brusadi* (this is the damage to things alone, leaving out people who have been killed or wounded). Altogether, the count of Šibenik estimated that 3 000 ducats worth of cattle and other things (alone) had recently been plundered or destroyed by a handful of men subjected to Matthias's *bans*. No wonder that as early as the 1470s, Venice and her subjects in areas bordering on Croatia made no distinction between raiders. Regularly, in letters, records, instructions, Turks, Croats, and Vlachs were listed together as perpetrators.<sup>835</sup> Just how similar incursions of Ottoman and Hungarian troops were at the time is maybe best demonstrated by an appeal presented personally in 1488 before the Venetian Senate by two citizens of Trogir, Andrew Cipico and Peter Cega.<sup>836</sup> Both had joined the Venetian *stradioti* to defend Venetian subjects around Trogir in recent Hungarian incursions and witnessed the death of the commander of the *stradioti* in the clash. They were 'mortally wounded,' thrown in shackles, dragged away, detained, and

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<sup>831</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 132r; reg. 10, fol. 89r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 88, pp. 127, 275-6.

<sup>832</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 147r-v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 98, pp. 141-2.

<sup>833</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 26, fol. 183v-184r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 154, pp. 235-7.

<sup>834</sup> MNL OL DL 50085; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 155, pp. 238-9.

<sup>835</sup> See: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 10, fol. 89r; Secrete, reg. 26, fol. 101r.

<sup>836</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 12, fol. 156v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 348, pp. 530-1.

lived for some time on bread and water. In order to redeem themselves from captivity, they had to sell a large part of their possessions, to their and their sons' great detriment. Their experience in Hungarian/Croatian captivity is no different to those of Ottoman captives.<sup>837</sup>

That one probably had significant difficulties in correctly identifying the raiders who plundered Venetian territories is a consequence of the chaos that ruled the region with regard to changing loyalties and especially the lack of 'ethnic' or other significant features that would differentiate the attackers. In other words, many raiders (if not all in some cases) were local people who were connected to the Ottomans by self-interest that either motivated them 'to go *among* the Turks' or remain under their authority. It was indeed a 'predatory confederacy' that had little to do with either religion or grand political goals. The people who regularly appear as raiders are Vlachs. Their role in the early Ottoman state, especially within its frontiers, where they were not only used for repopulation of poorly populated areas, but also provided significant military power, is well documented and discussed in a fairly large number of

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<sup>837</sup> The problem of Ottoman captivity (or ransoms, ransom industry in general) along the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier and within this period (c. 1450-1490) has not been fully investigated. Although there have recently been a few brief contributions, our understanding of this issue is very far from ideal, practically inexistent. See: G. Dávid, P. Fodor, eds., *Ransom Slavery*. Although there is a lack of published sources (a handful were published in [Mihailo Dinić] Михаило Динић, *Из дубровачког архива* [From the Archives of Dubrovnik], vol. 3 (Belgrade: SANU, 1967)), there is a relatively large number of quite rich primary material kept in the archives in Dalmatia. As an example of how little experiences of captives of either side differed, see this rich and very interesting record from the archives of Dubrovnik, HR-DADU-15, vol. 52, fol. 164r-v, dating from 16 September 1470:

Egregius vir Ivan Marcovich de partibus Croatie, cuius uxor erat captiva in manibus Turchorum, confessus fuit ad interrogationem Ratchi Vuchossalich dicti Mizalovich de Ragusio ibi presentis, quod dicta eius uxor sibi data, consignata et restituta fuit hic Ragusii viva, sana et libera per dictum Ratchum qui eam traduxit ex partibus Verchbossanie, ubi tenebatur captiva per Turchos, ex quorum Turchorum manibus ipsa uxor liberata fuit opera Iohannis Pripinovich mercatoris Ragusini in illis partibus commorantis et negociantis. Item confessus fuit idem Ivan Marchovich habuisse et realiter recepissee a dicto Ratcho et per manus dicti Ratchi ducatos tercentos(!) boni auri et [...] ponderis, habitos per ipsum Ratchum in Bosna a dicto Iohanne Pripinovich, et quos ducatos tercentos ipse Iohannes Pripinovich alias habuit et recepit a vayvoda Exebegh Isachovich tempore quo dominabatur Bosne. Et de pluri ipse Ivan habere debet alios ducatos ducentos quos ipse Ratchus, ut Giuragh Pripinovich promiserunt dicto Ivano pro dicto Iohanne Pripinovich cum termino duorum mensium, ut constat in libro [scripturarum notarie Ragusii...] Quos ducatos quingentos cum dicta eius uxore ipse Ivan habere debebat ex conventionem habita inter ipsum Ivanum ex una parte et dictum Iohannem Pripinovich ex alia parte. In contracambionem et liberationem, ac pro contracambio et liberatione Mustaffe Turchi, qui tenebatur captivus per Magnificum dominum Paulum Tari vicebanum Croatie etc., quem Mustaffa Turchum ipse Ivan Marchovich habuit a dicto domino vicebano et eum traduxit Ragusium et consignavit vivum, sanum et liberum dicto Ratcho. Et sic tam ipse Ratchus quam dictus Mustaffa Turchus ibi presentes dixerunt et confessi fuerunt eundem Mustaffa esse liberum, et quod ipse Mustaffa potest pro libito voluntatis sue ut homo liber sine alicuius contradictione persone ire ad omnes quator partes mundi.

As we learn from other sources, Ivan Marković worked at the time for the king. In 1473, he represented Matthias and in his name requested the release of men who had been captured during the brawl with *ban* Tár; ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 63.

works.<sup>838</sup> We have seen how they also filled voids left behind by other decaying Ottoman administrative solutions in the borderlands. They populated the frontiers and were at the front of grand Ottoman operations in the west, as guides and collaborators. The contemporary material also contains information about Vlachs (Morlachs) as Hungarian raiders in general, as well as about individuals who caused the greatest troubles to the Venetian state. Among others, a certain Vlach *catunar* Kožul and the brothers John, Gregory, and Martin Višić (or Visić) were the worst of the worst, as far as Venice was concerned. The Republic wanted them dead.<sup>839</sup> Kožul was, in fact, the castellan of the royal castle of Ostrovica that Matthias acquired in 1458, located near Šibenik and Zadar. These Vlachs in general were under the command of the *bans* of Croatia or their castellans.

That Vlachs had a significant, maybe even a central role among Matthias's troops along the frontier is suggested by a number of further contemporary material as well as circumstantial evidence. Contemporary sources mention *voynuks* (lit. 'soldiers') in service of royal castles both in Bosnia and Croatia.<sup>840</sup> *Voynuks* were a relatively well-known category of Ottoman auxiliary troops that had a vague, but certainly military role in the early Ottoman state. As demonstrated by Branislav Đurđev, they were probably largely (if not entirely) of Vlach origin.<sup>841</sup> According to one of Bayezid's Cyrillic letters to Matthias discussed in the first chapter, the primary target of Hungarian incursions into Ottoman Bosnia in the late 1480s, led by *bans* Emeric Derencsényi and Ladislaus Ficsor Csulai, were Ottoman Vlachs. Having arrived in Bosnia, both on foot and mounted, Hungarian troops *нашех неколко влаха пленив, а неколко их исекл[и], а неколко их съ женами и з децами и съ иманием скѹпив отерали и ѿвели* (robbed some of our Vlachs, cut down others, while some they gathered together with their wives, children, and possessions and took them away). Hungarians were able to do this primarily because these Vlachs *ѿздаюки се ѿ мирѿ и ѿ любсѿв коѿа не мегю нами тере не сѿт носили*

<sup>838</sup> For a recent overview of the place and role of the Vlachs in the Ottoman state, with relevant historiography, see: Vjeran Kursar, 'Being an Ottoman Vlach: On Vlach Identities, Role, and Status in Western Parts of the Ottoman Balkans (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries),' *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 34 (2013): pp. 115-61. For a recent very detailed and quite voluminous overview and commentary on historiography on Vlachs as a group, see: Zef Mirdita, *Vlasi u historiografiji* [Vlachs in historiography] (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2004).

<sup>839</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 30, fol. 22r-v; Mar, reg. 12, fol. 50r; HR-DAZD-388, vol. 2, fol. 151r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 14, n. 321; MNL OL DL 50085; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 155, 289, 330, pp. 238-9, 450-2, 503-4.

<sup>840</sup> MNL OL DL 32650; J. Adamček, I. Kampuš, eds., *Popisi i obračuni poreza*, pp. 1-3; L. Thallóczy, Antal Hodinka, eds., *A horvát véghegyek oklevéltára 1490-1527* [Documents on Croatian frontiers, 1490-1527], vol. 1 (Budapest: MTA, 1903), doc. 23, pp. 16-19; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, docs. 67, 115, pp. 104-23, 183-92.

<sup>841</sup> [Branislav Đurđev] Бранислав Ђурђевић, 'О војнуцима' [On voynuks], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu*, n.s. 2 (1947): pp. 75-137.



