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ISTVÁN BARISKA

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE
HISTORY OF THE TURKISH
CAMPAIGN OF 1532

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of Turkish Siege of Kőszeg

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Miért áll - - -borongva keblében,
Mit néz - - - a bástya fokán?
Ki tűnik amott fel a por közepében?
A por közepében jön Szolimán.
Jön, mint dagadó hab Dráva folyásin,
Jön, mint rohanó szél a Bakonyon;
Fegyvert - -! honod zokogásin
Gyűljön fel erőd bús harcaidon. "

(Ferenc Kölcsey, Kölcse, Aug. 7, 1818.)

1 A WAR OF PAN- EUROPEAN SIGNIFICANCE

Preparations and War Diplomacy

*"The moment I occupy the kingdom of Hungary, we are at the border of Germany."*¹ In September 1532 a message was carried by Joseph von Lamberg and Leonardo Nogarola, envoys of Ferdinand I, from Sultan Suleiman to the Habsburg court. In his missive the Turkish emperor offered a clear and succinct explanation to the head of the Holy Roman Empire as to why, for the third time in two years, they had blessed the flag of Mohamed in the spirit of holy war. *'You must learn'*, the letter went on to say, *'that my aim is not to go against you but against the king of Hispania.'*²

Indeed, this was the first and last combat in which the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V participated directly in the preparations, although he personally only travelled as far as Regensburg. In terms of manpower, however,

¹ *Letter from Suleiman I to Ferdinand I*. Eszék, July 17, 1532. In: István Bariska (ed.), *Kőszeg ostromának emlékezete* [In Memory of the Siege of Kőszeg]. Budapest, 1982. (Henceforth: *Siege 1532*), 170. This publication relieves us from the obligation to give reference to the original loci of the sources published in 1982.

² *Ibid.*, 170.

he sent an army unprecedented in size to aid his younger brother, Ferdinand I. This is understandable since the war that was about to break out between the two Great Powers of the world clearly threatened to be one of pan-European significance. The motives for the war, however, remain unclear to this day. Was it simply the case of demonstrating pure power? Or was it a means for Suleiman to condescend the Habsburgs to give up Hungary? In this context it is interesting to note what Ferdinand I said to the envoys of the *Porta* back in the spring of 1530, namely that if an emperor was great

enough to enter and occupy a particular piece of land, it was only right that it should belong to him. This is indeed how the Turkish *Porta* interpreted the fact that the Turkish Sultan had set foot on Hungarian territory during earlier campaigns.

This was significant for both the country and the Transdanubian region for one reason: should the war begin; this was sure to be the route of the army and the consequences this entailed were unforeseeable and menacing.

The envoys sent by Ferdinand I in 1530 were unable to deflect the Sultan from launching a new campaign. The message was delivered in February 1531 and just over a year later, on April 25, 1532, Turkish forces set off on their way to Europe.³ Intelligence reports about their precise route were uncertain to start with. The French monarch Francis I, an ally of the Turks, wanted the Turkish army to attack Charles V in Italy. He was worried that a Turkish attack against the Holy Roman Empire might induce the Germans to unite. This fear was, incidentally, shared by the Sultan which we know of from a report circulating around the Turkish ambassador to Venice. It was reported from the Turkish camp at Nándorfehérvár, on July 7, 1532, that Charles V was eagerly preparing for war. The Sultan, however, would clearly not be pleased were the Emperor to make peace with the Lutherans.⁴ In this way a union of the Germans against the Turks was provoked by the very news of the Sultan's attack. The frame was provided a week later by the Imperial Diet held in Regensburg two weeks later. In 1531 it was still felt that the alliance established at Schmalkalden against Charles V had splintered the Christian forces. This must have been what gave rise to the notion of the

³ Szulejmán szultán naplói. [The Journals of Sultan Suleiman.] Vol. IV. *Az 1532. évi hadjárat* [The Campaign of 1532]. (Henceforth: Sultan's Journal.), 71.

⁴ Egy névtelen, valószínűleg velencei olasz tudósítása. [Report by Anonymous Italian, Probably from Venice]. Nándorfehérvár, July 7, 1532, 98.

campaign in 1532. The power of anti-Turkish solidarity, however, had been underestimated.

This is why it was important that the Persian *sofi* had assured the Sultan in May 1532 that he would not attack him from the rear while the latter was engaged in the European campaign (Török 1932: 165-170). The Lutheran peace treaty formulated in Regensburg and the aid which the nobility of the Holy Roman Empire had voted to grant to the Christian forces to help them fight the Turks inspired the *Padishah* to come to a new decision. This is also why the Tartar emperor, Sahib Giray Khan, ruling under Turkish liege, engaged his troops in fighting. He was obliged to do this because the Sultan personally headed the army. This is justified by the fact that in the camp at Nándorfehérvár the Turks were already waiting for the Crimean Tartars to join them. Another decision, however, limited the activity of the imperial army. The Turkish Divan ruled that instead of Italy the troops would progress toward the Netherlands. In response, the diplomats of the French monarch Francis I pushed through a decision that imperial auxiliary forces could not be deployed beyond the boundaries of the Habsburg hereditary provinces.

Ferdinand I took one more important step in the field of diplomacy. He sent two envoys, Count Leonardo Nogarola, a nobleman from Vicenza, and Count Joseph von Lamberg to meet the Sultan's troops. It was too late, however, to halt the progress of the Turks (Bucholtz: 99). The Habsburg diplomats probably entered the Turkish camp on June 11, 1532, at Niš. They were instantly captured, not to be released again until September 2nd. Only then could they pass on to Ferdinand I the Sultan's message, dispatched from Eszék on July 17th. The message and the fact that the Tartars were invited to ally, leave no doubt that the Sultan must have felt somewhat unsure of his powers. News regarding the united Christian army probably made him more uncomfortable than anything else. According to the ruling of Regensburg, the largest ever Christian army was to be mounted. By this time, July 23, 1532, the Sultan's troops had advanced as far as the Southern Transdania. It was feared, however, that the slow and complicated organization of the Christian army would cause it to arrive late to Vienna. These fears proved justified.

The Decision at Eszék about the Direction of the Campaign

There was one important question, however, that they could not be left out of consideration, and this was the decision at Eszék. Today, for a number of reasons, it seems, that the plan for the Turkish campaign was finalised in the camp at Eszék. This is where the different armies were united: Pasha Kasim Guledje, *beglerbeg* of Rumelia arrived at Eszék with 40,000 men; the *beglerbeg* of Anatolia, who was the next pasha in rank after the Grand Vizier Ibrahim, headed an army of almost 20,000. This was where Khosref, *sandjak beg* of Bosnia, brought his 8,000 soldiers. *Serakser* Ibrahim had command of the entire army with between 20,000-32,000 men under him. There is no data, however, as to the size of the advance guard. This unit from Szendrő was headed by Yahya-pasha-oglu-Mohamed, i.e., Mohamed, son of Pasha Yahya. One thing is certain, that the regular army, including this unit, numbered at least 100,000.

