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GUARDING SULTAN MURAD IV'S FRONTIER: AN ATTEMPT AT CONTEXTUALISING THE HUNGARIAN GARRISONS AROUND 1630

Mahmut Halef CEVRİOĞLU*

Abstract: Tangible evidence regarding Ottoman military entity in the early modern period is provided by the frontier garrisons. Therefore, studies of Ottoman military history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have started to focus on the garrisons on the Hungarian frontier. The present study undertakes a similar attempt but with a particular focus on the border garrisons stationed in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623-1640). Both provincial (pay lists and treasury registers) and central registers (central treasury register in Istanbul) provide us with data that render it possible to have a rough idea regarding the garrisons troops. Thus, this study aims at a comparison of the Hungarian frontier troops with those of other Ottoman provinces in Europe. Furthermore, a similar comparison will be made by comparing Ottoman frontiers with the troops stationed across the border, i.e., the troops of the Ottoman rival states. As a result, the present study argues that the Ottoman administration placed the lion's share of its military entity/garrison troops on the western frontier against the Habsburgs.

Key Words: Frontier, Garrison, Hungary, the Habsburgs, Military Force.

SULTAN IV. MURAD DÖNEMİNDE OSMANLI KALELERİ AVRUPA'DA HUDUT BOYLARI: 1630 CİVARI MACAR GARNİZONLARINI ANLAMLANDIRMAK

Öz: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Yeniçağ askeri varlığına dair en somut delilleri, serhat garnizonları teşkil etmektedir. Bu sebepten ötürü olsa gerek ki, on altı ve on yedinci yüzyıla dair şimdiye kadar yapılan Osmanlı askeri tarihi çalışmaları özellikle Macaristan serhattindeki garnizonlara odaklanmıştır. Mevcut çalışma da benzer bir teşebbüste bulunmakta, ancak bunu hususi olarak Sultan IV. Murad (h. 1623-1640) döneminde Rumeli vilayetlerinin garnizonlarını mercek altına alarak yapmaktadır. Gerek taşra muhasebesinin

(mevacip ve hazine) gerekse merkezi muhasebenin (hazine ruznamçeleri) sunmuş olduğu veriler, garnizon sayılarına dair bir fikir edinmeyi mümkün kılmaktadır. Böylece, Macar hududunu diğer eyalet garnizonlarıyla kıyaslamak hedeflenmektedir. Literatür el verdiği ölçüde hududun karşı tarafında yer alan (Osmanlı rakiplerinin barındırdığı) askeri kuvvetlere değinmek de benzer bir kıyaslamayı mümkün kılacaktır. Sonuç olarak mevcut çalışma, Osmanlı askeri varlığının en gözle görülür kısmının Habsburglara karşı batı serhattinde konuşlandırıldığını öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Serhat, Garnizon, Macaristan, Habsburglar, Askeri Güç.

Introduction

In the early modern period, when borders were porous and not strictly delineated, cross-border raids were somewhat ordinary occurrences. Especially between the Habsburg- and Ottoman-held territories, the clashes between the two parties were rather normalised, and these skirmishes (the so-called *Kleinkrieg*)¹ did not evoke the intervention of the central armies. The relatively stable period of peace between 1606 and 1660 on the Ottoman western frontier witnessed a large number of these clashes.

During one such expedition, in 1623, the Ottoman governor of Bosnia undertook an operation with around twenty thousand troops against the Habsburg-held Hungarian territory in a bid to support the Transylvanian Prince against the Habsburgs.² Similarly in 1626, the Ottoman governor of Buda took to the field against the Habsburgs at the head of some fifteen thousand troops with the aim of helping the Transylvanian Prince Gabor Bethlen, who was again waging his war against the Habsburgs in Royal Hungary.³ So, if the European armies that fought *proper* pitched battles during the Thirty Years War put together less than twenty thousand soldiers

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¹ Gábor Ágoston, “Macaristan’da Osmanlı - Habsburg Serhaddi (1541-1699): Bir Mukayese”, *Osmanlı’da Savaş ve Serhad*, (ed. and trans.) Kahraman Şakul, Timaş, İstanbul 2013, p. 203-224. The author would like to thank Dr. Ömer Gezer (Ankara) for his helpful remarks and suggestions for the text.

² Nedim Zahirovic, *Murteza Pascha von Ofen zwischen Panegyrik und Historie: Eine literarisch-historische Analyse eines osmanischen Wesirspiegels von Nergisi (El-vasfı l-kâmil fî-ahvâli l-vezîri l-âdil)*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 2010, p. 52. The Ottoman governor in question was Sarhoş İbrahim Pasha (Memibegovic).

³ Dávid Angyal, “Gabriel Bethlen”, *Revue Historique* 158 (1928), 19-80, p. 65-66: the governor mentioned herein is Murteza Pasha; the Transylvanian Prince Bethlen had also purportedly brought along his thirty-thousand-strong army in this particular campaign.

(such as the Swedish army at Lützen in 1632), could the Ottoman provincial forces be so crowded?⁴ And if the Ottoman raiding parties were indeed so sizeable, what would have been the total number of the Hungarian garrison troops which obviously contributed to the formation of these rather crowded Ottoman provincial expeditions?