оружия [...] (carried no weapons, believing in peace and love that is between us).<sup>842</sup> No doubt, Hungarian *bans* resettled them somewhere in Bosnia and employed them in the defence and maintenance of castles. Evidence from Ernuszt's account book, albeit dating from 1496, shows not only *voynuks* and Vlach voivodes, but *martolosi* as well among the castles' garrisons.<sup>843</sup> Further evidence shows that Vlachs settled on private estates served in their lord's castles, probably as members of garrisons.<sup>844</sup> That this was the system also put to use by Matthias is revealed by an invaluable piece of evidence, a brief document that, despite its brevity, is rich in information on both the status of royal Vlachs in Croatia and their propensity to change lords. It is a charter issued by *ban* Matthias Geréb in 1484 to a certain John Kučić, Croatian petty nobleman, who according to Geréb had served him earnestly since the beginning of his *banate*.<sup>845</sup> What Geréb granted John was a license to settle Vlachs on his lands, either those from lands of other Croatian lords, from the *dominium* of Sultan Bayezid II, or domains of Duke Vlatko. Importantly, however, he was not allowed to invite and resettle Vlachs who were attached to royal castles. Geréb further exempted all new settlers from taxes exacted by *bans* of Croatia, suggesting that, just as the Ottomans, the Hungarian side also sought a solution to the lack of manpower in the Vlachs. All this corresponds to information found in a register of royal taxes due from Croatia, undated but probably dating from the late 1480s (1492 at the latest).<sup>846</sup> It relates that the *voynuks* of Knin *domino serviunt in equis et propter metum Turcorum intraverunt*, as well as that they had previously been exempt from paying any taxes. The register notes a number of such groups (either Vlachs, *voynuks* or *familiares et liberales ad castrum et castellanis servientes*) around several other castles in Croatia (Sinj, Klis, Ostrovica, Skradin, Obrovac, Nutjak), royal or private, that were near or *in confinibus Turcorum*. The register also mentions the Vlachs who belonged to the aforementioned Paul Čubretić, as well as that they were located *in finibus*. Kučić, the recipient of *ban* Geréb's grant, also makes an appearance, showing that he was, in fact, the castellan of Knin. A certain Mustafa is also mentioned, clearly an Ottoman renegade in Hungarian service.

This goes to show that Vlachs, largely transhumant pastoralists, traditionally versed in equestrian arts, horsemanship, and mounted warfare, who for more than a century before Matthias's times had been entering the service of rulers and aristocrats precisely because of

<sup>842</sup> BAV, Ottob. gr. 469, pt. B; I. Biliarsky, 'Une page des relations magyaro-ottomanes,' p. 296.

<sup>843</sup> L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, docs. 67, 124, pp. 109, 123, 207.

<sup>844</sup> E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1133, pp. 274-7.

<sup>845</sup> HR-HDA-877, 525.

<sup>846</sup> MNL OL DL 32650, published, with a few errors, in J. Adamček, I. Kampuš, eds., *Popisi i obračuni poreza*, pp. 1-3, and L. Thallóczy, A. Hodinka, eds., *A horvát véghelyek oklevéltára*, doc. 23, pp. 16-19.

their equestrian nature,<sup>847</sup> easily found their place in the environment that increasingly witnessed what scholars regularly deem the *Kleinkrieg*. Skirmishes, incursions, plundering, abductions, burning, outright destruction required a response. Not only did the Ottoman side cause a Hungarian response in this sense, but so did the context of life along the frontier in general. While Matthias apparently relied on Vlachs, Ottomans on their *akinji* composed of diverse groups, including Vlachs, Venice responded by bringing in the *stradioti*, a Greek-Albanian version of the lightly armed, lightly armoured swift cavalry capable of matching Hungarian Vlachs and Ottoman *akinji*.<sup>848</sup> Venetian records show that from 1473, when the citizens of Dalmatian cities requested, and the Republic granted, several hundred *stradioti* for the defence against ‘Morlachs, Croats, and Turks,’<sup>849</sup> Venice increasingly relied on this category of light cavalry (Greeks and Albanians) and steadily gave up on local *provisionati*, whom the government considered useless and possibly even dangerous.<sup>850</sup> While salaried garrisons protected her cities and castles, the *stradioti*, also paid and supplied from the Venetian treasuries, watched over the districts together with the *condottieri* and their bands. Only foreigners from the east were allowed to serve as *stradioti* in Dalmatia (although this was not always the case in practice),<sup>851</sup> and they were forbidden from marrying local Slavic women.<sup>852</sup> Irregularly paid, and especially lacking fodder for their horses that they incessantly requested from the state, *stradioti* do not seem to have quite expected what they encountered once they arrived in the area. In 1486 the Venetian Senate noted that a contingent of *stradioti* had been sent the previous year to Dalmatia, to Zadar, Šibenik, Trogir, and Split, to counter Vlach incursions. However, these *stradioti* expressed their unwillingness to remain in the area, unless the state provides fodder for their horses, as they claimed that ‘it was impossible for them to live on three ducats a month in those barren places.’<sup>853</sup> No wonder, then, that in the same year

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<sup>847</sup> For a sketch of the role the Vlachs assumed in Balkan politics prior to Matthias’s times, with relevant works, see: N. Isailović, ‘Legislation Concerning the Vlachs of the Balkans Before and After Ottoman Conquest: An Overview’ in *State and Society in the Balkans Before and After the Establishment of Ottoman Rule*, ed. S. Rudić, S. Aslantaş (Belgrade: Institute of History), pp. 25-42.

<sup>848</sup> On *stradioti* in Venetian service see: Michael Mallett, John Hale, *The Military Organisation of a Renaissance State, Venice c. 1400 to 1617* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 45-81, *passim*.

<sup>849</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 172r-v; Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 26, fol. 101r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 131, 144, pp. 196, 215-6.

<sup>850</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 10, fol. 52r, 77v; reg. 11, fol. 115v, 128r, 130r-v, 139r, 143v, 144v-145r; reg. 12, fol. 35r-v, fol. 45r; Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 30, fol. 22r-v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 160, 176, 289, 290, 298, 300, 302, 305, 306, 327, 328, pp. 245, 266, 450-3, 461, 463, 466, 469-70, 498-501. See also: M. Šunjić, ‘*Stipendiarii veneti* u Dalmaciji i Dalmatinci kao mletački plaćenici u XV vijeku’ [*Stipendiarii veneti in Dalmatia and the Dalmatians as Venetian mercenaries in the fifteenth century*], *Godišnjak Društva istoričara BiH* 13 (1962): pp. 251-88.

<sup>851</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 12, fol. 35r-v; fol. 45r.

<sup>852</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 172r-v.

<sup>853</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 12, fol. 81r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 337, p. 515.

the commander of the local *stradioti* attacked Venetian mills and took provisions by force. Venice promptly requested his deposition and the installation of another Greek at the head of these troops.<sup>854</sup>

All this explains one quite mysterious document, kept today in the archives of Budapest. It bears no date, nor any title, and is obviously a smaller piece of some longer writing or a draft that eventually ended up in another, unknown document. It only contains a list of names and numbers of riders attached to each name.<sup>855</sup> The archivists in Budapest dated it to the period between 1490 and 1500, but Tamás Pálosfalvi, one of two scholars who commented briefly on the document, argued that it must have been compiled before Matthias's death.<sup>856</sup> Neither Pálosfalvi, who successfully proved that the list was compiled before 1490, nor Kubinyi, who

<sup>854</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 12, fol. 95v; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 341, pp. 521-2.

<sup>855</sup> MNL OL DL 104613.

Banus	equites	IIIC
Vicebani	equites	IC
Comes Karolus	equites	II <sup>C</sup>
Comes Iohannes de Corbavia	equites	II <sup>C</sup>
Comes Nicolaus	equites	L
Comes Iohannes de Czethyn	equites	L
Comes Nicolaus de Merzyn	equites	XX
Comites de Blagay	equites	L
Petrus de Zrinio	equites	L
Iohannes Horwath	equites	LX
Sunko	equites	IC
Abbas de Thoplicza	equites	XX
Balthasar de Bathyan	equites	L
Challowich iunior	equites	XXXII
Stephanus Chwpor	equites	XL
Ladislaus Zempchey	equites	XXXII
Georgius Mikulichych	equites	XXXII
Iohannes Hunczky	equites	LX
Sarko Hunczky	equites	XL
Thadia	equites	XL
Polycenses	equites	II <sup>C</sup>

<sup>856</sup> T. Pálosfalvi, *The Noble Elite in the County of Körös (Križevci) 1400-1526* (Budapest: MTA, 2014), p. 275, fn. 2182.

in an even shorter note dated it ‘around the turn of the century,’<sup>857</sup> however, discussed the document or its dating in detail. A careful reading of its content offers further clues as to the date of its composition and its purpose. Altogether twenty-one items, either names of individuals, officials, or groups that occupied areas in Slavonia and (largely) Croatia were listed on this piece of paper. One name in particular, that of a certain *Sunko*, is the most valuable clue with regard to the document’s dating. *Sunko* can be none other than Marin (Maroje) Žunjević,<sup>858</sup> installed as the captain of Senj and granted the castle of Bribir in (or around) 1477 and 1480, respectively, by Matthias.<sup>859</sup> Vinciguerra knew him as *Marin Xuncho Raguseo, capitano de Segna*,<sup>860</sup> Matthias identified him as *Marinus Sonko, capitaneus Segniensis*,<sup>861</sup> other Hungarian documents as *Sonko*,<sup>862</sup> Katona as *Samko*.<sup>863</sup> Croatian Glagolitic material identifies him as *Maroi Žunevič*<sup>864</sup> or *Žunko*.<sup>865</sup> He was dead by November 1486.<sup>866</sup> Although he had relatives who had the same ‘surname,’ it is highly unlikely that anyone other than Marin hides behind the name *Sunko* on the list, for two reasons. Firstly, none of the other *Sunkos* enjoyed the same status as Marin, and the list contains names of well-to-do Slavonian and Croatian magnates or noblemen of considerable power and wealth (the counts of Krbava, the Zrínyi, the Frankapans, Balthasar Batthyány, Stephen Csupor, etc.). Secondly, Marin’s wealth was nowhere near the wealth controlled by these families. As the list also contains the *ban* and the *vicebans* of Croatia and Slavonia, his name must have been added due to the nature of his office, the captaincy in Senj. This means that it was compiled before autumn 1486. The name of Tadija Vlatković also appears near the bottom of the list. He was at least until the end of 1480/beginning of 1481 in Ottoman service. Lastly, and most

<sup>857</sup> A. Kubinyi, ‘A Szávaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi győzelem 1523-ban. Adatok Mohács előzményeihez’ [The victory at Szávaszentdemeter-Nagyolasz in 1523. Data on precedents to Mohács] in *idem, Nándorfehérvártól Mohácsig. A Mátyás- és a Jagelló-kor hadtörténete* (Budapest: Argumentum, 2007): p. 125, fn. 18.