Sahib Giray Khan joined Suleiman's army at the camp at Eszék, heading a light cavalry force of 10,000 Tartars. The much feared Turkish irregular cavalry, the *akindji* were led by *beg* Mikhal-oglu-Mohamed. This lightly-armed force consisted partly of volunteers and partly of conscripted peasantry and was comparable to the army of the Tartar khan (Gyalókay 1932: 213). It was also to Eszék that Aloisio Gritti arrived with his escort, receiving the Sultan in the rank of General. Gritti was the illegitimate son of the Venetian ambassador to Stambul, later to become Doge of Venice. He was closely acquainted with *beg* Ahmed Feridun, author of the Sultan's journal, chancellor (*nishandji*) of the Turkish empire. He had played a prominent role in Hungarian politics earlier as governor. At Eszék he was made commander. He was put in charge of the siege of Esztergom but failed to occupy that city (Csorba 1978: 73). In this way Hungarian allies to the Turks opened a second front at Esztergom, but the castle by the Danube continued to be held by Ferdinand I and this required considerable energies at the time of the Turkish attack (Szakály 1986: 71). This made the upper Danube a route for the army. The fact that the Habsburgs still held Esztergom also contributed to the Turks choosing a different route for attacking Vienna than they had done in the 1529 campaign.

This also explains why the Turkish army finally took the route through Southern and Western Transdanubia. Another factor in this decision was

that their previous campaign had destroyed the entire southern belt of the country. 'They had set everything on fire along the Danube' - answered one Turkish prisoner when questioned about the route.⁵ One approach has it that the Turkish army leadership was sharply divided over the question of the route to be taken (Horváth 1938: 84--86). According to the plan conceived in the camp at Eszék, the first to set off were the Turks of Szendrő and the Crimean Tartars. Next to leave were Grand Vizier Ibrahim and Beg Khosref with the Rumelian army. Finally, the Sultan would leave with the soldiers from Anatolia. This vast army, accompanied by barbers, traders, artisans, carriers, *arabadji* (supervisors of ammunition) and a host of people doing other services, had to make a superhuman effort to cover the distance of over 1,500 km between Istanbul and Vienna. Many of them, of course, joined the advancing Turkish army in one or another of the European *sand-jaks* of the Turkish Empire.

The hardships suffered by the army became intolerable due to unexpected developments. The summer of 1532 arrived with practically incessant rainfall. The Sultan's Journal speaks of ceaseless rain after mid-June of that year. At this time the troops had only just left the city of Niš.⁶ Roads had become nearly impassable for the troops and their service staff. Man and beast suffered equal torture - *asabs* were forced to build bridges over flooding rivers and treacherous marshes. Near Eszék, no fewer than twelve bridges were constructed over the Dráva and its flood plains. Under these circumstances the army could make no more headway than 13-15 kilometers a day. It is, therefore, no wonder that the normal two-days distance between the advance party and the main body of the Sultan's army grew to five days. This caused no major difficulty from the Turkish point of view since the Christian troops were slow in gathering.

A more substantial difficulty was caused by the fact that food prices in the camp at Eszék soared, even though at this stage practically all foodstuffs were still available - something that could not be said at the camp in Kőszeg which had suffered shortages for days. In late August, a captured Turk stated that the Turkish leadership made a conscious effort to avoid the Danube valley, as everything along the river had been burned. Another believed that

⁵ Két újonnan elfogott török kihallgatása és válaszai [Interrogation and Replies of Two Newly Captured Turks]. Vienna [?], late August 1532. 123.

⁶ Szultáni napló [Sultan's Journal], June 17, 1532, 173.

high food prices had forced them to choose a new route.⁷ As shown, drawing up along the Danube had been precluded partly by the military situation at Esztergom and partly by the consequences of the devastation caused by the Turks in 1529. This is why after crossing the Dráva, the Turkish army chose routes leading through Baranya, Somogy, Zala, Vas and Sopron counties. First they marched along the left bank of the Dráva as far as the city of Kanizsa, and then turned north toward Kapornak. This way they reached the Rába near Hídvég and Rum.

Something happened, however, that nobody expected or at least which took the attackers by surprise and this was to have a decisive impact on the entire campaign. This was the movement of co-operation that emerged all along the country's border, in some ways independently of Vienna, which made life increasingly difficult for the Turks on the far side of the Dráva and near side of the Leitha. These subversive activities appear even more significant when contrasted to the delayed mobilisation of the Christian forces. In the first few days of August 1532, the Turkish troops crossed the River Rába on the new bridges. While the plundering Turkish army units plagued Lower Austria, the united Christian army was still very far from Vienna (Mayer 1927: 10-11). Before Western Hungary and the Eastern Austrian provinces could look twice, they were in the middle of a war of European significance.

2 RECEPTION ON THE LEFT BANK OF RÁBA

Resistance at the Regional Level of the Feudal Estates

At first it seemed as if no power could stop the Turkish advance. But events took a different turn: on the far side of the Danube, they came up against unexpected regional resistance. Hearing that the Turkish troops were drawing near, the sense of belonging, an awareness of the shared faith and the de-

⁷ Két újonnan elfogott török kihallgatása és válaszai [Interrogation and Replies of Two Newly Captured Turks] Bécs [?], late August 1532, 121.

termination to protect hearth and home gained the upper hand. Miklós Jurisics, landlord and Captain of Kőszeg, learned as early as mid-July 1532, while the Turks were still camping at Eszék, what route they were going to follow. *'The Turks will shortly attack this part of the country,'* he wrote to Tamás Nádasdy on July 20th, *'... it is widely hoped that the Hungarians, who have always been and still are, defenders of the Christian faith, will co-operate faithfully and to the best of their power in their own defence and in defence of the entire Christian realm.'*⁸ This indicates that Jurisics had high hopes regarding co-operation between Western Hungary and the hereditary provinces. He concludes the letter by stating, *'Finally, we, too, wish to protect the subjects living in the region of Your Highness, as well, as our own.'* It must be remembered that at this time Jurisics was in the service of Ferdinand I, while Tamás Nádasdy served János Szapolyai. Kőszeg itself and its wider estate belonged (by lien) to Lower Austria. The Nádasdy castle at Sárvár and its estate were led by Ferenc Nádasdy who in turn was a supporter of Ferdinand I. This explains why Jurisics stressed the co-operation of the two parties.

One of the signs of mutual assistance and co-operation was that Nádasdy's serfs from Csepreg soon moved to Jurisics's castle at Kőszeg. Ferenc Batthyány, Captain of the Transdanubian region, also contacted Tamás Nádasdy in a letter urging co-operation. *'It seems reasonable to me,'* he wrote to Nádasdy on August 14, 1532, *'that we should put aside hostility, stop offering our loyalty to our various enemies, and instead lend unanimous support to Christianity.'*⁹ By this time, however, the Turks had launched the siege against Kőszeg. What is more, only one day later Sárvár was also attacked by a contingent that had lagged behind the main body of the army (Bariska 1982/2: 28). Longinus von Puchheim, Captain of the castle at Szalónak, was one of the active participants of co-operation along the border. He is believed to have delivered help to Kőszeg at the instructions of Ferdinand I (Istvánffy 1962: 64, Barta 1982: 166). Longinus von Puchheim was Barbara Baumkircher's fourth husband (Schäfer 1992: 31). Although Ferdinand I had donated Szalónak to Ferenc Batthyány, resistance from the Baumkircher heirs prevented him from taking possession of the entire estate until 1544 (Zimányi 1992: 94). Personal hostilities around the estate, however, did not

⁸ Jurisics Miklós levele Nádasdy Tamásnak [Letter from Miklós Jurisics to Tamás Nádasdy], Kőszeg, July 20th. 25-26. 30.