Lucky for that question, scholarly attention has been directed towards the formation, financing and composition of border garrisons throughout the last decades. In 2000, Gábor Ágoston drew probably the first picture in English of the Ottoman border system in Hungary for the period concerned, whereas Sadık Müfit Bilge made a similar endeavour in Turkish in the same year.⁵ Mark L. Stein's monograph, despite its rather all-embracing title, similarly focused on the Ottoman fortresses in Hungary in the seventeenth century.⁶ Particularly important for the field is, however, Klára Hegyi's majestic work published in English in 2018,⁷ since she focused on each period of Hungarian fortress organisation in every Ottoman administrative unit during the one-and-half century Ottoman rule.

The situation and the significance of the garrisons at the time the aforementioned raids were staged are, however, not as well expressed as, let's say, those during the second half of the seventeenth century. Ágoston's closest figure regarding the four Hungarian provinces (Buda, Temesvar, Kanizsa and Eger) dates from 1610's, whereas Hegyi similarly provided rough figures regarding the 1620's.⁸ The 1620's and 1630's, that is, the

⁴ I must thank Günhan Börekçi (Central European University) who had brought up this issue to my attention during the defence of my MA thesis in 2015. For a general work where figures of Lützen (where both the Swedes and their enemies fielded 19.000 troops) and other battles of the period can be consulted, see: Geoffrey Parker (ed.), *The Thirty Years' War*, London-New York 1984 (e-book 2006), p. 121.

⁵ Gábor Ágoston, "The Costs of the Ottoman Military System in Hungary", *Ottomans, Hungarians and Habsburgs in Central Europe*, Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds.), Brill, Leiden 2000, pp. 195-228; Sadık Müfit Bilge, "Macaristan'da Osmanlı Hakimiyetinin ve İdari Teşkilatının Kuruluşu ve Gelişmesi", *Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi (OTAM)*, 11 (2000), p. 33-81.

⁶ Mark L. Stein, *Guarding the Frontier: Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe*, Tauris, London-New York 2007.

⁷ Klára Hegyi, *The Ottoman Military Organization in Hungary: Fortresses, Fortress Garrisons and Finances*, Berlin 2018. The forerunner of her work must also be referred to Klára Hegyi, *A Török Hódoltság Várai És Várkatonasága* (in 3 volumes), Budapest 2007. She also had a condensed forerunner of this work as a book chapter, Klára Hegyi, "The Ottoman network of fortresses in Hungary", *Ottomans, Hungarians and Habsburgs in Central Europe*, Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds.), Brill, Leiden 2000, pp. 163-193.

⁸ Gábor Ágoston, "The Costs", pp. 208-209; Klára Hegyi, *The Ottoman Military*, p. 170-171.

period corresponding to Sultan Murad IV's rule therefore need to be highlighted more in this respect.⁹

1. The Hungarian Frontier

But before delving into the Ottoman garrisons, one must first ask whom they were defending against? In his review of Mark Stein's book, Ágoston pointed out to the importance of providing "comparative information related to the opposing Habsburg border forts" in assessing Ottoman defence organisation.¹⁰ Hence, it would be useful to start by suggesting a number for the military entity across the Ottoman castles, since there was a well-developed Habsburg defence system since the sixteenth century.¹¹ However, a caveat must be placed beforehand that the numbers for the Habsburg side of the border at this period seem to lack even the questionable exactitude of the Ottoman side.

Kiss has pointed out to a contemporary *opinio* by Miklos Esterházy, the Governor General of Habsburg Hungary (1625-1645), which suggested that the six defensive regions (or captaincies) in the Hungarian Kingdom in 1641 harboured 22.182 troops.¹² Pálffy, on the other hand, argued that during the Thirty Years War, this figure must actually be lower given the ongoing military operation of the Habsburgs in Europe, bringing down the number of their troops on the Hungarian defensive line to around 17.000.¹³ This must drive us to the conclusion that the Habsburg forces fluctuated around 20.000, suggesting that Ottomans should have had at least an equal number of defendants on their side of the border, too.

198

⁹ For fresh and heavily documented studies covering time frames before and after this period see: Göksel Baş, "XV. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Balkanlarda Osmanlı Serhad Organizasyonunun Oluşumu: Kaleler Ağı, Askeri Personel, Finansman ve Mali Külfet", *Güneydoğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 33 (2019), p. 151-181; Ömer Gezer, *Kale ve Nefer: Habsburg Sınırında Osmanlı Askeri Gücünün Yeniden Örgütlenmesi (1699-1715)*, Kitap, İstanbul 2020.

¹⁰ Gábor Ágoston, "Mark. L. STEIN. *Guarding the Frontier. Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe*", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 52.1 (2009), 159-163, p. 159.

¹¹ Géza Pálffy, "The Origins and Development of the Border Defence System Against the Ottoman Empire in Hungary (Up to the Early Eighteenth Century)", *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, (eds.) Pál Fodor and Géza Dávid, Brill, Leiden 2000, 3-70, p. 5.

¹² I. N. Kiss, "Die ökonomische und soziale Basis der Verteidigung gegen die Türken in Ungarn im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert", *Beiträge zur Geschichte der frühneuzeitlichen Garnisons- und Festungsstadt*, (eds.) H.W. Hermann and F. Irisgler, Minerva-Verlag Thinner & Nolte, Saarbrücken 1983, 173-198, p. 187.

¹³ Pálffy, "The Origins and Development", p. 59.