<sup>858</sup> In scholarship, his name is traditionally rendered as ‘Žunjević,’ although the name itself rarely appears in the primary material, largely in Glagolitic writings, and even there it is written ‘Žunevič.’ For the sake of simplicity, I will stick to ‘Žunjević.’

<sup>859</sup> MNL OL DL 275072; V. Klaić, ‘Dubrovačka vlastela Žunjevići u Senju i Vinodolu, 1477.-1502.’ [The Ragusan Žunjevićes in Senj and Vinodol, 1477-1502], *Vjestnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arhiva* 3 (1901): pp. 237-9; cf. Branko Krmpotić, ‘Maroje Žunjević, veliki kapitan Senja (1476-1483)’ [Maroje Žunjević, captain of Senj (1476-1483)], *Senjski zbornik* 6 (1975): pp. 305-14.

<sup>860</sup> Š. Ljubić, *Commissiones*, doc. 4, p. 48.

<sup>861</sup> MNL OL DL 275072.

<sup>862</sup> Mile Magdić, ‘Regesta važnijih i znamenitijih isprava senjskih arhiva’ [Regesta of notable documents from the archives of Senj], *Vjestnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arhiva* 1 (1899): p. 245.

<sup>863</sup> I. Katona, *Historia critica*, vol. 9/16, pp. 288-9.

<sup>864</sup> I. K. Sakcinski, *Acta Croatica*, doc. 105, p. 119; cf. Đ. Šurmin, *Acta Croatica*, doc. 191, pp. 290-1.

<sup>865</sup> *Ibid.*, doc. 109, pp. 122-3 = MNL OL DL 37117.

<sup>866</sup> E. Fermendžin, *Acta Bosnae*, doc. 1175, pp. 295-8.

importantly, the very last item on the list are the Poljicans, who, as discussed, entered Matthias's service during 1480.

Already Kubinyi asserted that the list in fact contains the number of riders each of the listed had to provide for the defence of Croatia/Slavonia.<sup>867</sup> Pálosfalvi also claimed that the list contains 'the number of horsemen to be equipped by the persons who figure on the list.'<sup>868</sup> Although there is no indication of any of this in the document itself, it is unlikely that it served any other purpose than to record the number of mounted warriors the listed individuals had at their disposal. Whether these numbers were expected by the king or were numbers already under their command(s); men for whom they received stipends or they had to provide on some other basis is not that clear. Most likely, these riders were indeed equipped in exchange for subsidies, as the case of the Poljicans, who received money from Matthias's *bans*, strongly suggests. What seems completely clear is that the list mirrors Matthias's defensive arrangements within the borderlands that took shape after his successful assault on Ottoman Bosnia in 1480. Having taken under his wing the Poljicans and Vlachs of the nearby areas, the Vlatkoviće who had until that point served the Ottomans, as well as re-established Hungarian presence on the Neretva, Matthias arranged a model that is reflected in the list. Poljicans themselves, for the stipend they received, provided two hundred riders (far fewer than the one thousand they offered to Venice, however exaggerated). Briefly put, this list represents military services that Matthias planned to receive from the listed men in exchange for money, not necessarily what they truly provided.

It is questionable how effective this arrangement was or whether it ever even took its full intended form. We have seen that already in 1482 the Poljicans regretted their decision to join Matthias and receive money from him, rather than from the Venetian treasury. Why they opted for Matthias in 1480 in the first place remains a matter for debate. They certainly were not motivated by his successes in Bosnia, as they approached the king a few months before his captains burned Vrhbosna. Their alliance was, as we have seen, long in the making. I do not share Ante Banić's view that the 'aristocracy' of Poljica in this way wished to acquire greater power in Poljica to the detriment of the Venetian count who, at least in principle, ruled the *comitatus*.<sup>869</sup> The matter remains vague, but it seems that Venice had no significant influence over Poljica's internal politics. In other words, there is no evidence to suggest that the Republic

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<sup>867</sup> A. Kubinyi, 'A Szávaszentdemeter-Nagyolaszi győzelem,' p. 125.

<sup>868</sup> T. Pálosfalvi, *The Noble Elite*, p. 275, fn. 2182, cf. p. 94.

<sup>869</sup> A. Banić, 'Adopcija,' pp. 61-2.

established firm authority over the region, as it did in other places (e.g. Dalmatian cities), but rather, as with Krajina, enjoyed loose and intermittent loyalty of its people.<sup>870</sup> Ivan Božić was probably closer to the truth regarding the ways through which Venice (or any other sovereign) controlled Poljica (or any such region): ‘their loyalty was based on revenue collected from granted estates and yearly income in cash.’<sup>871</sup> As Matthias offered more money than what Venice had been sending to their *provisionati* in Poljica, it may well be true that, as the count of Split put it in 1482, the Poljicans were ‘greedy for money’. It could be, furthermore, that they disagreed with the Venetian-Ottoman peace treaty from 1479, which certainly for at least two years brought no peace to them. They may have sought a different protector in Matthias. That is why, perhaps, one of the most important points in the king’s agreement with them was the construction of a fortress for the protection of Poljica, as well as the king’s promise to allow further troops to remain there for protection. Why they gave up on Matthias after less than two years is also not explicitly discussed in the primary material. It is probable that either Matthias’s money stopped coming, never arrived, or the amount did not meet the agreed sum. It could also be that, when eventually in 1481 Ottoman assaults on Poljica ceased in accordance with the Venetian-Ottoman treaty and subsequent bordering agreements, the people of Poljica no longer had a reason to stay with the king.

In any case, this again shows that we cannot view Hungarian borderlands in Matthias’s times as a solid system of anti-Ottoman defences that, once established, selflessly sustained Ottoman onslaught for the benefit of their homeland. We especially cannot any longer view Matthias’s frontiers as if they truly maintained the role of the ‘bulwark of Christendom’ that they acquired more through shameless propaganda than true experiences. A lot remains to be investigated. Even the new material used in this dissertation challenges the established views; the far richer material yet to be studied will certainly alter our understanding of the borderlands in Matthias’s times even more thoroughly. Observed through a longer period, between the beginning of the fifteenth until roughly the middle of the sixteenth centuries, political, military, and social circumstances that affected lives within the borderlands were indeed detrimental to the norms, customs, polities, and people in general who resided along the Hungarian-Ottoman frontier. But to apply such a view to each and every period, especially Matthias’s era, would be to indulge in teleology. Once all this material is taken into consideration, it not only quite

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<sup>870</sup> On government in Poljica, see: Ante Laušić, *Postanak i razvitak Poljičke kneževine (do kraja XV. stoljeća)* [Origins and development of the *comitatus* of Poljica (until the end of the fifteenth century)] (Split: Književni krug, 1991), pp. 162 ff; M. Pera, *Poljički statut*, pp. 185-97.