⁹ Batthyány Ferenc levele Nádasdy Tamásnak [Letter from Ferenc Batthyány to Tamás Nádasdy] Németújvár, August 14th, 1532. 29.

stand in the way of co-operation. Longinus von Puchheim was himself in need of assistance, since on August 14, 1532, Turkish units gathering food appeared near Szalónak. Indeed, the Sultan's Journal notes that on this day 'the gíours captured a great many of the food collectors.'¹⁰ According to Styrian data, Szalónak was attacked by no fewer than 10,000 Turkish cavalry and 1,000 janissaries. Styrian Captain Hans Ungnad sent his men up from Hartberg to help Szalónak keep the Turks away from the Styrian province. Foraying Turks failed to occupy the castle even though co-operation between Styrians and Hungarians had suffered a setback (Posch: 1972: 65). This was chiefly due to the efforts of Captains Siegmund von Weixelberg (Weichselberg) and Wilhelm von Polheim from Kraina. They were in constant contact with the Styrian captain. Longinus von Puchheim, landlord and Captain of Szalónak, requested both light and armoured cavalry to relieve the castle. On August 13, 1532, Count Longinus von Puchheim wrote in a letter dated from Szalónak that '*by this we should try to relieve Kőszeg to some extent*' (Steinwenter 1887: 17).

Slavonian Captain Lajos Pekry, a familiar to Ferenc Batthyány, sent word to Tamás Nádasdy at the same time, August 14th, stating that they had successfully carried out a foray against the rear of the Turkish forces.¹¹ On the same day he wrote a letter to Ferdinand I from Szombathely asking for information. He was aware that he might be ordered to appear at Krems¹² which would jeopardise the entire co-operation along the border. A characteristic detail is that Szapolyai's supporters also re-considered as a result of the developments. On August 22, Tamás Nádasdy sent word from Kanizsa to Simon Erdődy, Bishop of Zagreb, about the recent events. Although the bishop remained a committed supporter of Szapolyai, he showed openness for co-operation. '*Lord Batthyány also desires that there should be unity, just like your Lordship,*' wrote Nádasdy.¹³ Nádasdy, however, was unaware that regional de-

¹⁰ Szultáni napló [Sultan's Journal]. August 14, 1532, 176.

¹¹ Pekry Lajos szlavón főkapitány levele Nádasdy Tamásnak [Letter from Slavonian Captain General Lajos Pekry to Tamás Nádasdy]. Kőrmend, August 14, 1532.

¹² Pekry Lajos levele I. Ferdinándnak [Letter from Lajos Pekry to Tamás Nádasdy]. Szombathely, August 14, 1532. In: Emilis Laszowski (ed.), *Monumenta Spetantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium. Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae, Slavoniae. Volumen. II. Habsburški spomenici kraljevine Hrvatskem Dalmacije i Slavonije*. Zagreb, 1916. No. 133, 119-120.

¹³ Nádasdy Tamás levele Erdődy Simon zágrábi püspöknek [Letter from Tamás Nádasdy to Simon Erdődy, bishop of Zagreb] Kanizsa, August 22, 1532. In: *Ostromemlékezet 1532* [Siege 1532], 32.

fence co-operation had collapsed on the very same day. The feudal forces of the hereditary provinces had been ordered to appear at Vienna (Posch 1972: 64-65). At any rate, between Ferenc Nádasdy and Ferenc Batthyány co-operation was as close as it possibly could be: it is known that on August 15th, Batthyány's hussars attacked the Turks from the rear while they were besieging Sárvár. This co-operation was not limited to historical Western Hungary, even less so as borders of the Hungarian Crown had been re-charted around this part of the country by estates that were mortgaged to Lower Austria. A further reason was that the dangers which the attack of the Turks against Vienna entailed now become clear to the estates in Lower Austria, Styria and Kraina. They no longer entertained doubts that such hereditary Austrian provinces as lay between Vienna and Graz would also become victims to the campaign.

Naturally, protecting Vienna became even more important than the defence of these provinces. This was the very reason why Vienna could not show more consideration for the hereditary provinces than for Western Hungary. The people threatened by the situation were well aware of this: the arrival of the united Christian forces was endlessly delayed. This is why feudal cavalry from Lower Austria, Styria and Kraina (Gültreiterei), the rebel forces (Aufgebot), the Hungarian hussars and what little heavy cavalry was available were not ordered to appear in Vienna until the end of August 1532. The Turks, however, did not delay.

Between August 3-6, they crossed the River Rába at Hidvég and Rum¹⁴ and the estates affected by the onslaught were forced to take action. Open confrontation became inevitable. It also became clear that to some extent the defence was also able to influence the course of events. They took different steps, including one commanded by Hans Katzianer, the Captain of Lower Austria, who ordered that the mills in Vas County, including those along the Rába, be set on fire before the Turks arrived. Turkish prisoners interrogated in Vienna complained about the grave difficulties this caused in supplying the Turkish forces.¹⁵ Miklós Jurisics and Ferenc Nádasdy both gathered the population of their landed estates in their castles. Livestock was herded away from the enemy, corn was harvested, and animal fodder was

¹⁴ II. Szulejmán 1532. évi hadjáratának útvonala [The Route of the 1532 Campaign by Suleiman II], 246.

¹⁵ Egy névtelen jelentése Hans Katzianer alsó-ausztriai főkapitánynak [Anonymous Report to Captain General Hans Katzianer of Lower Austria]. Gottschee, August 17, 1532, 112.

carried away lest the enemy should seize it. In this way, the Hungarian defence struck a heavy blow to the Ottoman forces which were advancing under extremely difficult conditions.

Strategic Consequences

All of this had strategic consequences. The Sultan's Journal testifies that various units of the Turkish army had to be sent out on forays for food. Distanced from the main body of the army, these small units became extremely vulnerable. Resorting to a war of detail which manifested in a string of loosely co-ordinated actions, the Hungarians found it far easier to fight these smaller armed units. This explains why the Turkish army that had crossed the Rába broke up into several parts. It also helps to understand why Sárvár and Szalónak were under siege at the same time as Kőszeg. The Turks soon reached Szentgotthárd. They flooded into Hungary from the Rába to the Leitha, from Fertő-köz to the Dráva as well as the Eastern portion of the Austrian hereditary provinces down as far as Hartberg and Fürstenfeld.¹⁶ This was not based on a strategy constructed to match the tactics of the enemy, since we are not talking of the Turkish irregular light cavalry, the *ak-indji*. The steps were provoked by the co-operation of defence overarching

national borders. This also explains why the size of the army that sieged Kőszeg was limited to 50,000-55,000 men. This oppressively large number showed that the Grand Vizier Ibrahim had enough men to spare.