To start with Buda/Budin, which functioned in a way as the capital of the Hungarian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, we can draw our data from a pay list from the Topkapı Palace archives, dated August 1628. According to this *mevacib* register, the garrisons of Buda were manned by 7.870 troops.¹⁴ Additionally, a French travelogue similarly observed a rounded figure close to the one in the register, 8.100 men for 1621.¹⁵ Nevertheless, since the *mevacib* register referred to herein (BOA, TSMA D, 216) excludes the local janissaries, the total number rises to some 9.800 soldiers with their inclusion into the sum.¹⁶

Even though it shared no tangent border with the Habsburgs in the first half of the seventeenth century, Timisoara/Temeşvar was still integrated into the Ottoman frontier zone in Hungary. Hence it must also be counted as a part of the defensive system: in a provincial treasury register including the summary pay list of the garrisons for the year 1629 (and similarly in a payroll register -*mukabele defteri*- dated 1634), the number of recorded soldiers was over 3700.¹⁷ The third Hungarian province, Kanizsa/Kanije, was garrisoned with around 3.800 soldiers at the time.¹⁸

For the province of Eger/Eğri, there is unfortunately hardly any actionable data for this period. But if we accept the rough figure of 3.400 provided for the first decade of the century,¹⁹ we come up with a total number: For the years 1628-29, the four provinces which constituted the Ottoman Hungary were protected by a defensive force of 20.800 local soldiers. However, this was not the whole picture.

¹⁴ [Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi] BOA, [Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi, Defterler] TSMA D, 216: 1 Muharrem 1038. This register was employed by Mark Stein (*Guarding the Frontier*,) but seems to have escaped Hegyi's attention as her works suggest.

¹⁵ Sr. D. Choisy, *Voyage de Levant fait par le commandement du Roy en l'année 1621 par le Sr D. Choisy*, Adrian Taupinart, Paris 1624, pp. 42-43.

¹⁶ BOA, [Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler] MAD.d 7339, p. 28 points out to 1425 local janissaries. This register is the chronological predecessor (1628-1629) of the provincial treasury register kept in the Austrian National Archives (ÖNB, Cod. Mixt. 636). I should express my gratitude to YÖK (Turkish Institution for Higher Education) for the doctoral research grant (YUDAB) I benefited from during my research in the Austrian archives and National Library (ÖNB) in 2018-2019, along with Claudia Römer, Özgür Kolçak and Cahit Telci for their help in the process.

¹⁷ BOA, [Maliyeden Müdevver Defterler] MAD.d 15983. The register for 1634 records 3748 troops: ÖNB, Cod. Mixt. 616, f. 18b.

¹⁸ BOA, [Kamil Kepeci defter] KK.d 1920, p. 30-34. The register covers the payments for the Lunar year 1038 (1628/1629).

¹⁹ Figures are for the year 1606: Gábor Ágoston, "The Costs", p. 209; Klára Hegyi, *The Ottoman Military*, p. 537-547.

In order to reach a total number, the janissaries of the Porte (*yeniçeriyân-ı dergâh-ı 'âli*) and other central troops must also be taken into consideration, as they were stationed in garrison duty with triennial service:²⁰ Since their salaries were not paid by the local treasuries, it is hard to come across their names in either the provincial treasury records or in the pay lists. These units, which were stationed only in the major castles (namely Buda/Budin, Esztergom/Estergon, Székesfehérvár/Ístolni Belgrad, Eger/Eğri, Kanizsa/Kanije and Timisoara/Temeşvar), received their pay from the central treasury in Istanbul, with particular lists prepared for that purpose.

One of these janissary registers points out to a total of 1.259 janissaries serving in these Hungarian castles for the period of late 1627-early 1628.²¹ The number, however, falls down to 1.020 for the next three-monthly-payment (*ulufe*) period, and therein lies the tricky part: never do we seem to have consecutive or overlapping payment lists with congruent total figures. Even when two separate registers record the payments for the same companies (*bölük* and *cema'at*), the figures fluctuated between 1.000 and 1.500. To make things worse, separate documents addressing the same period could provide separate data: for example, the janissary register for March-May 1629 period points to 1.098 janissaries sent to Hungary, whereas an isolated document suggests payment for 1.406 janissaries for the exact period.²²

200

In any case, at a time when the Ottoman western front was relatively stable and peaceful in comparison to what it had been at the beginning of the century, we can assume that an average of 1.200 janissaries of the Porte served in the Hungarian castles. Under these circumstances, when we combine this average with the above-mentioned 20.800 local troops, there

²⁰ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapıkulu Ocakları I: Acemi Ocağı ve Yeniçeri Ocağı*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 1988, p. 325.

²¹ BOA, [Bâb-ı Defteri Yeniçeri Kalemî Defteri] D.YNÇ.d 33748: Payments for MASAR 1037 (September-November 1627) and RECEC 1037 (early 1628).