<sup>871</sup> И. Божић, ‘Племенити људи,’ p. 89.

clearly shows that little, if anything that took place in the borderlands remained either stable or had been planned, but also that practical, day-to-day worries, rather than ponderings about the clash of civilisations, guided peoples' lives. Contrary to what I expected, extremely little in the sense of religiously shaped opinions, symbology, behaviour, positions about or towards the 'Turk' can be found in the primary material that deals with 'ordinary' people. None of the 'little people' that I have encountered in the primary material from a dozen different archives were bothered with the grand scale of things, the clash of religions and civilizations; they could not care less, it seems, about the ruin of Europe. In comparison to the committed humanist tractates that debated the history and character of the Ottomans to absurd extents, the few scarce attributes that can be encountered in the otherwise rich diplomatic and epistolary material are stupefyingly dull. And even those often came from chancellors who either had a humanist education acquired at some pretentious Italian school or wished to emulate their more successful colleagues. The disparity between these two worlds is very interesting, to be explored in the future. What needs to be emphasized is that the vast majority of people cared nothing about the impending doom or the Antichrist, but about preserving their communities and way of life, maybe improving their lives and adopting to new situations, and mostly about keeping their heads attached to their shoulders. A telling example is that in 1470, at the height of the Venetian-Ottoman war, certain individuals of the Poljican 'aristocracy' begged Venice to accept them on her territory, if need be, as a rebellion was looming. Some inhabitants of Poljica considered accepting Ottoman rule as they started to see the benefits of offers that came from the other side.<sup>872</sup> This same reasoning, bereft of grand concepts, fuelled the changes that profoundly influenced the development of Matthias's authority in the borderlands and his defensive policies whose characteristics, it seems, had just as much to do with outside pressure as with the king's agendas, if not more. He, it seems, primarily responded to crises, rather than initiated changes or improvements. Indeed, Matthias paid stipends, or at least promised to pay them (as we have seen, there were complaints about his negligence) to the leading men who inhabited the kingdom's frontiers. The above-mentioned list, as well as another piece of writing found among the *formulae* published by Kovachich, suggests that. One of them is an (undated) example of a letter by Matthias that narrates how he met with barons and prelates and decided that each of them ought to keep a certain number of mounted warriors for the protection of the kingdom(s) against Ottoman incursions, whom they would be ready to provide to the *bans*

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<sup>872</sup> ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 27r; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 15, p. 18.

without delay, if need be.<sup>873</sup> The king noted that each of these noblemen had a specific ‘arrangement’ with him, whereby he was obliged to help them finance these units. He promised to pay eight florins per rider a year. This document is, I am sure, a concept that the chancery used to inform each of these individuals of their obligations under the agreement. It continues, in fact, with information for the unnamed recipient, informing him that, considering the number of royal castles that he holds as well as estates, he was obliged to keep a hundred riders. Unless the whole content of the letter is merely a draft, and this number is arbitrary, it may be that the recipient of the letter this draft was based on was in fact Marin Žunjević. I would argue that the list discussed earlier is in fact related to this arrangement between Matthias and his barons; a record of agreed numbers of riders each of them had to keep in accordance with the contract. Out of all people listed there, only Žunjević had to keep precisely a hundred riders. All of this, furthermore, may be related to another of the king’s letters, dating from October 1480, compiled during preparations for an assault against Ottoman Bosnia and Serbia. A circular letter (this particular copy, kept at the archives of the Croatian academy, is addressed to the county of Szabolcs), it shared the king’s plans for the kingdom’s refurbished defences with the nobility and propertied men of the kingdom. Matthias also asked the nobility to pay the subsidy (presumably the one-florin tax that Matthias collected regularly in agreement with the barons) that had been set for the feast of St Martin (11 November) in advance, as the kingdom’s defences needed urgent aid due to recent Ottoman incursions.<sup>874</sup> The letter itself was issued on 3 October, barely a month before the set deadline. Matthias’s motives, as laid out in the letter, stemmed solely from the consequences of ‘recent’ Ottoman incursions into both the kingdom’s borderlands and further inland. In other words, Matthias referred to the incursions of the summer of 1479 and especially the summer of 1480, as discussed in the first chapter. The king, so he said, invested enormous efforts in defending the kingdom, but ruthless Ottoman onslaught left his men decimated and exhausted. They now needed aid and reinforcements. This was especially true for his troops in Croatia and Slavonia (and Wallachia), whom, as is suggested by the letter’s wording, he had only recently sent to guard these frontiers. Bonfini, interestingly, noted that in 1479/1480 Matthias remained in Buda for a long period (which is not entirely true),<sup>875</sup> but did not waste his time. In fact, the king, claims his court historian, ‘fortified the kingdom’s borders facing the Turks with military outposts to check the enemy’s incursions’

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<sup>873</sup> Márton G. Kovachich, *Formulae solennes styli in cancellaria... Regni Hungariae olim usitati* (Pest: Trattner, 1799), pp. 509-10.

<sup>874</sup> HR-AHAZU-70, D-XVI-74.

<sup>875</sup> Cf. R. Horváth, *Itineraria*, pp.109-13.



(*regni fines, qui ad Turcum spectant, omnes militum stationibus circumvallat, qui excursiones hostium inhiherent*).<sup>876</sup> It may be that Matthias needed money for his upcoming assault on Bosnia, but it is indicative that all this different contemporary material speaks of changes along the frontier. It would appear that in/around 1480, Matthias considerably altered not only the landscape of the borderlands by acquiring further castles, but also the model on which defences against the Ottomans functioned. It may be, in fact, that the incursions of 1479/1480, which seem to have been the most ferocious in a very long time, motivated the king to establish a system that, at least in theory, resembled something Szakály had in mind. Precisely in 1479, furthermore, as a direct response to Ottoman incursions earlier that year, Matthias introduced the ‘captaincy of the Lower Parts’ and gave it to Kinizsi. Alterations in Croatia may have been a part of this reform and money collected from the nobility funds that made it possible.

All of this further suggests, indeed, that Matthias had neither established such a system before, nor maintained it for very long. His planning, too, does not seem to have been quite good as it would appear. We must not forget that he did not acquire castles in Croatia in the late 1470s because of Ottoman incursions. They had not yet taken place by the time Matthias initiated his assault on the Frankapans’ and the Kurjakoviće’s domains. What the king did, if this interpretation is correct, was that he merely altered the system according to which troops were hired and maintained in this portion of the frontier. Anyway, by 1482, at least in part, this model also failed. It was primarily outside influence and circumstances, rather than Matthias’s agency, that created opportunities for these ‘improvements’ and changes in the borderlands in general. The decision of individuals to serve the king (for money, at that), rather than Venice (such as the Frankapans or, almost, Vuk Branković) or the Ottoman Empire (such as Paul of Hum, Tadija Vlatković, or all those Vlachs), the sudden changes in loyalties (such as with the Poljicans, the Ottoman-installed kings of Bosnia, Vlachs again, etc.) seem to have been the primary motor of change. Surely Matthias’s actions in Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia in the 1470s and the 1480s acted as catalyst for all these oscillations, but it was action from below, rather than force from above that dictated them. I emphasize yet again, Matthias seems to have generally responded to what he was presented with, and rarely acted first. This characterized his approach to the kingdom’s frontier towards the Ottoman-occupied areas throughout his reign, from the ill-prepared counterattack of 1463, the poorly executed assault on Zvornik in 1464, to the crisis of 1484. By the early 1480s, then, Matthias did introduce a system that resembled the defensive mechanism implemented in the Hungarian-held parts of Bosnia, but

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<sup>876</sup> A. Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum decades*, vol. 4, 4/6, p. 106.

only to defend royal possessions that were not acquired for the defence of the kingdom against the Ottomans in the first place.

## CONCLUSIONS

While very little can be said with certainty about Hungarian-Ottoman truces/peace in the period between the early 1460s and the late 1470s, there seems to be enough evidence to suggest that from 1478 onwards these two states regularly and intensely negotiated as well as entered such agreements. It seems that both sides accepted truce or possibly even a lasting peace in 1478, but the agreement was soon annulled when one of the sides (or both) failed to respect the contract. It was not until 1483 that negotiations, it seems, returned to the level of the late 1470s. In early 1484 a new agreement was reached that seems to have largely (if not completely) been based on the stipulations of the contract from 1478. It was Matthias who more than once insisted that the older agreement be reintroduced. In fact, the king presented this as an ultimatum, unwilling to enter any deals unless this condition was respected. Evidence suggests that the remaining Hungarian-Ottoman peace/truce contracts (during Matthias's reign) were indeed based on the template that was introduced in 1478. The truce of 1484 was quickly annulled due to the crisis that surrounded the Ottoman capture of Moldavian ports, but was soon reintroduced in 1485.

It does not seem that the two sides ever entered a lasting peace, such as that between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. The treaties of 1484, 1485, and later, all seem to have introduced short-term truces that lasted most likely for two years. The treaties, furthermore, were largely focused on keeping peace along the frontier, introducing mechanisms to check violations of the contract, and on little else. Bordering similar to that between Venice and the Ottoman Empire never took place, although contracts included crude stipulations that guaranteed the preservation of established positions. The two sides, in fact, largely remained on positions established during 1463/1464, as very little changed as regards the territorial extent of either state between 1463 and 1490. These borders, for various reasons discussed above (probably primarily because Hungary and the Ottoman Empire never agreed on a proper peace treaty, but only truces), remained vaguely defined, confined perhaps only by traditional, historical boundaries, which seem to have been the basis for demarcations at the time, as suggested primarily by Venetian-Ottoman negotiations.

Particularly in Bosnia, Hungarian-controlled territory was defined by a series of castles that the king's troops managed to capture during 1463 and 1464, in counter-attacks that followed Ottoman invasions. The situation there remained largely unchanged for the remainder

of Matthias's reign. Further to the west, in Croatia, the king's position changed drastically and regularly between 1458 and the mid-1480s. Matthias there gradually acquired castles, primarily from the Frankapans and the counts of Krbava, responding to threats that came not from the east, but primarily from Venice. It was not until around 1483 that Matthias eventually managed to acquire the majority of those castles that would later be listed in the so-called 'Farkashida capitulation'. In fact, the king controlled but a handful of forts in central Croatia (and Senj) by that time, with little authority. It was not until the mid-1470s that he managed to establish a lasting control even over those areas around Klis and Knin. Together with the geographical evidence discussed above, this shows that the 'defensive system' as described by Szakály and accepted in current scholarship did not function in Croatia. While, no doubt, acquisitions in Bosnia were first and foremost tasked with defending approaches to Hungary proper, Croatia had no strategic value in this sense, nor did the king have a chance to expand his 'defensive system' to those areas until very late in his reign.