The weight of the loss caused to the Turkish camp is clearly illustrated by the report that reached Katzianer on August 17, 1532: *'The Turks are ravaged by a great famine for want of bread They do have grain for bread and fodder; there are not enough mills for such a vast mass of men - they cannot mill their grain. The Emperor's janissaries formed a kind of committee and sent it to the Sultan to say that he had sent them to this place to fight, so it was time to fight. They said they were more willing to meet their death in battle than to die of starvation.'*¹⁷

¹⁶Nádasdy Ferenc levele fiának, Nádasdy Tamásnak [A Letter from Ferenc Nádasdy to his Son Tamás Nádasdy]. Sárvár, Aug. 12. 1532. 28.

¹⁷Egy névtelen jelentése Hans Katzianer alsó-ausztriai főkapitányának. [Anonymous Report to Captain General Hans Katzianer of Lower Austria]. Gesse, [Gottschee], Aug. 17, 1532, 114.

Miklós Jurisics did not lose contact with Vienna even after the Turkish advance guard arrived at Kőszeg on August 5, 1532. Styrian Commander Hans Ungnad also sent a message, stating that a council of war was to be held in Graz. Ferenc Batthyány, Captain of the Transdanubian region, however, was prevented from attending because on August 8th, the Turks reached his estates. Around August 10th, Hans Wernecker, Captain of the Kraina estates and Lukács Székely, Count of Ormož, Slavonia, launched an attack to chase the Turks who had attacked the area of Fürstenfeld in Styria.¹⁸ This attack was executed in conjunction with, among others, Siegmund von Weixelberg (Weichselberg), captain of Kraina. He was the officer who arrived on August 14th, with German and Croatian soldiers as well as Hungarian hussars to relieve Szalónak then under attack.¹⁹ After the Turks retreated, he also repelled the Turkish attack against Marburg (Maribor) three times (Hammer-Burgstall: 1963: 118). On the same day, Slavonian Captain Lajos Pekry attacked the Turkish rear-guard from their rear.²⁰ As mentioned earlier, Ferenc Batthyány relieved Sárvár, mounting a heroic defence only one day later.

Clearly it was no accident that during these days Longinus von Puchheim, Captain of Szalónak, requested Hans Ungnad, the Styrian Captain, to help the light and heavy cavalry of Styria. According to Puchheim's message, the aim was, at least partially, to bring some relief to Kőszeg.

This, however, did not come to pass. On August 15, 1532, Hans Wernecker, Captain of the Kraina estates forwarded Jurisics's call for help but this arrived too late. *'In my view,'* wrote the Captain, *'in harmony with the decision made by the captain of the province, the council of war and the council of other noblemen of the province, we must go to Vienna where we shall have to engage in an open battle, or to wherever the Holy Roman Emperor wishes us to be.'*²¹ The author of this letter was aware that the command ordering them to Vienna was to be expected

¹⁸ Hans Werneckernek, a krajnai rendek főkapitányának levele a krajnai rendeknek [Letter from Hans Wernecker, captain general of the Kraina nobility to the nobles of Kraina]. Radkersburg, Aug. 10, 1532.

¹⁹ Siegmund von Weixelberg krajnai kapitány levele Hans von Ungnadnak, a stájer rendek főkapitányának [Letter from Siegmund von Weixelberg captain of Kraina to Hans Ungnad, captain general of the Styrian nobility]. Neudau, Aug. 15, 1532, 110.

²⁰ Pekry Lajos szlavón főkapitány levele Nádasdy Tamásnak [Letter from Slavonian Captain General Lajos Pekry to Tamás Nádasdy]. Körmend, Aug. 14, 1532, 30.

²¹ Hans Werneckernek, a krajnai rendek főkapitányának levele a krajnai rendeknek [Letter from Hans Wernecker, captain general of the Kraina nobility to the nobles of Kraina]. Graz, Aug. 15, 1532, 111.

shortly. Only a few days later Siegmund von Weixelberg (Weichselberg) wrote to the Styrian Captain: *'It is true that we only have one hundred fully-armed cavalry soldiers, and even these are light cavalry, and the hussars from Kraina have also been ordered to come here (i.e., to Neudau - author's note), this way we trust that we shall destroy many Turks, even though the Hungarians do not want to join us.'*²² With this the first breach was made in the chain of regional co-operation. What could have been predicted now came to pass: on August 22, 1532, cavalry from Kraina, Styria and Lower Austria were ordered to Vienna. Although they were engaged in fighting to the very last days, the intention and willingness for mutual support was marred by the plan to concentrate all forces on the defence of Vienna. This is why the Turks suddenly had more room to manoeuvre. Evacuating the provinces and handing them over proved fatal. At the same time the main Turkish army invaded, the united Christian troops retreated through what amounted to demilitarised zones (Burkert 1986: 196). Neither the defence of Western Hungary nor that of the hereditary provinces was ranked higher than the defence of Vienna.

3 A BLOODY TWENTY-FIVE DAYS WITH AND WITHOUT LEGENDS: THE SIEGE OF KŐSZEG - 1532

A Forced Tactical Siege?

Miklós Jurisics had not at first planned to remain in Kőszeg to wait for the Turkish onslaught. He had personally notified Tamás Nádasdy before July 20th, that the invasion was imminent and described the route it was likely to take. For his part, he was to join Ferdinand I as he had done in 1529, when he had served his monarch in Vienna. Jurisics wrote to Ferdinand I in his first known report: *'I arrived here with 10 fully armed cavalrymen and 28 hussars when I found out that the Turkish Emperor was to attack this small town. Two days ear-*

²² Siegmund von Weixelberg krajnai kapitány levele Hans von Ungnadnak, a stájer rendek főkapitányának [Letter from Siegmund von Weixelberg, captain of Kraina to Hans von Ungnad, captain general of the Styrian nobility]. Neudau, Aug. 20, 1532, 115.

lier I had planned to go to your Majesty in order to offer my services, as your faithful servant, in the imminent battle. I had left the castle, relatively well-prepared compared to my desperate situation, in the hands of an honourable nobleman'.²³

The news came that Suleiman was to march past Kőszeg. Although the Captain of Kőszeg was personally in charge of only 10 heavy cavalrymen and 28 hussars, he decided to change his original plan and stay in Kőszeg. *'I volunteered to fight against the Turkish emperor and his army when the Sultan appeared in person outside the city and set up camp. I decided to fight but not because I presumed to equal his force but only so as to delay him a little while to give time for your Royal Majesty to unite with the Christian Holy Roman Emperor, your Majesty's brother, and other Christian monarchs.'*²⁴

The Captain of Kőszeg was to march to Vienna for the same reason as the feudal estates of the provinces or as Ferenc Batthyány. On August 14th, the latter had written to Tamás Nádasdy, *'Your highness had also proposed that we should meet in Slavonia. This notion pleases me very much, although we are really wary of lengthy meetings perhaps this one will prove more useful than the rest... We are more than willing to co-operate at meetings of this kind. We only request your Highness to write to all of those it concerns and go hastily about whatever is to be done, because if His Royal Majesty orders us to go him - and indeed we await such orders any hour now - then we will doubtlessly need to obey His Royal Majesty's orders.'*²⁵ This quote clearly reveals two things: One is that, regardless of party loyalties, the Western Hungarian feudal estates held frequent meetings. The other is that even Batthyány expected to be ordered to Vienna, even though his position was slightly different from that of Jurisics who was pledged to Lower Austria. Western Hungary, Slavonia and the hereditary provinces were not isolated from each other in terms of information flow or action. Miklós Jurisics wrote to the provisor and burghers of Kirchzuschlag on August 6th: *'... You should know that the Turks held me under siege all day today. I am writing this to you so that you know what to expect and pass my letter on as quickly as possible to Wienerneustadt and to Vienna.... I am also sending a copy of this report to the Captain of Graz...'*²⁶ The war office of the Styrian province issued its own 'mustering command' (*Auf-*

²³ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak [Report from Miklós Jurisics to King Ferdinand I]. Kőszeg, Aug. 8, 1532, 35.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁵ Batthyány Ferenc levele Nádasdy Tamásnak [Letter from Ferenc Batthyány to Tamás Nádasdy]. Némétújvár, Aug. 14, 1532, 29-30.