²² BOA, D.YNÇ.d 33752 covers 1038 MASAR, RECEC and REŞEN period [September 1628 to May 1629] and suggests that 1.098 janissaries were serving in Ottoman Hungary. The document in question is BOA, [İbnülemin- Askeriye] İE.AS [3] 246: Reşen 1038 (March-May 1629). This fluctuation could stem from a variety causes, such as a quick displacement of certain troops to other border areas (Black Sea), their return to the capital or, perhaps, existence of a totally different register for their particular units. In 1630, when the janissary companies were to a great extent substituted, we observe payments for 1.143 soldiers: BOA, MAD.d 7089, payments for RECEC 1039. In the daily central treasury register (*Büyük Ruznamçe Kalemî*) dated 1632-33, the number of janissaries sent to Ottoman Hungary had risen to 1.586, BOA, KK.d 1823 (pp. 115, 146, 165). This can be rounded up to 1600 by including the fifteen artillery troops (*dergâh-ı 'âli topçusu*) sent to Buda and Kanizsa (p. 141).

were at least 22.000 garrison soldiers around 1628 in Ottoman Hungary. Nonetheless, this should not imply coming to the conclusion that Ottoman and Habsburg sides were protected by equal forces.²³

The Habsburg-held Royal Hungary was not surrounded solely by the Hungarian provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The southern portions of the kingdom, covering modern Slovenia and Croatia, were also constituent elements of the Kingdom of Hungary as the captaincies of Warasdin (Slavonia) and Karlovac (Croatia), which were neighbouring along a relatively short strip of land another major Ottoman province, Bosnia. That is to say, Bosnian garrisons must also be evaluated in this defensive system, especially when the anti-Habsburg raids of the Bosnian governor generals are taken into consideration.²⁴

The Bosnian Province had a garrison surpassing even that of Buda during the period under question. Given the fact that Bosnia had quite a large territory which lay adjacent to the Venetian Republic and the Habsburgs at the same time, this was understandable. A pay list dated to 1613 registered 10.302 garrison troops,²⁵ while another in 1626 points out to 10.264.²⁶ Lastly, a provincial treasury register from the first half of the 1630's suggests that this figure had now risen by a thousand, reaching up to 11.473.²⁷

²³ The ratio of infantry/cavalry was highly skewed in favour of the infantry on the Ottoman Hungarian frontier, Akto, p. 61-66. For my own findings regarding the five major Ottoman settlements, see the appendices below.

²⁴ Gunther E. Rothenberg, *Antemurales Christianitatis: The Austrian Military Border in Croatia, 1522-1749*. Ph.d Thesis, Illinois University 1958, p. 105.

²⁵ BOA, TSMA D 1356. Even though it is dated 5 Ramazan 1036 (20 May 1627), this *deFTER* is annotated as the copy of the survey commissioned by Karakaş Mehmed Paşa (Bosnian governor between November 1612 and 1614), f. 1r. The sum of the garrison soldiers is provided at the end of the register, f. 203v.

²⁶ BOA, MAD.d 1942, s. 347: Evasıt- ı Muharrem 1036 [1-10 Ekim 1626].

²⁷ Said Öztürk, "1042-1045 (1632-1635) Yıllarına Ait Bosna Eyaleti Bütçesi", *Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 1 (January 1999), 325-337, p. 336.

Within the larger framework of the Habsburg defence system, in return, the Croatian-Warasdin captaincies claimed a rather humble portion in terms of their garrison numbers (around 3.500 troops). It implies that a comparison with the Bosnian garrisons places them on quite a disadvantageous standing.²⁸ Hence, even when we fail to take into account the forces sent by the Porte to reinforce the Bosnian frontier,²⁹ the total number of garrisoned

²⁸ It has been formerly argued this discrepancy had emerged during the sixteenth century and the number of the Croatian garrisons remained around two thousand for a hundred and sixty years after 1577, see: Sanja Lazanin and Nataša Štefanec, "Habsburg Military Conscription and Changing Realities of the Triplex Confinium (16th-18th Centuries)", (eds.) Drago Roksandić and Nataša Štefanec, *Constructing Border Societies on the Triplex Confinium – International Project Conference Papers 2 "Plan and Practice. How to Construct a Border Society? The Triplex Confinium c. 1700-1750"*, (Graz, December 9-12, 1998), Budapest 2010, 91-116, p. 95-96. Karl Kaser, in an analogous manner, attracts attention to this stability by noting down the Warasdin garrison as 1600 troops and the Croatian around 1700 in the second half of the seventeenth century, Karl Kaser, *Freier Bauer und Soldat –Die Militarisierung der agrarischen Gesellschaft in der kroatisch-slawnischen Militärgrenze (1535-1881)*. Böhlau, Vienna 1997, p. 109, 168-69.

²⁹ Neither in the central treasury nor in the janissary registers could any references regarding the commissioning of the Porte janissaries to Bosnia could be detected for this period. Similarly, it has been suggested that these janissaries were hard to come by in the eighteenth century Bosnian registers, too, Ömer Gezer, "Bosna Serhaddinde Osmanlılar: Karlofça Antlaşması'ndan Sonra Bosna Eyaleti'ndeki Osmanlı Ordusu Üzerine Bir Analiz", (ed.) Aşkın Koyuncu, *Uluslararası Balkan Tarihi ve Kültürü Sempozyumu, 6-8 Ekim 2016, Çanakkale, Bildiriler, Cilt I*, Çanakkale 2017, 338-347, p. 344.



Map 1: Ottoman Provinces and Tributaries in Europe

troops on the Ottoman side of the Habsburg-Ottoman frontier was about 30.000.

2. The Black Sea Frontier

An overview of the further extensions of the Ottoman defence system in Europe reveals more decidedly the importance of the Hungarian frontier.³⁰ If the confines against the Habsburgs are accepted as the Ottoman western front, the provinces of Özi (Silistra) and Kefe (Caffa) were the northern frontier, beyond which lay the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Cossacks. Especially the latter caused great concern for the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the seventeenth century,³¹ which somehow rendered the northern defensive line more important than before.