His primary concern in those areas was Venice, not the Ottomans. Troops that eventually manned his forts in areas west of Bosnia and defences he organized there had a slightly different task than those in Bosnia and further to the east. Their job was to defend the king's possessions, the castles themselves and only indirectly Croatia, from either Venetian or Ottoman troops, and not Slavonia or Hungary. But even in this area, the king seems to have been quite slow in organising a meaningful framework for the defence of his newly-acquired possessions. Navigating through a complex network of ever-changing political circumstances, fluctuating loyalties of the local people, even his own captains, Matthias seems to have introduced significant steps in the defences of the area only in the early 1480s, when he acquired the majority of his castles in Croatia and when the local Ottoman captains proved to be far too untrustworthy. At risk from being lost to either Venice or the Ottomans, the castles had to be defended in some way. Matthias apparently came up with a mechanism that was based on subsidies to the local communities and noblemen, who were to collaborate with Matthias's *bans* and face the Ottoman raiders attacking royal castles. This model that was introduced in the 1480s is what resembles currently accepted model of Matthias's defensive system along the southwestern edges of his realm. But, even these improvements do not seem to have lasted for more than a couple of years, and were certainly not introduced early in Matthias's reign, nor solely thanks to the danger from the Ottomans. And the general situation in the area that had already by that time become the meeting point of Venetian-, Hungarian-, and Ottoman-controlled territories, changed less through Matthias's plans and primarily under

the influence of factors that were out of Matthias's direct control. Chance seems to have governed relations in the area to a significant level. Matthias seems to have been happy to leave his plans with Martin Frankapan's domains to chance. The whole endeavour depended on Martin's inability to produce an heir and on his age. Until shortly before Martin's death, Matthias was left with a handful of castles in central Croatia and with Senj, and his approaches to Knin and Klis were at risk from being cut-off by the Ottomans. Only Martin's death and the subsequent squabbles over his inheritance allowed the king to improve his position in the south. The decision of the people of Poljica, Krajina, and the surrounding areas in 1480 to subject themselves to the king, rather than Venice or the Ottoman Empire, whom they had served until that point, allowed the king to reform the defences of his castles in Croatia. This was only partially a consequence of the king's agency; it was to an extent a response of the local populace to his invasion of the Ottoman-held areas in Bosnia. Matthias, then, was certainly quite capable of using the situation to his advantage, but most of the situations that usually ended in Matthias's favour were not of his doing. As in Bosnia in 1463 and 1464, 1476, as well as 1480, Matthias improved his position along the Adriatic coast not through a pre-existing plan, but through responses to crises that emerged thanks to outside factors. It seems that it was only Klis, Knin, and the surrounding areas of the 'Tallóci inheritance' that he was eager to take control of, and invested a lot of planning and effort to gain them. But even this took place thanks to his fear of losing control over Croatia, either to Venice or the local potentates, not the defence against the Ottomans. All of this is suggested by the newly-discovered sources, primarily from the archives of Venice and Zadar.

This material also shows that during Matthias reign Hungary's borderlands, primarily Croatia, further transformed into 'in-between spaces,' typical frontiers characterised by fluctuating and overlapping loyalties, little control from the centre, the collaboration between nominal enemies, a wide spectre of uncertainties and a myriad of other phenomena that followed the same patterns; *Kleinkrieg*, abductions, mercenaries, bleak wastelands, petty infighting. While the Ottomans purposefully maintained a similar frontier on the edges of their territory in Bosnia and in Herzegovina, it seems that on the Hungarian side Croatia itself, by the nature of its 'betweenness,' acquired all the characteristics of such a frontier. This is perhaps best evident in the way all sides transformed their troops in order to better protect their interests in the area, adapt to and come to grips with the reality of the day-to-day life in the frontier. While the Ottomans relied on their *akinji* and the Vlachs, Matthias tried the same tactics with the Vlachs that chose to subject themselves to his *bans*, and Venice brought in the *stradioti*.

Unlike Bosnia, where the king seems to have established firmer control, already during his reign Croatia indeed assumed the characteristics traditionally understood to have governed the life in areas adjacent to the so-called *triplex confinium* in the later periods.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Comments on Pertusi's dating of Segono's work

Pertusi was quite vague about the datation of certain parts of Segono's work, but was convinced that his tractate, addressed to Sixtus IV, was finished by the summer of 1480.<sup>877</sup> However, a brief note in Segono's text shows that at least a part of his work was certainly composed no sooner than December 1480/January 1481. While discussing the position of Vrhbosna and its role in Ottoman incursions, Segono noted<sup>878</sup> that Vrhbosna was not for long the centre of Ottoman administration in Bosnia:

[...] *nuper enim per Pannonum regem direptus atque incensus, fugato inde Thauto bassa Romaniae* [...]

[since recently it was torn apart and set on fire by the king of the Pannonians (i.e. Hungarians), chasing away from there *Thauto*, the paša of Romania]

In both of his studies dedicated to Segono and his work, Pertusi discussed this specific section in considerable detail, and concluded that this attack on Vrhbosna took place during Hungarian campaigns of 1463 and 1464. He added, furthermore, that Vrhbosna must have remained in Hungarian hands for at least some time thereafter.<sup>879</sup> He further discussed the identity of *Thaut bassa*, claiming that although his name resembled that of Davud Paša, it remains unknown whom exactly Segono referred to. Davud that Segono refers to is surely the same Davud that I have discussed in the thesis. Following his *akins* into Hungarian and Austrian territories in 1479 and 1480, Matthias responded with a well-known counterattack, both into Bosnia and Serbia. Matthias's correspondence with Sixtus IV, with Mehmed, reports compiled by Matthias's own captains about the course of the campaign, and a number of other sources show that Vrhbosna was the goal of the Hungarian attack in Bosnia, and that indeed, in words of one of Matthias's soldiers;

[...] *civitatem comburri omnino fecimus, thezauros tam basse tam in civitate que fuerunt omnino accepimus civitatem et provinciam totam comburri fecimus* [...]

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<sup>877</sup> Cf. A. Pertusi, *Martino Segono*, p. 157, *passim*; *idem*, 'I primi studi,' pp. 526ff.

<sup>878</sup> *Idem*, *Martino Segono*, p. 104.

<sup>879</sup> *Idem*, *Martino Segono*, p. 238-9; 'I primi studi,' p. 535-6.

[we completely burned the town (i.e. Vrhbosna) down, we took all the treasures, those of the paša as well as those that were in the town, and we set the town and the whole province on fire]

Matthias himself, who explained to Sixtus that Vrhbosna was one of the four principle Ottoman possessions in the Balkans (comparable only to Constantinople, Edirne, and Skopje), narrates in his letter how Hungarian troops burned, ravaged, and ransacked Ottoman Bosnia and Vrhbosna, then under Davud's command. Both Matthias and Vuk Grgurević described in some detail the subsequent clashes with Davud and his troops in the area between Vrhbosna and Travnik. The whole endeavour was finished by the middle of December 1480. This is why Segono, who obviously referred to these particular events, could not have written about them before this time.<sup>880</sup>

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<sup>880</sup> See: V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 2, doc. 48, pp. 76-80; [V. Makušev] B. Макушев, 'Прилози к српској историји XIV и XV века' [Contributions to the Serbian history of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries], *Glasnik Srbskog učenog društva* 32 (1871): doc. 12, pp. 204-8; L. Thallóczy, *Jajca. Oklevelek*, docs. 43, 44, pp. 51-8. Cf. [S. Ćirković] С. Ћирковић, 'Српска властела у борби за обнову Деспотовине' [Serbian aristocracy and their fight for the restoration of the Despotate] in *Историја српског народа*, vol. 2, ed. J. Kalić (Belgrade: Srpska književna zadruga, 1982), p. 386; Pálosfalvi, *From Nicopolis to Móhacs*, pp. 274-5. With respect to the data provided by the primary material, these events are best narrated in V. Klaić, *Povjest Hrvata*, pp. 122-3.