²⁶ Jurisics Miklós levele Kirchzuschlag provizorának és polgárainak [Letter from Miklós Jurisics to the provisory and burghers of Kirchzuschlag]. Kőszeg, Aug. 6, 1532, 27.

gebotspatent) which regulated obligations around military organisation and the defence of the province, even though this did not rule out the competence of Vienna as the seat of government (Ruhri 1986: 205). Thus, Jurisics considered it important to keep Styrian Captain (*Landeshauptmann*) Hans Ungnad informed even after the Turkish blockade had sealed him off from the outside world. This was not the only time he managed to pass a message through the Turkish camp. Finally, Jurisics was forced to face confrontation with the Turks for the same reason as his peers all over the border region. The reason was that the united Christian troops were extremely late in arriving and the defence of Vienna was the central consideration. His decision exposed his own life, and the lives of his subjects left behind in Kőszeg to extreme danger.

The die was cast. Kőszeg was the first fortification along the route of the Turks that was on the side of Ferdinand I. This is one of the reasons why, on August 5th, they began to surround it. *'As soon as the mind of his Highness the Pasha, like unto the sun, became enlightened as to the situation of the castle, he set up camp along with the warriors of his army, like unto so many lions in courage, on the 8th day of the said month, 8th day of the month of Moharrem in the year 939, (i.e. on August 10, 1532 - author's note), it being his intention, after breaking the pride of those locked within, to open the gate of triumph and attach this castle to the string of other fortifications he had conquered.'*²⁷ These are the words of *reis-efendi Jelalzade Mustafa*, the Sultan's chancellor. The *reis-efendi* also noted that it was Jurisics's hussars who started provoking the advanced guard as well as the army of the Beg of Szendrő. What is more, *'a group of warriors from the indomitable army of those hunting for the faithless giaour approached the castle and the cavalry of the abominable infidels came out of the castle and fought a fierce battle on the field outside the castle. They fired canons from the walls of the castle at the Muslims who passed by. And because they trusted the strength of their castle, they resisted.'*²⁸

First to arrive in Kőszeg, on August 5th, were the Turkish forces from Szendrő, strengthened by the Tartars from the Crimea. Two days later, Grand Vizier Ibrahim arrived with part of the Rumelian army. Pasha Kasim Gülelje arrived next with the other half of that army. On August 10th, the Padishah's tent also went up at the southern boundary of the town. This was the day when Sultan Suleiman and his escort arrived along with Pasha Ayas

r Dzelalzade Musztafa: Az országok osztályai és az utak felsorolása [The Classes of Countries and an Enumeration of Roads], 200.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 199.

at the head of the Anatolian forces. On August 10th, the people of Kőszeg, surveying from the castle walls, noticed in shock that the blockade had locked around them.

As reported earlier, the defence had been active in the five days that had passed between the arrival of the advance unit and that of the Sultan's forces. When the units from Szendrő drew near, on August 5th, the two surrounding villages of Németváros or Sziget in the north and Ungermarkt inhabited by Hungarians in the south, were still standing. The Captain of Kőszeg castle, who had unlimited power over the town, did everything to hold the surrounding villages, fortified with trenches and gates, as long as possible. This was where they kept the livestock that had been rescued. The Turkish army instantly tried to seize the animals. This happened on August 6th and the struggle for the villages went on for another three days.

There was really no hope of holding onto these for very long. On August 9th, Jurisics was compelled to set fire to both villages, lest they come to serve as a hiding place for the Turks. The remaining cattle were herded in behind the walls. On August 10th, before the blockade was completed, the Hungarians also managed to sally out and recapture a few of the animals. The town's silk flag had been soaking in the rain for days - telling the Turks that those within were ready to defend themselves. By this time, it was clear that a siege was inevitable.

It was also clear that the town would provide the backbone of the defence. In other words, this was going to be a siege of the town not of the castle. *'... as long as the town holds out, we can hold the castle, too, but not longer...'* wrote Miklós Jurisics to Ferdinand I.²⁹ This remark contains the entire strategic concept of the defence. The town had to be seen as the centre of defence as the castle was inside the town walls. To a contemporary this was obvious, as Kőszeg, built in the 13th-14th centuries, was a 'castle town' where defence was planned to take place on the town walls and not within the castle itself (Holl 2000: 17-18). At the time there were fewer guard towers to protect the walls than in the period following the siege. The Turkish onslaught struck the town in the middle of the renovation of the fortification system. Owing to financing and taxation urged by Ferdinand I and Miklós Jurisics, they had started erecting guard towers along the town walls (Bariska 1982/3: 242-258). However, only two of the five planned towers were com-

²⁹ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. [Report from Miklós Jurisics to King Ferdinand I] Kőszeg, Aug. 28, 1532, 35.

pleted before the siege: Rókafarok or Rókafok [Fuchszagel, Fox Corner] built in 1531 in the north-eastern corner of the walls; and the Sarkos-bástya (Eckturn, Corner Tower) built in 1532 roughly halfway along the straight stretch between the Öregbástya (Bastei, Old Tower) and the castle. This was the time when a second wall was constructed parallel to the western wall - the original Zwinger (wall walk) which the Old Tower was later named after. This second wall was badly needed as the neighbouring hills of vineyards offered the enemy excellent firing positions. A similar double wall was also erected on the southern stretch of the town wall (B. Benkhard 2000: 55-58).

Outside these towers and gate towers there stood the Lower Gate Tower [Alsókapu-torony] to the south, itself protected by the Old Tower that had once been separate from the wall; while on the north stood the Upper Gate Tower [Felsőkapu-torony]. Italian historian Paolo Giovio refers to the latter as the Austrian Gate.³⁰

The Sultan's chancellor noted that the people of Kőszeg sallied out at the forces that were first to arrive. *'It cost me great effort to hold the surrounding villages,'* wrote Miklós Jurisics on August 6th.³¹ Since he knew this mission was hopeless, the forays served a different purpose. *'While the Turks were drawing close, the people of Kőszeg lashed out from the castle onto the grassy plane in the villages as far as the Gyöngyös stream and actually fought them each time.'*³²

Pangracz Swankler, the town's notary mentions in his journal of the siege that the people of Kőszeg did not wait idly for the Turkish advance units to reach Kőszeg. It is clear that these sallies formed part of a conscious plan. The question arises whether the defence was consciously preparing to force a kind of tactical siege against the enemy. There was no hope whatever of holding onto the villages. At the same time, however, it seemed reasonable to provoke the advance units. On the one hand, this could be done without any major risk; on the other hand, it showed the enemy that the Hungarians were determined to engage in combat. It is also relevant that this was the first (castle) town along the route of the Turks which was loyal to Ferdinand I. The resistance that emerged on the far side of the Rába and in the area around Vienna and Graz, as well as the extreme difficulties suffered by the

³⁰ Paolo Giovio (Paulus Iovius): Jelenkori történetek könyve. [Contemporary History Book] 30. könyv, 153.