³⁰ Lately, a promising attempt at comparing the eastern and the western frontier zones has been made: Deniz Armağan Akto, *Ottoman Fortresses and Garrisons in the Hungarian and the Eastern Frontiers (1578-1664)*, MA Thesis, METU, Ankara, 2019.

³¹ Mihnea Berindei, "La Porte Ottomane Face aux Cosaques Zaporogues 1600-1637", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 1/3 (1977) p. 273-307.

Three decades ago, in 1989, Victor Ostapchuk suggested that some 3.300 soldiers manned the Silistra garrisons during 1620's.³² Nonetheless, this figure must be approached with some discretion: Ostapchuk retrieves his numbers from the land survey 748 (BOA, Tapu Tahrir 748),³³ which lists numerous towns and castles in the norther frontier (such as Bender or Akkerman) as belonging to the province of Silistra, while they should have been administratively listed under the province of Kefe.³⁴

It is possible to reach a more healthy consideration by turning to the fiscal records of the era: northern castles' garrison payments were recorded in the central treasury registers in Istanbul even though the funds were locally procured (this was contrary to the case in Hungary, where the garrisons' local troops were paid from the local treasury, which was, however, not reflected in the central treasury registers). Hence, records gathered from central treasury registers for the northern garrisons are made us of in order to calculate the size of Silistra and Kefe garrisons. Furthermore, these figures also combined with the ones provided by Alan Fisher regarding the province of Kefe for the year 1636.³⁵

Accordingly, for the period 1631-1633 (Lunar 1041-1043), the garrisons accommodated by the provinces of Silistra and Kefe, along with the diminutive number of the soldiers sent from the Porte to reinforce them numbered around five thousand: 2.350 for the Province of Kefe and 2.650 for that of Silistra.³⁶ To go into detail, the northern defensive system concentrated its forces on the castles spread around Özü (Silistra) with 1.567 local troops and 90 more sent from the Porte, a figure confirmed by the

³² Victor Ostapchuk, *The Ottoman Black Sea frontier and the relations of the Porte with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy, 1622-1628*. Ph.d Thesis, Massachusetts: Harvard University 1989, p. 185.

³³ BOA, TT.d 748, dated Lunar 1037 (1627-28).

³⁴ According to the appointment register (*ruus defteri*) BOA, KK.d 266, dated H. 1040 (1630-31), the counties of the province of Kefe were Akkerman, Bender, Azak (Azov) and Kilburun, while the Silistra Vilayet was composed of Silistra, Nicopolis, Çirmen, Vidn, Kırkkilise and Vize, pp. 44-48.

³⁵ Alan W. Fisher, "Azov in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", *Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Neue Folge, 21/2 (1973), 161-74, p. 172-173.

³⁶ It should be pointed out that these can not be the final figures, but they express a minimum. The calculations are to a great extent based on the central treasury register BOA, KK.d 1823 covering the years 1632-1633, whereas data for the castle of Tulca is mined from BOA, KK.d 1826 and that of Sudak and Kerch are from the pay list BOA, MAD.d 392 (dated 1633-34). Regarding Kilburun and Azak, figures are based on A. Fisher "Azov in the Sixteenth".

Danubian treasury register for 1629 that suggested 1576 soldiers.³⁷ For 1632, Bender was the second largest northern garrison with 514 local troops and happened to be the only castle to house janissaries of the Porte at the time, with a total of 138 janissaries in 1632 and 68 janissaries in 1635.³⁸ When we put aside the garrisons of Kili/Chilia (300) and Akkerman/Cetatea Alba (312), all other fortifications in the region were manned by forces ranging between 20 and 200 soldiers. Nonetheless, it was not possible to calculate the auxiliary forces of the region which must have been recorded in separate registers.³⁹

Regarding the military entity facing the Ottoman northern frontier, it is hard to identify any defence system immediately across the Ottoman castles, as was the case with the Habsburg network of fortifications over Hungary and Croatia. To be more precise, Ottoman castles and fortresses in the Northern Black Sea region were standing at the end of kilometres of steppe territory. So, it was hundreds of kilometres north of the Kefe Province that the Russians had their defensive line (Abatis Line/Zasechnaya Cherta) close to Moscow. Since this line was not facing the Ottoman garrisons directly, it must be reminded that the intention was to fend off Tatar raids. The numbers provided for the garrisons of the Russian fortification line ranged from some 4.000 to 11.000 between the years 1616 and 1629. So, while the particular figure for 1629 was 11.826, the average number of garrisons was around 8.600 troops for the specified period of 1616 to 1629.⁴⁰

This suggests that Russian garrisons were almost twofold superior in number to those of the Ottomans in Silistra and Kefe. However, one needs to bear in mind that the Ottoman Black Sea fortifications were protecting strategically important small points either in the openings of rivers (the Don, Dnieper, Danube) to the sea or on the Black Sea coast. This contrasts with the long stretched line of the Russian borderland that was facing an immense territory south of Moscow. In that sense, Ottoman Black Sea fortifications were making good by density of stationed soldiers for what they were losing in

³⁷ BOA, MAD.d 1663, p. 11.

³⁸ BOA, KK.d 1823, p. 71 and BOA, D.YNÇ.d 33788, p. 2.