**Appendix 2 – Transcription of the contract between Venice and the people of Hum and Krajina, 29 November 1465 - ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 8, fol. 47r-48v**

Ser Victor Capello

Ser Laurentius Mauro

Sapientes consilii et

Sapientes ordinum

Contulerunt se ad presentiam dominii nostri duo oratores Craine, et narrata prius devotione sua erga hunc statum et voluntate quam semper propensam habuerunt essendi sub ditione et umbra nostra exhibuerunt infrascripta capitula cum responsionibus ad unum quodque ipsorum factis per Comitem nostrum Spaleti, supplicantes ut cum de voluntate Illustrissimi domini ducis Sthefani sese dederint dominio nostro, dignemur ipsos acceptare et capitula prefata atque responsiones benigne ratificare et approbare. Et licet superioribus diebus in hoc consilio fuerit captum de expediendis per Collegium capitulis ipsis, inspecta tamen rei gravitate. Vadit pars quod confirmatis capitulis et responsionibus per Comitem nostrum predictum factis, oratores ipsi equites facti, sicut postulant, et vestiti, sicut Collegium videbuntur, hinc grate debeant expediri

de parte 83; de non 2; nonsinceri 11

Comiti Spaleti et successoribus suis

Contulerunt se ad presentiam dominii nostri Egregii milites domini Vuchomir Cacichi et Iuanis Petrovich, oratores fidelium nostrorum Craine et Cruschexemie, et narrata devotione illorum erga dominium nostrum, ac voluntate quam semper propensam habuerunt consistendi sub ditione et umbra nostra, infrascripta capitula cum responsionibus vestris ad unumquodque ipsorum nobis exhibuerunt, rogantes ac supplicantes nomine et vice illorum qui in capitulis ipsis continentur, ut cum de voluntate Illustrissimi domini ducis Stephani sese dediderint dominio nostro, ipsos accipere ac capitula cum responsionibus prefatis benigne ratificare et approbare dignemur. Nos vero inspecta fide ipsorum et omnibus preterea consideratis ipsos fideles nostros acceptantes et benigne recipientes, cum nostro consilio rogatorum, capitula et responsiones vestras, sicut inferius videbitis confirmavimus et approbavimus. Tenor autem capitulorum talis est:

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti amen, et sanctissime dei genitricis virginis Marie, et Sancti Marci Evangeliste patroni et protectoris nostri, cui recommisimus animas

nostras, atque corpora et nostrorum descenduntium et successorum. Io Conte Xarcho Vlachovich, cum volunta del Illustrissimo domine Sthefano de Sancto Sava, et de vayvoda Iuanis nostro mazor fradello, et dei altri fradelli nostri Bartole et Tadio per nui, e per nostri heriedi e descendenti, vegnimo soto le alle dela Illustrissima Signoria de Venexia, mediante la vostra Magnificencia per nome de quella Iacomo Marcello Conte e capetanio de Spalato et etiam dio cum tuti i honorevoli zentilhomeni de Cruschaxemia e de Craina ad esser servidori de la prefata Illustrissima Signoria de Venexia perpetualmente et in secula seculorum, cum tuti nostri adherenti, et descendenti, cum questo modo; Io Conte Xarcho primo et ante omnia honorando vaivoda Iuanis, cum li altri nostri fradelli, e cum i honoreveli zentilhomeni de Cruschaxemia e de Craina, damo in avanti se sotometemo, deliberemo e promettemo esser servidori dela prefata Illustrissima Signoria de Venexia. E per tanto supplichemo essa Illustrissima Signoria che non debi lassar et abandonar nui prefati vaivoda e fradelli, et altri zentilhomeni de Cruschasemia e de Craina per complacentia de persona vivente, anzi ne debi aiutar in tute quelle chosse, che ne bisognera.

E primo chel ne sia confermado el nostro Capitaneado in terra de Cruschasemia, et ogni liberta la qual havemo havuto per li tempi passata.

Item che siamo confermadi in li nostri patrimonii, zoe castelli e ville, villani, Morlachi, et animali et in li altri beni et intrade nostre, secondo le antiche consuetudine sue, cum ogni iurisdiction, dignita, exemption, et preeminencia consueta.

Item che nesuno de quelli che sono stadi soto el nostro Capitaneado, e soto la nostra bailia, non sia tolto dala nostra liberta, secondo chome sono sta peravanti, e che quelli li quali fosseno sta dela nostra iurisdiction e pervegnirano in lavegnir, soto lombra dela Illustrissima Signoria debiano esser chome erano prima dela iurisdiction e subiection del nostro Capitaneado, pur essendo subditi e servidori dela Illustrissima Signoria.

Item pregemo, che se alguno non volesse sostenir le nostre leze antige, che nui li possiamo castigar secondo chome prima havemo havuto liberta e consuetudine.

Item chel sia in nostra liberta de tuor un Rector e Conte, el qual praxera a nui, pur sia dei servidori dela Illustrissima Signoria, el qual habi ducati CCC doro liberi de salario al anno, da esser cavato del pagamento de iperperi solo fin i paexi, se reduxeno, poi pageremo dele nostre borse.

Item domandemo ali honoreveli zentilhomeni de Cruschaxemia siano confermade tute bone usanze, le qual hano havuto per li tempi passati.

Item che la subiection e servir nostro ala prefata Illustrissima Signoria sia questo. Et primo da parte de vaivoda Ivanis, et de suo fradeli, e de tuti i honoreveli zentilhomeni de Cruschaxemia e de tuta la Comunita e universita de Cruschaxemia e de Craina, siamo tenuti cum le nostre persone, e cum i nostri servidori e cum tuta nostra zente debiano servir, secondo le nostre usanze, etiam sel bisognasse morir per honor dela nostra Illustrissima Signoria. Et che do parte dela gabella de Narenta sia dela Illustrissima Signoria et la terza de nui predicti vaivoda Ivanis e fradey. E che la Illustrissima Signoria habi un perpero per chasa al anno per tuto, cum reservation dele raxon de l'honorevelli zentilhomeni de Cruschexemia, secondo l'usanza vechia. Et similiter dei dacii uxadi, do parte sia dela Illustrissima Signoria, e la terza dei predicti vaivoda Ivanis e fradei.

Item che alguno non possa domandar ad alchun nostro homo, se non davanti de nui prima de quello, chel nostro homo fosse debitado in li nostri paexi.

Item se alugno de i nobeli homeni de Cruschaxemia o de Craina menera vin, o altra victualia in le terre dela Illustrissima Signoria, over a Veniexia che pagino quel datio pagano Spalatini.

Item domandemo che se fossano oppressi da infedelli, chome semo adesso, o da altra persona, che alhora la Illustrissima Signoria debi commandar a Polizani e Radobigliani, siano in nostro aiuto, ese piu aiuto ne bisognasse, chel ne sia dato.

Item chel ne sia concesso in el luogo de Machar in Craina suxo certa ponta apresso el mar, a nostre spexe far un ridotto e forteza, dove possiamo redur le chaxe e fameie et robe nostre, et salvare per ogni novita potesse occorrer.

Item supplichemo sia confermado ai nobel homeni de Crayna, Chacichi, Uchmisichi, et Baranavichi, e Iurevichi li lor patrimonii, secondo li tocha de raxon e chome teano de presente. E che Vochmir Caciti e fradel siano absolti de certa condanaxon contra de loro lim facta per el conte de Liesna.

Item che la villa de Igrani de Craina cum suo iurisdiction sia donata ai nobeli Conte Rados e Ivanis de Poliza, boni servidori dela Illustrissima Signoria per le fadige portate per honor dela Illustrissima Signoria, et ben nostro

Responsiones facte dictis capitulis per nobilem virum Iacobum Marcello Comitem Spaleti de quibus Comes Xarchus et alii nobiles remanserunt contenti, et tamen quod Illustrissima domiatio Venetiarum possit corrigere, minuere, et addere quecumque sibi videbuntur pro honore suo.

Ad primum Io Iacomo Marcello, Conte de Spalato, per nome dela mia Illustrissima Signoria de Veniexia, accepto in el numero dei subditi e servidori de quella i Spectabili e Nobili Vaivoda Ivanis, Conte Xarcho e fradei e tuti altri zentilhomeni de Cruschaxemia, et etiam tute altre persone, terre, ville, chaxali e luogi de dicto territorio de Cruschaxemia, confermando ogni iurisdiction de Capitaneado havesseno habuto, per el passato, e che hanno de presente i dicti Vaivoda Ivanis e fradi in el dicto territorio de Cruschaxemia cum ogni suo iursidition e preeminentia. I quai Vaivoda e fradei e nobeli et altri homeni, terre, ville, e caxalli del dicto paexe, tolemo a conservar, favorizar e defender da chadauna persona li volesse offender, subiugar o damnificar, maxime da Turchi, e tuti altri inimici dela Christianita, e dela prefata nostra Illustrissima Signoria, cum quella Carita e diligentia sono aiutati e defesi tuti i altri subditi e boni servidori desa Illustrissima Signoria.

Ad secundum confirmemo al prefato vaivoda Ivanis e fradelì e nobeli del territorio predicto tuti e chadauni beni de suo patrimonii, i quai de raxon li aspecta o podesse aspectar segundo le antige loro consuetudine, cum ogni iurisdiction, dignita, exemption e preementia usata.

Ad tercium siano contenti, che tuti quelli sono soto el Capitaneado de vaivoda Ivanis e fradey, rimagnano soto a quello, chome sono stadi per el passato, e che quelli se acquisterano siano de iurisdiction del dicto Capitaneado siano a quel sotoposti, chome erano peravanti.

Ad quartum che quelli sono sotoposto ai prefati vaivoda Ivanis e fradei siano da quelli recti e governadi segundo le lor uxanze antiche, e contrafazando, punidi et tamen vogliandosse aggravar, sempre possino haver ricorso dala Illustrissima Signoria.

Ad quintum dixemo che la nostra Illustrissima Signoria li dara Rector dei suo zentilhomeni, chome fa a tuti i altri suo subditi, bon e sufficiente, e che per questa prima volta loro possano dei predicti zentilhomeni de Veniexia e lezer uno li piaqui per anni do.

Ad sextum confirmemo ai nobel homeni de Cruschaxemia tute suo usanze antige dummodo non siano contra el stado et honor dela nostra Illustrissima Signoria.

Ad septimum siamo contenti, et acceptemo i predicti subditi, cum quella servitu et obligation se offeriscono cum le robe, e cum le persone. Dechiando che dela utilita dela gabella del sal de Narenta, e dei altri dacii de quel luogo, do parte sia dela Illustrissima Signoria, et la terza parte de vaivoda Ivanis e fradei sin tanto che ala prefata Illustrissima Signoria paresse altramente proveder ai predicti de altra intrada, over utilita quanta e la terza parte de dicta gabella e dacii. Et generaliter essa Illustrissima Signoria habi un perpero per fuogo per tuto dicto paexe.