³¹ Jurisics Miklós levele Kirchzuschlag provizorának és polgárainak. [Letter from Miklós Jurisics to the provisory and burghers of Kirchzuschlag] Kőszeg, Aug. 6, 1532, 27.

³² Pangracz Swanklernak, Kőszeg város jegyzőjének leírása a város ostromáról. Kőszeg, [1532?], 41.

Turks, must be seen as jointly responsible for the way in which the Turks were received in Kőszeg. The Turkish army needed rest. They needed food and animal fodder. The janissaries had been promised that they would receive all of the wealth looted from the fortifications they occupied. Recent news about the actual size and strength of the Sultan's army was also more promising than before. The Sultan himself had been informed of the massive preparations that were underway in Vienna. They had brought no siege-guns which explains why they gave up on the idea of a siege of Vienna. There was more and more talk of confronting the Christian troops on open terrain. Any successful action against the Turks gained tactical significance. In the meantime, it was finally decided that the central camp of the Ottoman forces would be erected at Kőszeg (Sinkovics 1963: 28).³³ It must be emphasised once again that this meant outside the town rather than simply outside the castle, as they were preparing to besiege a fortified town.

A Unified Defence System

At the time, a simple home guard already existed in Kőszeg. According to records, every member of the senate (Rat), all of its aldermen (Ratsgeschworenen) were given the post of quarter master (Viertelmeister). This meant that administrative and justice officials also acted officially in the defence of the town, and they were not inexperienced. During the 1529 campaign against Vienna, neighbouring Borsmonostor (today Klostermarienberg, Burgenland, Austria) was completely destroyed in a Turkish foray which struck south of Vienna. At about the same time, the people of Kőszeg repelled a Turkish force which outnumbered them ten times, at considerable human cost (Prickler 1982: 236). What was revived here was the originally German institution of quarter master, known from Vienna and Sopron (Mollay 1983: 199). However, this was supplemented with the Hungarian system of 'petty officers.' It seems that in this age the post of quartermaster has to be seen as purely an office to do with town defence. The task of petty officers, however, also included administrative tasks. The first known list of quarter mas-

³³ Szulejmán szultán naplói IV. [Sultan's Journal, Vol. 4] Az 1532. évi hadjárat, 476.

ters was recorded in the famous Siege Journal,³⁴ including the names, of senators and quarter masters: Pál Erdős, Hans Kerssner, Miklós Bedóts, Mathes Lederer, Andres Slaher, Pangraz Swankler, Bálint Markó, Mathes Plickenofen, Ulrich Günser, Mihály Csun, Stefan Dachner and Benedek Veres. The council was headed by town magistrate Stefan Rempl, while at the head of the church of Kőszeg we find the parish priest Michael Alz. Unfortunately, the petty officers were not listed. This organisation had but one house of government at the time, and in times of war the castle captain was in charge of protecting the town. The institutions of castle captain and town captain were not separated until 1575 (Bariska 1986: 25-38).

In the letter mentioned previously, Jurisics reveals that the future of the castle depended on the defence of the town. It must be added that there was no chance for success unless the defence systems of the town and the castle were unified. The two had to be in one and the same hands. This could only be guaranteed by Miklós Jurisics exercising unlimited power. This was the last military event in the life of Kőszeg where the castle and the town formed an organizational unit, the military control of defence and the administration of local public power. In other words, it required that the town give up some of its autonomy. The defence of Kőszeg, one single unit in topographic terms, presupposed organisational unity. This is also indicated by the Siege Journal which puts the name of the captain before that of the parish priest and the town magistrate. *The master of the town is Lord Miklós Jurisics, Knight, Councillor of the Holy Roman Emperor, Captain of Kőszeg and St. Vid near Pflaum.*³⁵ Besides the title he had inherited from Croatia, we must stress that as the lien holder of the castle of Kőszeg, Jurisics was also captain of this burgher town. That he was both military and civilian commander is a practice that had been imported to the parts of Western Hungary held in Habsburg lien from the hereditary provinces, from the middle of the 15th century onwards, when the mercenary and office-holding nobility were pledged to these estates. With this act they also came to possess the right to military power (Bariska 2002: 59-60). The Bratislava Agreement of 1491 reserved for the Habsburgs the right to nominate captains and castellan for the annexed Western Hungarian castles (Aull 1930: 90). In addition, there is no title next

³⁴ VaML. KFL. Tk. Lvt. 179.sz. Dürkösche Belegerung vor Günß Im Monat Augusti des 1532 Jars. továbbá Ostromemlékezet 1532. Pangratz Swanklernak, Kőszeg város jegyzőjének leírása a város ostromáról. Kőszeg török ostroma az 1532. esztendő augusztus havában, 18-24.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

to the name of the town magistrate Stofan Rempl to indicate that he held any rank in the home guard which is curious since later when they appointed the first independent town captain, they chose the town magistrate.³⁶ Attempts to separate these offices ultimately failed in 1611. From that time on, local power remained in one person's hands.

As the fortification system continued to develop (towers, quartermasters, petty officers), the organisation of defence also grew more structured. Thus by 1532 there were four other elected lieutenants (Hauptleute) functioning in the town under Jurisics: András Bedóts, Mathes Lederer, Martin Schneider and Hans Krammer. They and their subordinates were responsible for the four towers. Georg Kromoser became Sergeants (Wachtmeister) of the home guard (Horváth 1963: 46). The Siege Journal also includes the names of Ensign Hans Ygl (Fähnrich, Weibel), as well as Sergeants (Wachtmeister) German Swankier, Peter Schmid and Erhard Schuster, and the excellent Chief of Artillery (Feuermeister) Mátyás Forintos. The register also names the drummer (Trommelschläger) and the piper (Pfeifer).

There were altogether 38 cavalry soldiers serving directly under Jurisics. In a letter of August 28, 1532, he wrote '*I arrived here with ten armed cavalry soldiers and 28 hussars.*'³⁷ Whether he had been granted any money to set up his escort has not been clarified. Being a Knight (Ritter) at this time, he belonged to the Lower Austrian common nobility (Ritterstand). It wasn't until after the siege that Ferdinand I granted him the baronetcy (Freiherr) which made him a member of the higher nobility (Herrenstand) (Taucher 1932: 16). Jurisics was obliged to provide properly armed cavalymen. After the siege Ferdinand I hinted that '*this little town was not sent any mercenaries either from its own country or from other countries.*'³⁸ Sebastian Schärtlin von Burtenbach, fighting as a mercenary of Augsburg, believed that the estates had sent 100 men to Kőszeg.³⁹ As he was also a lieutenant colonel (Oberst-lieutenant) of the imperial army (Hammer-Purgstall: 1963: 115), he must have been rela-

³⁶ Kőszeg város ülésjegyzőkönyve. Protocollum. 1572-1575. Kőszeg, 1574. ápr. 25. 69., valamint Kőszeg város adóügyi iratai. Conscriptioes. Kö 510-512. Musterregister der Statt Günß 1575. Besetzung der Stattmaur...4

³⁷ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. [Reports from Miklós Jurisics to King Ferdinand I] Kőszeg, Aug. 28, 1532. In: Ostromemlékezet 1532, 35.