³⁹ For example, Murteza Pasha of Silistra orders 15.000 *akçes* to be paid to an unspecified number of *beşlüyan* forces in 1630 (Şevval 1039), BOA, MAD.d 7267, p. 19.

⁴⁰ Brian Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe, 1500-1700*, Routledge, London and New York 2007, p. 68.

terms of numbers. To be precise, the function and rationale of the two defensive lines were different.⁴¹

In the end, one plausible way to explain the relatively small number of 5.000 troops in the Ottoman northern frontier may be calling attention to a buffer zone built up by the Ottoman tributaries of Wallachia, Moldavia and the Crimean Khanate, situated between the Ottoman Empire on the one hand and Poland-Lithuania, the Muscovite State (and the Cossack tribes) on the other.⁴² Hence, the disproportionate allocation of the garrison troops between the Ottoman western and northern frontiers once more emphasises the importance of the Ottoman border with the Habsburgs, where a direct land contact between the two sides was the case.⁴³

As the last point, one may also try to draw comparisons with the eastern frontier, where lay a long territorial frontier between the Ottomans and the Safavids. However, Sultan Murad IV's reign would not be a propitious ground since intermittent campaigns between 1624 and 1639 were inevitably swelling the numbers at the time: whenever one of the sides conquered a fortification, enormous number of garrison troops were left in them to prevent a recapture by the enemy. This renders a comparison of the garrison sizes between the Ottoman western and eastern garrisons in the period concerned unreliable.⁴⁴

All in all, despite the lack of contact between a large part of Bosnia and Temesvar with the Habsburg territory, the combined forces of Hungarian provinces and Bosnia provided the Ottomans with an advantageous ratio of three to two over the Habsburgs. However, it must be kept in mind that these

⁴¹ The present author has unfortunately failed to gather any data regarding the Polish-Lithuanian fortification against the Ottomans.

⁴² Feridun Emecen refers to this area as the "periphery" (*çeper*), see: Feridun Mustafa Emecen, "Osmanlı Sınırları Nerede Başlar, Nerede Biter?", *Osmanlı Klasik Çağında Siyaset*, Feridun M. Emecen (ed.), Timaş, İstanbul 2009, 195-217, p. 199. For the Cossack raids, Ostapchuk (1989) can be compared with the following study based on Ukrainian literature: Olena Bachynska, "XVII. Yüzyılın Başlarında Ukrayna Kazaklarının 'İstanbul' Seferleri (XIX. Yüzyıl Sonu - XX. Yüzyıl Başlangıcına Ait Bilimsel Yayınlar Üzerine)", (eds.) Feridun Emecen, Ali Akyıldız and Emrah Safa Gürkan, *Osmanlı İstanbulu III: III. Uluslararası Osmanlı İstanbulu Sempozyumu bildirileri, 25-26 Mayıs, İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi*, İstanbul 2016, p. 761-768.

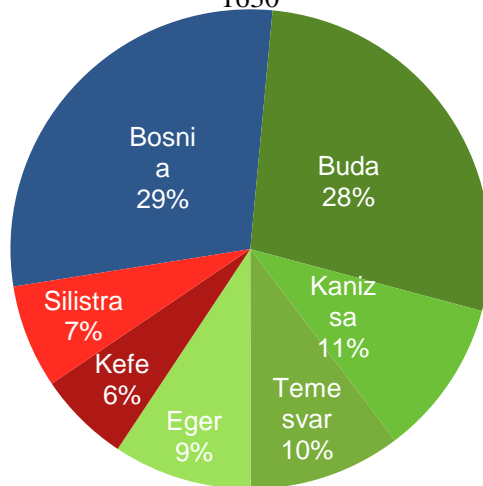
⁴³ One must also feel tempted to include the castles in the Peloponnesos within the larger framework of the western frontier, along with the castles on the shores of Sinop, Trabzon and the Straits (İstanbul) within that of the northern, in order to achieve a more complete picture of the border defences. In that respect, the calculations made herein correspond only to the outer rims Ottoman defensive line and exclude these castles of secondary contact.

⁴⁴ Deniz Armağan Akto, *Ottoman Fortresses*, p. 97-98.

figures merely reflect the garrison troops that were paid in cash and exclude the garrisons paid with land fiefs (*timar*).⁴⁵ Moreover, the frontiers could not have been protected only by the garrisons, since regular cavalry troops (*timarlı sipahi*), auxiliary/para-military units and retinues of Ottoman administrators (*kapı halkı*) similarly must have constituted elements of the sultan's frontier guard in times of need. Unfortunately, it was not possible to come across any data regarding these components of Ottoman provincial military machine. But, in any case, it would be safe to say that the Ottomans placed their military weight in terms of garrisoned soldiers on the Hungarian frontier in order to preserve a certain level of superiority over the Habsburgs during the reign of Sultan Murad IV.



Distribution of Ottoman
Garrisons in Europe around
1630



Provinces	Buda	Kanizsa	Temesvar	Eger	Bosnia	Kefe	Silistra	Total
Garrison	10.500	4.000	3.900	3.550	11.000	2.350	2.650	36.950

⁴⁵ Klára Hegyi duly argues that some of the garrison troops must have been paid with land holdings (*timar*) instead of cash, close to twenty percent of the total as she presumes, K. Hegyi, *The Ottoman Military*, p. 170. I was not able to detect any considerable number of *timar*-paid troops for this period, save for the *kale dizdars*, either.