Ad octavum, che li sia concesso chome se contien in el dicto capitolo.

Ad nonum, che li sia concesso, ut in capitulo continetur, conducentibus ipsis vinum, aut alia victualia nata in suis agris et territorio.

Ad Xm. Serano sempre aiutadi cum i favori e forze de Pollizani, Radobigliani, et de tuti i altri subditi dela Illustrissima Signoria.

Ad XI. Che li sia concesso a suo spexe in Machar far un reducto e forteza per conservation dele suo persone e dei suo beni.

Ad XII. Che ai nobeli de Craina, Chacichi, Uhasinici, Baranovich e Iurevichi, siano confermadi tuti suo beni e patrimonii chome loro tieno e possedeno de presente, secondo le lor usanze. Item non dubitemo la nostra Illustrissima Signoria comandara la condanaxon facta per el Conte de Lesina contra Vochmir e fradello, sia anichilada, non essendo per alchuna caxon contra el suo stado.

Ad XIII. Che a nobeli Conte Rados e Ivanis de Poliza per suo fede e bone opere sia donata la villa de Igrani de Craina, non derogando alicui speciali persone.

### Appendix 3 – An incomplete list of Matthias's border officials and sources for their biographies

Damian Horvat<sup>881</sup>

Blaise Magyar<sup>882</sup>

Ladislaus Terjéni<sup>883</sup>

Paul Kinizsi<sup>884</sup>

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<sup>881</sup> ASV, Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 67v; Senato, Deliberazioni, Segrete, reg. 26, fol. 27v-28r; MNL OL DL 66005, 98193, 46858, 30860, 16182, 65951, 88575, 98193, 46858; DF 233118, 237601; Iván Borsa, ed., *A Balassa család levéltára 1193-1526* [Archives of the Balassa family] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990), docs. 409, 410, pp. 140-1; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 134, 135, pp. 201-4; L. Thallóczy, 'Frammenti relativi,' pp. 14-17; M. Karbić, 'Od hrvatskog sitnog plemića do ugarskog velikaša i hrvatskog bana: Damjan Horvat od Litve i njegova obitelj' [From a pauper Croatian nobleman to the Hungarian magnate and the ban of Croatia: Damian Horvat of Litva and his family] in *Croato-hungarica. Uz 900 godina hrvatsko-mađarskih povijesnih veza. A horvát-magyar történelmi kapcsolatok 900 éve alkalmából*, eds. Milka Jauk-Pinhak, Csaba Kiss István Nyomárkay (Zagreb: Katedra za hungarologiju Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2002), pp. 119-25. See also: [N. Isailović] Н. Исаилович, 'Повеља бана Дамјана Хорвата Дубровчанима о слободи трговине' [The charter of ban Damian Horvat on trading liberties of the Ragusans], *Иницијал. Часопис за средњовековне студије* 2 (2014): pp. 241-53.

<sup>882</sup> ASV, Senato, deliberazioni, segrete, vol. 24, fol. 105v-106r, 116r-v, 117r; Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 47v-48r, 90r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 124, 128-129, 131, 132-135; MNL OL DL 15543, 84974, 84975, 84976, 19105, 15543, 56982, 15412, 15520, 15772, 16566, 26235; DF 213696, 213767, 213772, 213778, 213779; I. Borsa, ed., *Az Abaffy család levéltára 1247-1515. A Dancs család levéltára 1232-1525. A Hanvay család levéltára 1216-1525* [The archives of Abaffy, Dancs, and Hanvay families] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), doc. 214, p. 149; Ernő Kammerer, *Codex diplomaticus domus senioris comitum Zichy de Zich et Vásonkeő*, vol. 10 (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1907), doc. 230, pp. 320-6; Béla Iványi, ed., *Bártfa szabad királyi város levéltára, 1319-1526* [The archives of the free royal town of Bártfa] (Budapest: MTA, 1910), doc. 997, p. 156; I. Nagy, A. Nyáry, *Magyar diplomáciai emlékek*, vol. 2, doc. 118, 119, 120, 121, pp. 172-7; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 34, 36, 37, 40, 43, 60, pp. 46-7, 49-53, 56, 60-2, 88; L. Fenyvesi, 'Mátyás király törökverő hadvezérének származása' [The origins of King Matthias's anti-Ottoman commander], *Honismeret* 5-6 (1990), p. 38; R. Horváth, 'A Felső Részek kapitánysága a Mátyás-korban' [The captainship of the 'Upper Parts' in Matthias's age], *Századok* 137 (2003): pp. 953-4; Vedran Klaužer, 'Djelovanje Blaža Mađara, bana Bosne, Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije, u njegovom prvom mandate (1470.-1472.). Prilog poznavanju vršenja banske dužnosti u kasnom 15. stoljeću [Blaise Magyar, the ban of Bosnia, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia in his first mandate (1470-1472). A contribution to the studies on the *banati* in the late fifteenth century], *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti HAZU* 30 (2012), pp. 123-44.

<sup>883</sup> HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 152; MNL OL DL 66601, 50083, 13428, 44254, 13428, 14120, 13985, 13987, 45570, 25248, 44554, 45570, 58226; DF 289135, fol. 144v-145r, 242919, 236976; Josip Barbarić, Josip Kolanović, ed., *Monumenta historiam Sibenici et eius districtus illustrantia*, vol. 1. *Diplomatarium Sibenicense* (Šibenik: Muzej grada Šibenika, 1986); docs. 162-4; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, doc. 23, pp. 28-30; L. Thallóczy and S. Barabás, *Codex diplomaticus comitum de Blagay* (Budapest: MTA, 1897), doc. 200, pp. 377-80; Borbála Kelényi, 'Három Várdai-feleség végrendelete a késő középkorból' [Three Várdai wives' wills from the late middle ages] in *Micae Mediaevales*, vol. 2, ed. Bence Péterfi et al. (Budapest: ELTE, 2012), pp. 167-8; N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 2, p. 98.

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<sup>886</sup> MNL OL DL 18483, 18487, 18615; DF 285283; S. Andrić, 'Srednjovjekovni Šarengard i njegovi gospodari' [Medieval Šarengard and its lords], *Povijesni prilozi* 23 (2002): pp. 50-2; P. Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, s.v. 'Kacsics nem, Geréb (vingárti)'; V. Fraknoi, *Szilágyi Mihály, Mátyás király nagybátyja* [Michael Szilágyi, King Matthias's uncle] (Budapest: Franklin, 1913), p. 102; Danijel Jelaš, 'Rekonstrukcija srednjovjekovne urbane mreže Vukovske županije na temelju analize centralnih funkcija' [The reconstruction of the medieval urban network of the county of Valkó on the basis of the analysis of centralities], unpublished PhD dissertation (Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2018), pp. 140-5; A. Kubinyi, *Matthias Rex*, pp. 18-9; T. Pálosfalvi, 'Szegedtől Újvárig,' p. 363; N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, pp. 38, 84, 86, 95; N. Tóth, 'Magyarország késő-középkori főpapi archontológiája (1458–1526) (Érsekek, püspökök, segédpüspökök, vikáriusok, valamint jövedelemkezelők)' [Archontology of Late medieval Hungarian prelates], manuscript (Budapest, 2014), p. 33.

<sup>887</sup> MNL OL DL 55244, 27335, 16388; DF260774, DF 292991, fol. 210r (and related MSS. See the first chapter); Samu Borovszky, *Csanád vármegye története 1715-ig* [History of the county of Csanád until 1715], vol. 1 (Budapest: MTA, 1896), pp. 108-9; V. Fraknoi, *Mátyás király levelei*, vol. 1, docs. 259, 281, 381-3, 409; H. Радойчић, 'Пет писама,' pp. 362-3; Z. Daróczy, 'Dóczyak és Nagylucseyek' [The Dóczy and the Nagylucsey], *Turul* (1938): pp. 82-3; P. Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, s.v. 'Dóci'; Sándor Márki, 'A Dóczyak Aradban' [The Dóczy in Arad], *Turul* (1891): p. 188; N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 140; G. Wenzel, *Az alsómagyarországi bányavárosok küzdelmei a nagy-lucsei Dóczyakkal* [Struggles of the mining towns of Lower Hungary with the Dóczy of Nagylucse] (Budapest: MTA, 1876), p. 7.

<sup>888</sup> HR-HDA, 2-1-44, 45; MNL OL DL 19031, 17720, 17618, 17578, 17989; DF 268098, 252069; Vincze Bunyitay, *A váradai püspökség története*, vol. 1. *A váradai püspökök a püspökség alapításától 1566. évig* [The history of the Bishopric of Várad. Bishops of Várad from the establishment of the bishopric to 1566] (Nagyvárad, 1883), p. 304; E. Laszowski, 'Zaključci hrvatskog sabora u Zdencima od 20. januara 1478. pogledom na obranu Hrvatske od Turaka' [The conclusions of the Croatian diet in Zdenci from 20 January 1478 about the defence of Croatia against the Turks], *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog zemaljskog arkiva* 18/2 (1916): pp. 81-7; Ede Reisz, 'A Geregye nemzetség,' pts. 1 and 2 [The Geregye kindred], *Turul* (1900): pp. 52-65 and 117-33; especially pp. 117 ff.