³⁸ I. Ferdinánd király levele Jurisics Miklósnak. Linz, [Letters from King Ferdinand I to Miklós Jurisics] Sept. 12, 1532, 49.

³⁹ Sebastian Schärtlin von Burtenbach augsburgi zsoldoskapitány levele Augsburg város tanácsának. Bécs, Sept. 5, 1532, 127.

tively well-informed. This detail also seems to indicate that the Lower Austrian estates had an obligation to provide soldiers. It was with these that Jurisics first set off to Vienna, having *'left the castle, relatively well-prepared compared to my desperate situation, in the hands of an honorable nobleman'*.⁴⁰ The identity of this nobleman is unknown. It must be noted, however, that besides Jurisics one more name is mentioned repeatedly by sources: that of Baron Longin von Puchheim.⁴¹ What is known about him is that on August 14, 1532, he repelled the siege against Szalónak with help from Styria and Kraina.

The same source also mentions *'spoken and written reports sent by Lord Nikolics, captain of Kőszeg, and Baron Longin von Puchheim'* that Ferdinand I was urged to relieve Kőszeg. Istvánffy wrote that Ferdinand I had sent him to Kőszeg *'with a German squadron'*, but this was before the siege. He added that Nikolics *'added another hundred infantrymen'*, using his own funds.⁴² These contradictory reports cannot be reconciled.

Puchheim himself was under threat at Szalónak, so he was unable to move from there. The above mentioned letter, dated at Szalónak, rules out the possibility that he left the castle. It is even less likely that he went to Kőszeg which was completely surrounded by Turks. Naturally, there should be some explanation why sources attribute such an active role to Baron Puchheim in the context of Kőszeg. Istvánffy was informed that while Jurisics was gone to the Turkish camp for talks with Ibrahim, *'he had left the castle and the town in the care of his fellow-officer Longin Puchheim...'*⁴³ As far as is known, Jurisics's first wife was Baroness Katharina Puchheim (Taucher 1932:17). Some say she was the sister of Longin von Puchheim and so the Captain of Szalónak might have been Jurisics's brother-in-law (Bakay 2001: 263). This cannot be confirmed. What can be confirmed is that *'this little town was not sent any mercenaries either from its own country or from other countries.'* This was stated by Ferdinand I in a letter written to Miklós Jurisics directly after the siege, in September 1532.⁴⁴ The letter is as good as a confession. It also

⁴⁰ I. Ferdinánd király levele Jurisics Miklósnak (Letters from King Ferdinand I to Miklós Jurisics]. Linz, Sept. 12, 1532, 35.

⁴¹ Az egyetemes kereszténység ősi ellenségének a töröknek Ausztria ellen indított második had-járatának hiteles leírása,... Nürnberg, 1539, 141.

⁴² Istvánffy Miklós: A magyarok történetéből. Kőszeg ostroma - Jurisics Miklós [From Hungarian History. The Siege of Kőszeg- Miklós Jurisics] (1532), 64.

⁴³ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁴ I. Ferdinánd király levele Jurisics Miklósnak (Letters from King Ferdinand I to Miklós Jurisics]. Linz, Sept. 12, 1532, 49.

makes it quite clear that Istvánffy was misinformed in terms of facts and figures concerning the German squadron sent to Kőszeg and of Puchheim himself. This opinion is confirmed by one of the earliest analysts of the siege, Martin Rosnak, in a book written in 1789 (Rosnak 1990: 117).

It was mentioned earlier that subjects from the Nádasdy estates, including people from Csepreg, went to Kőszeg to escape the siege. *'Lord Mikolicz praises and commends highly your Highness's serfs who came with him from Csepreg, as they all behaved most decently'* - wrote Tamás Nádasdy's *servitor* at Léka to his landlord.⁴⁵ Miklós Jurisics reported that *'even among them at first I found no more than about 700 able bodied men.'*⁴⁶ *'I did not find more than 1,000 able bodied men in the town, local or foreign, who could stand on the walls,'* wrote the notary of Kőszeg in the Siege Journal.⁴⁷ He adds that 418 people died or were shot during the siege. This figure is highly plausible. In 1575, the Kőszeg home guard consisted of 438 people (Bariska 1986: 47). At the time, 286 people were ordered to fight directly on the walls and the town was twice as large as it had been in 1532.⁴⁸ This way the town could only spare 250-300 people for the defence. Thus, the Siege Journal is correct when it talks of 1,000 men from local and more distant parts among the defenders. Between the walls there were 800 women and 2300 children and old people, i.e., just over 4,000 souls awaiting their fate.

The Turkish Siege of Kőszeg

It is no wonder that these people were overcome by horror when the vast Turkish army arrived on August 5, 1532. Four days later, on August 9th, under Ibrahim's command, they started digging trenches for cannons. Behind these they hid field cannons called *falcons* and *falconettes*, as the heavy siege cannons had not arrived in Kőszeg. Lodovico Dolce, biographer of Ferdinand I, was also under the impression that *'The news reached Vienna that*

⁴⁵ Hirnik Lőrinc lékai szervitor levele urának, Nádasdy Tamásnak. Léka, Sept. 4, 1532, 45.

⁴⁶ Jurisics Miklós levele I. Ferdinánd királynak. [Letters from Miklós Jurisics to King Ferdinand I] Kőszeg, Aug. 28, 1532, 35.

⁴⁷ Pangratz Swanklernak, Kőszeg város jegyzőjének leírása a város ostromáról. Kőszeg török ostroma az 1532. esztendő augusztus havában, 44.

⁴⁸ VaML. KFL. Tk. Lvt. Pótsorozat I/XV. Bécs, May 24, 1526.

*Suleiman ... was not bringing mortars.*⁴⁹ This is partly contradicted by the sources which state that after the siege the retreating Turks left a heavy siege-gun behind at Weissenburg (Hammer-Burgstall 1963: 117).

They posted eight carriage guns they had brought along in the vineyard hills to the west of the town, opposite what they called the Zwinger. Sultan Suleiman was surprised to find that Jurisics had set the neighbouring villages on fire. Therefore, he ordered an investigation on August 10th and subsequently gave rapid orders to attack. Benedikt Kuripecsics, interpreter to the envoys of Ferdinand I wrote the same, as he arrived in Kőszeg with the Sultan's army. '*We arrived at the town of Kőszeg on August 10th, St. Laurence's day, and the town was put under heavy siege on the very same day.*'⁵⁰

Turkish cannons fired for three days, but the 4-5 kg iron balls of the *falcones* and the 1 kg balls of the *falconettes* could do little real damage to the walls. On August 13th, however, Grand Vizier Ibrahim ordered his forces to charge. They rushed the walls from four sides, equipped with ropes and ladders. A desperate struggle ensued. The defenders, however, managed to hold out. The siege lasted four days in which time the defence repelled more than a dozen waves of onslaught, nine of them extremely fierce, even though it cost them heavy losses.