3. How many troops could governors of the Western frontier command?

The original question can now be addressed: did the governor generals of Buda actually lead raiding parties of some fifteen to twenty thousand soldiers into Habsburg territory? Even though the data regarding other provincial military classes than garrisons are hard to detect, there is at least a possibility to make approximations. The traditional *timarli* troops and the retinues of the governors need to be added into equation in this respect.

In his attempt to calculate the paper strength of the *timariot* army in 1631, Rhoads Murphey estimated that the total strength of the empire would be some 107.000 troops. The province of Buda accounted for approximately seven thousand soldiers within this total. And the combined *timariot* force of the Hungarian provinces and Bosnia was around 13.000 souls (4.474 *kılıç* of *timar* and 487 *kılıç* of *zeamet*).⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in the seventeenth century, the effective participation of the *timariots* even to an imperial campaign could only reach up to fifty per cent on a lucky day,⁴⁷ as seems to be the case with Sultan Osman II's (r. 1618-1622) imperial campaign against Poland (Chocim/Hotin Campaign) in 1621: only 880 of the roughly 1.900 *kılıç* holders in Bosnia attended the campaign.⁴⁸ a ratio which would most probably prove even smaller during a provincial raid.

Lastly, the household troops of the governors must be taken into consideration. Unfortunately, as Özgür Kolçak noted, "any attempt to estimate their exact number" was "extremely difficult" given the lack of any written records in most cases. However, since even Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household members varied between 100 and 400 in peace time during 1660's,⁴⁹ the number of a provincial governor's household forces would not exceed a few hundred, either. In that case, the combined

208

⁴⁶ Rhoads Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare 1500-1700*, Taylor & Francis e-Library 2001, p. 40-41.

⁴⁷ Géza Dávid-Pál Fodor, "Changes in the Structure and Strength of the Timariot Army from Early Sixteenth to the End of the Seventeenth Century", *Eurasian Studies* 4 (2005) 157-188, p. 183. Even the Ottoman central army commanded by Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha during the Ujvar campaign in 1663 seems to have included no more than eight thousand *timariots*, see the manuscript by a certain Andrea Hölzel in Biblioteka Jagiellonska, Berol. Ms. Ital. Fol. 53 (*Relazione di viaggio a Buda, Costantinopoli, Sofia, Ossek, Vivar e narrazione della campagna dell'anno 1663 in Ungheria*), f. 90v.

⁴⁸ Ömer Lütfü Barkan, "Timar", *İslâm Ansiklopedisi (M.E.B.)*, XII, vol. 1, (1997), 286-333, p. 327; Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*, p. 40.

⁴⁹ Özgür Kolçak, "The Composition, Tactics and Strategy of the Ottoman Field Army at Zrínyi-Újvár and St. Gotthard (1663-1664)", (eds.) Ferenc Toth and Zagorhidi Czigany Balazs, *La bataille de Saint Gotthard et la paix de Vasvár: Expansion Ottomane-Coopération Européenne*, Budapest 2017, 73-92, p. 77.

household forces of the Hungarian and Bosnian governor generals must have been roughly a few thousand.

Reading the contribution of the *timariots* and the household troops with an eye to compare them with the garrisons might also be telling in this respect: whereas the Hungarian provinces and Bosnia could potentially put together 13.000 *timariot* troops and a few thousand household troops, the size of the garrisons in those five provinces surpassed 30.000. In a way, the Ottoman military force in the border regions was better represented with a *standing* army of fortress garrisons than the traditional *timariot* army or household troops that *had to be mobilised* before campaigns.

Now, under light of the calculations and the assumptions made above, it seems quite a challenging task for any frontier commander-in-chief to have amassed more than some five to eight thousand household and *timariot* troops for their cross-border expeditions. In order to put together twenty thousand soldiers, they would have undoubtedly required considerable reinforcement from the Hungarian and Bosnian garrisons. And this practically means that almost half of the garrison troops in those five provinces had to leave their positions.

It is true that commissioning half of the garrisons outside of their fortifications might sound like putting the Ottoman defensive line in extreme jeopardy. Nonetheless, it seems to be a commonplace practice followed by the Ottoman commanders in Hungary during imperial campaigns. In another study, Kolçak provides evidence that in the 1663 campaign against the Habsburgs, Ottoman commanders were ordered to enlist the participation of half of the Hungarian garrisons in the war effort.⁵⁰ Hence, even though the Ottoman campaigns in Hungary during the 1620's and 1630's might not have been imperial campaigns, the Ottoman frontier governors could still have included half of the garrisons for their border skirmishes. In such a scenario, Ottoman governor-generals might have indeed put together some fifteen to twenty thousand troops for their anti-Habsburg campaigns.

Conclusion

The present study tried to understand the size of the Ottoman military might in Europe around 1630 at several levels: firstly, a comparison between the Ottoman garrisons in Hungary (western front) and the Black Sea region (northern front) suggested that the Ottomans stationed more numerous

⁵⁰ Özgür Kolçak, "Yeniçeriler, Ümera Kapıları ve Tımarlı Sipahiler: 1663-64 Osmanlı-Habsburg Savaşlarında Osmanlı Ordu Terkibi", (ed.) Kahraman Şakul, *Yeni Bir Askeri Tarih Özlemi: Savaş, Teknoloji ve Deneysel Çalışmalar*, Tarih Vakfı, İstanbul 2013, 217-251, p. 248-250.

garrisons, hence placed greater importance, on their frontier with the Habsburgs. The topography must have definitely played role in this choice; but the main reason was the relative force of the enemy lying across the frontier, which takes us to the second level of comparison.