<sup>889</sup> NAZ, *Acta capituli antiqua*, 2/41/15, 2/41/26, 2/49/6; MNL OL DL 27335, 50084, 88575; Josip Lučić, 'Banovac Andrija Banfi. Prilog kronologiji hrvatske banologije' [Vice-banus Andrew Banfi, a Contribution to the Chronology of Croatian Banology], *Arhivski vjesnik* 3 (1960): doc. 1, pp. 402-3. It is important to emphasize that, although Lučić correctly transcribed documents, he was wrong about Andrew's background. For a more recent, and correct view, see: Livia Magina, 'La famille Danfy de Duboz,' *Banatica* 20 (2010): pp. 21-47; cf. Ioan Drăgan, *Nobilimea românească din Transilvania între anii 1440 – 1514* [Romanian nobility from Transylvania between 1440 and 1514] (Bucharest: Editura Enciclopedică, 2000), p. 294; N. Tóth et al, eds., *Magyarország*, vol. 1, p. 151.

<sup>890</sup> BAV, Ottob. gr. 469, pt. B; MNL OL DL 29533, 29844, 86002; DF 266137; I. Biliarsky, 'Une page,' pp. 291-305; I. Drăgan, 'Un căpitan Român pe frontul antiotoman: Ladislaus Ficior de Ciula (?-1492)' [A Romanian captain at the anti-Ottoman front: Ladislaus Ficior de Ciula], *Acta Musei Napocensis* 22-23 (1985-1986), pp. 261-6 (with significant errors); *idem*, 'Les nobles surnommés More au service de la famille Hunyadi,' in *Matthias Rex. Hungary at the Dawn of Renaissance*, <http://renaissance.elte.hu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Ioan-Dragan-Les-nobles-surnommés-More-au-service-de-la-famille-Hunyadi.pdf> - accessed on 9 June 2019; T. Fedeles, 'Egy Jagelló-kori humanista pályaképe. Csulai Mór Fülöp (1476-1526)' [A sketch of a humanist from the Jagiello period. Phillip Mór Csulai], in *idem*, *Püspökök, prépostok, kanonokok. Fejezetek Pécs középkori egyháztörténetéből* [Bishops, provosts, canons: Chapters from the medieval church history of Pécs] (Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem Történeti Intézet, 2010), p. 59, originally published in *Levéltári Közlemények* 78 (2007): pp. 25-84; Pál Török, 'Középkori magyar nemes családok Erdélyben' [Medieval noble families in Erdely], *Magyar Családtörténeti Szemle* 9 (1943): p. 106.

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Paul Tár<sup>892</sup>

Friar Alexander<sup>893</sup>

Peter Macskási<sup>894</sup>

Ambrose Török<sup>895</sup>

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<sup>891</sup> MNL OL DL 27341, 27494, 68070; J. Gelcich, *Diplomatarium*, p. 800; cf. Ferenc Fodor, *A Jászság életrajza* [History of Jászság] (Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1942), p. 112, *passim*.

<sup>892</sup> One of the most interesting (if not the most interesting) among Matthias's officials, that certainly deserves a separate study: ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 124r, 125r-126r, 135r-v, 140r-v, 143v, 149r; Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 9, fol. 132r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 178-181; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 1, n. 23b, sv. 12, n. 182-183, 187, 188, 193; MNL OL DL 68070, 50373, 88234, 88558, 88657, 14668, 14973; R. Fulin, *Errori vecchi*, pp. 115-20; V. Lamanski, *Secrets d'état de Venise*, pp. 18-23; *idem*, 'L'Assassinat politique à Venise,' pp. 105-20; Š. Ljubić, *Listine*, vol. 10, doc. 464, pp. 440-2; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 84, 85, 88, 89, 96, pp. 119-20, 121-3, 127, 128-9, 137-8; L. de Mas Latrie, 'De l'empoisonnement politique,' pp. 197-259; P. Preto, *I servizi segreti*, pp. 330, 340; M. Šunjić, 'Mletačka zavjera,' pp. 283-5.

<sup>893</sup> A Franciscan friar, an associate of John of Capistrano, and later the abbot of Telki, a similarly interesting, and quite mysterious figure, who seems to have governed the southernmost Croatian/Dalmatian regions along the Krka in Matthias's name and to have been the king's agent for Ragusa, but has thus far been completely neglected in historiography: AA SS, Oct., vol. 10, pp. 370, 379, 391, 392, 399; ASV, Senato, Deliberazioni, Secrete, reg. 25, fol. 165r-v; reg. 29, fol. 14r-v; Senato, Deliberazioni, Mar, reg. 11, fol. 18v; Consiglio dei dieci, Deliberazioni miste, reg. 18, fol. 117r; reg. 17, fol. 143v; HR-DADU, *Acta Consilii rogatorum*, vol. 19, fol. 54r; vol. 20, fol. 104r; HR-DAZD-371, kut. 6, sv. 12, n. 201; MNL OL DL 45512, 45515, 45520, 45562, 45573; Leonhard Lemmens, 'Victoriae mirabilis divinitus de Turcis habitae, duce V. B. Patre Fratre Ioanne de Capistrano, series descripta per Fratrem Ioannem de Tagliacotio, illius socium et comitem, atque beato Iacobo de Marchia directa,' *Acta Ordinis fratrum minorum* 25 (1906): p. 64; Franz Miklosich, ed., *Monumenta Serbica spectantia historiam Serbiae, Bosnae, Ragusii* (Vienna: Braumüller, 1858), doc. 403, p. 494; J. Radonić, *Acta et diplomata*, docs. 324, 336, pp. 712-3, 734-5; D. Salihović, *Monumentorum variorum*, docs. 46, 109, 143, 236, 239, pp. 65, 157, 214, 355-6, 360-1; L. Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, vol. 12, pp. 345, 361, 387-8, 399. Cf. S. Andrić, *Čudesna svetoga Ivana Kapistrana - povijesna i tekstualna analiza* [The miracles of St John of Capistrano – a historical and textual analysis] (Slavonski Brod-Osijek: Hrvatski institut za povijest, Matica hrvatska, 1999), pp. 59, 63.

<sup>894</sup> MNL OL DL 45759, 46024, 19073, 18604, 101034, 101036, 107078, 101096, 103949, 32650, 101075, 72054; Josip Adamček, Ivan Kampuš, *Popisi i obračuni poreza u Hrvatskoj u XV. i XVI* [Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century records of tax in Croatia] (Zagreb: Institut za hrvatsku povijest, 1976), pp. 1-2; cf. V. Klaužer, 'Petar Tarnok od Mačkaša (de Machkas), kapetan Senjske kapetanije (1486. – 1492.)' [Peter Tarnok of Mačkaš (de Machkas), captain of the Captaincy of Senj] in *Ascendere Historiam. Zbornik u čast Milana Kruheka*, ed. Marija Karbić et al. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2014), pp. 81-94; and a far superior piece - Adrian Magina, 'Constituirea și evoluția domeniului familiei nobiliare Măciș de Rapolt (1478-1520)' [The formation and development of the domain of the noble family Măciș de Rapolt (1478-1520)], *Banatica* 20 (2010): pp. 109-30; T. Pálosflavi, *The Noble Elite in the County of Körös (Križevci) 1400-1526* (Budapest: MTA, 2014), pp. 106-9.

<sup>895</sup> MNL OL DL 12030, 13829, 88296, 88475, 88349, 88591, 12030, 68986, 15268, 15552, 15624, 88382, 88544, 17443, 88647; DF 255788, 233105, 241745, 228644; Jenő Házi, *Sopron szabad királyi város története*, pt. 1, vol. 5 (Sopron: Székely & co., 1926), doc. 197, pp. 163-4; Imre Nagy, Dezső Véghelyi, Gyula Nagy, eds., *Zala vármegye története. Oklevéltár* [History of the county of Zala. Documents], vol. 2 (Budapest, 1890), doc. 300, pp. 577-9; D. Salihović, 'Nonnulla documenta,' doc. 2, p. 408; Antal Áldásy, 'Az enyingi Török család címeres levele 1481-ből' [The grant of arms for the Török of Enying family from 1481], *Turul* (1897): pp. 33-4; P. Engel, *Középkori magyar genealógia*, s.v. 'Török (enyingi)'; Z. Daróczy, 'Néhány dunántúli család eredete és leszármazása' [Origins and descent of some Transdanubian families], *Turul* (1908): pp. 84-6; A. Kubinyi, 'A budai vár udvarbírói hivatala, 1458–1541 (kísérlet az országos és a királyi magánjövendelmek szétválasztására)' [The udvarbíró of the Buda castle, 1458-1541], *Levéltári Közlemények* 35 (1964): p. 93; *idem*, 'A kaposújvári uradalom,' *passim*; Béla Németh, *Szigetvár története* (Pécs: Pécsi irodalmi és könyvnyomdai részvénytársaság, 1903), pp. 49-69; Martyn Rady, *Nobility, Land, and Service in Medieval Hungary* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp. 116-7; István Szabó, 'Középkori levéltártörténeti adatok,' *Levéltári Közlemények*, 10



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(1932): p. 125; József Bessenyei's views, in his *Enyingi Török Bálint* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1994), pp. V-VI, should be avoided, as they are not correct.

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