Comparing the relative size of Ottoman garrisons vis-à-vis those on the Habsburg and Muscovite defence lines, one can argue the following: the Ottomans tried to match the size of their Habsburg rivals on the Hungarian frontier where the Habsburg network of fortifications was dense. Against some 20.000 Habsburg garrisons in the Royal Hungarian territory, Ottoman garrisons facing them in Hungarian and Bosnian provinces were around 30.000, suggesting a clear superiority. As for the Russian border, the Ottoman authorities did feel no such need and accepted the numerical inferiority of their garrisons against their Russian counterparts given the absence of any immediate fortification line facing the Ottoman Black Sea fortresses.

The last and the implicit conclusion one can draw is that the garrison troops seem to have contributed to Ottoman military mobilisations more than the *timar* holders. A comparative reading of *timariot* and garrison sizes in Ottoman provinces of Bosnia and Buda suggested that the garrison troops far surpassed the traditional Ottoman military force of *timar*. Hence, provincial armies had to be composed of a good portion of garrison troops during campaigns in order to suggest a considerable whole.

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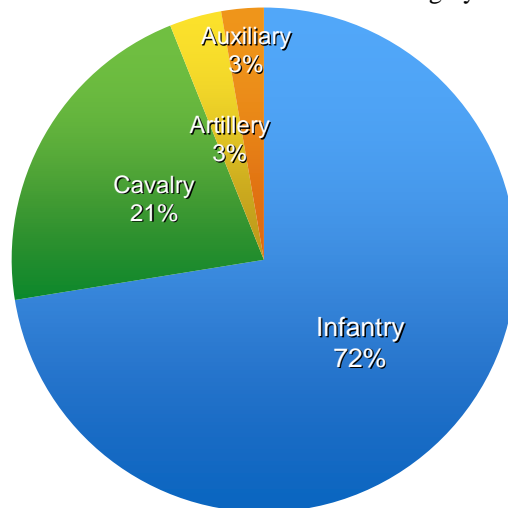
APPENDIX I: GARRISON OF THE BUDA CASTLE COMPLEX IN 1627-1628

Source	Name of the Military Corps	#
TSMA.d 216	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	306
"	Cema'at-i Cebecıyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	22
"	Cema'at-i Topçuyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	50
"	Cema'at-i Arabacıyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	5
"	Cema'at-i Humbaracıyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	22
"	Cema'at-i Barudçuyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	25
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Barudhane-i Budun	15
"	Cema'at-i Gönüllüyan-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	336
"	Cema'at-i 'Azaban-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	410
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Cısr-i Nehr-i Tuna der Budun	37
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Gürz İlyas	22
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Palanka-yı Cedid der Varoş-ı Budun, ihya- yı Hasan Paşa	23
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Bab-ı Ab, muhafaza-yı Kal'a-yı Budun 'an mustahfızan ...	23
"	Cema'at-i 'Azaban-ı Bab-ı Ab-ı Kal'a-yı Budun	16
"	Cema'at-i Mustahfızan-ı Kal'a-yı Cedid der Varoş-ı Budun ihya-yı Mehmed Paşa ...	16
"	Cema'at-i Zü'ema ve Erbab-ı Timarha-yı Mahruse-i Budun	29
SUB-TOTAL		1357
MAD.d 7339	Yeniçeriyan-ı yerlüyan	1925
D.YNÇ.d 33748, s. 30	Yeniçeriyan-ı Dergah-ı Ali	412
TOTAL		3694
TSMA.d 216	Cema'at-i Çavuşan-ı Defter-i Divan-ı Budun	41
"	Cami Hademesi (Buda and Pest)	44
"	Müteka'idin ve Duagüyan	37

APPENDIX II: GARRISONS OF THE FIVE FOREMOST CASTLES IN OTTOMAN HUNGARY⁵¹

	Budin (Buda)		İstolni Belgrad (Székesfehérvár)		Estergon (Esztergom)		Kanije (Kanizsa)		Temeşvar (Timisoara)		SUM
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	0
Infantry	3205	86,7	533	73,5	803	64,1	1106	59,5	566	54,1	6213
Cavalry	365	9,8	157	21,7	410	32,7	622	33,5	289	27,7	1843
Artillery	50	1,3	35	4,8	40	3,2	91	5	70	6,7	286
Auxiliary	74	2					38	2	121	11,5	233
SUM	3694	100	725	100	1253	100	1857	100	1046	100	8575
Source	TSMA.d 216; MAD.d 7339		Hegyi, p. 399.		TSMA.d 216; D.YNÇ.d 33748, p. 22.		D.YNÇ.d 33748, p. 42, 74; Hegyi, p. 552.		Hegyi, p. 497.		

Percentage Distribution of Garrison Types in the Five Castles in Ottoman Hungary



⁵¹ The figures herein excludes the Eğri (Eger) garrison since no data from around 1630 is available.

APPENDIX III: MAP SHOWING THE FIVE MAJOR CASTLES IN OTTOMAN HUNGARY AROUND 1630



Map 2: Hans Hotte, *Atlas of Southeast Europe, Geopolitics and History, Volume One: 1521-1699*.