Outside, the Turkish camp was overcome by unease and restlessness. They had expected quick success but after seven days failure loomed darker than ever. To make things worse, it rained incessantly. Shortage of food and animal fodder made the Turks in the Kőszeg camp nervous. '*You must also learn that there is a real shortage of bread in the Turkish camp. They have enough grain and fodder but there are no mills to grind it, so they are short of flour.*'⁵¹ This confession was made by a Turk who was captured and interrogated. The famine that struck the camp had a greater influence on the outcome of events than has previously been thought, although Szerémi seems to have believed that during the campaign a great number of men died of starvation. '*Therefore, the Emperor had his camp removed to the Fertő-köz. Then a great many military men died from the famine.*'⁵² This was also what the anonymous Italian correspondent

⁴⁹ Lodovico Dolce: Az e néven első Ferdinánd császárnak életeírása. In: Ostromemlékezet 1532, 164.

⁵⁰ Kuripecsics Benedek jelentése I. Ferdinánd király követeinek követjárásáról, 83.

⁵¹ Két újonnan elfogott török kihallgatása és válaszai [Interrogation and Replies of Two Newly Captured Turks] Bécs [?], end of August 1532, 124.

⁵² Szerémi György: Magyarország romlásáról. 53. A szultán ismételt kudarca Bécs alatt, 61.

stated. *'As far as food is concerned, both here and during the entire campaign there was a great shortage of everything.'*⁵³ Sebastian Schärtin, Lieutenant Colonel from Augsburg, wrote anxiously to Vienna: *'do not neglect to tell them that the Turks crossed the Rába at some points, the corn had not been burned and it is believed that they are transporting it in some way or other to the camp near Vienna.'*⁵⁴

This letter informs us of two things: that the defence did not manage to set the crops on fire everywhere to save it from the enemy; and that difficulties in getting supplies for the Turkish army had indeed become extreme. It was also in this connection that Hans Katzianer had all the mills along the Rába destroyed in mid-August.⁵⁵ This mercenary captain from Augsburg wrote in late August 1532 that famine had now reached a strategically significant level. Talking of the Sultan he wrote, *'It is commonly believed that he is having to move on because of the famine. They are paying twelve Aspers for a loaf of bread which we buy for one Viennese Denar, and discipline has quite disintegrated in their army.'*⁵⁶

The overall atmosphere was becoming intolerable for want of food and fodder. The Turks themselves admitted that each day they had to execute around 10-12 men for marauding and arson.⁵⁷ The confessions of two captured Turks are most convincing. To the question whether there was starvation in the Turkish camp, *'the first one answered that a loaf the size of my fist cost 10 Asper, fodder was 40 Asper, and many were believed to be dying of starvation. The other prisoner stated that many people died of starvation as there was no food or water.'*⁵⁸ Aspers were actually nothing other than the small silver Turkish coins, the *Akche*. At this time 50 Akche was the equivalent of 1 Rein gold coin and 60 Akche were worth 1 Hungarian gold Forint. 1 Akche was worth 2 Denar (Thury 1893: 397). These details are very telling. At certain places in the description of the siege these facts must be placed in conjunction with the behaviour of the janissaries. Particularly relevant is a fact mentioned earlier,

⁵³ Egy névtelen, valószínűleg velencei olasz tudósítása. Belgrád, July 7, 97.

⁵⁴ Sebastian Schärtin von Burtenbach augsburgi zsoldoskapitány levele Augsburg város tanácsának. Bécs, Aug. 17, 1532, 113.

⁵⁵ Egy névtelen jelentése Hans Katzianer alsó-ausztriai kapitánynak. Gesse [Gottschee], Aug. 17, 1532, 113.

⁵⁶ Sebastian Schärtin von Burtenbach augsburgi zsoldoskapitány levele Augsburg város tanácsának. Fussbrunnen, Aug. 29, 1532, 120.

⁵⁷ Ket újonnan elfogott török kihallgatása és válaszai [Interrogation and Replies of Two Newly Captured Turks] Bécs[?], end of Aug. 1532. 122.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 122.

namely that they had formed a committee. What was the reason for this? What is the basis for this step taken by the janissary Aga?

On August 14th and 15th the Turkish leadership consented to launch the siege against Szalónak and Sárvár. These actions failed and many Turks were captured. This was the piece of news delivered on August 17th to Katzianer in Vienna by a courier on horseback, stating that the Janissaries had lost their patience. The Sultan had only promised to offer to their representatives. *The Emperor replied that they had to be patient until Kőszeg was taken and then he would let them have all the food that they found in the town and would lead them into battle that way.*⁵⁹

In the meantime, Grand Vizier Ibrahim admitted that his inferior cannons had proved a failure, and he resorted to new tactics. He ordered sappers to dig mines to blow up the walls. This meant a new phase in the siege. From August 17th onwards they started constructing mine shafts. The moats surrounding the walls at Kőszeg took two days to dig because of the incessant rainfall. The attackers planned to hide Janissaries with shotguns behind the entrenchments. As soon as the mines destroyed the walls, the Janissaries would charge instantly. Led by Chief of Artillery Mátyás Forintos, the defenders of Kőszeg dug observation mine shafts within the walls, opposite the Turkish mines. This is how they managed to repel the first mine attack before the explosion was actually set off (Marosi 1975: 436.).⁶⁰ On August 20th the town was struck by a massive hailstorm. On the next day, however, Ibrahim once again ordered his men to lay mines. Still lacking siege-guns, he trusted he could breach the walls this way. In order to prepare for this, he veered away from the millrace of the Gyöngyös. This millrace had once fed the moat which surrounded the inner town and the castle. This action was indispensable if they wanted to successfully lay the mines. On August 21st, they tied the explosion of the mines to a very special plan of attack. All of this, of course, was kept secret, therefore Jurisics and his defenders did not at first notice what was happening.

Ibrahim ordered the *azabs*, the irregular infantry involved in digging the mines and the Janissaries forming the Sultan's guard, to the stretch of wall opposite the destroyed Magyarváros part of the town. This was where the Lower Gate Tower stood. This southern stretch of wall was protected partly

⁵⁹ Egy névtelen jelentése Hans Katzianer alsó-ausztriai kapitánynak. Gesse [Gottschee], Aug. 17, 1532, 114.

⁶⁰ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 28, 1532, 34.

by the Zwinger and partly by the Southern Town Gate. As elsewhere, the town was guarded here by a double wall. At the same time, Ibrahim ordered his men to fire at the defenders from the north, where the part of town called Sziget stood before it was destroyed. From the height of the vineyard hills these cannons could easily cause damage to the defenders. This double attack took many victims. To prevent a recurrence of this, Miklós Jurisics thought of a simple solution. He had an entrenchment of three and a half meters built out of timber and planks taken off the houses.⁶¹ On one occasion, a Turkish mine successfully exploded. To prevent the intrusion of Turkish infantry, they blocked the collapsed section with earthworks and barrels filled with soil. The emerging hand-to-hand combat took the lives of many Turks as well as Hungarians.

Ibrahim judged mine warfare promising. He thus called for the preparation of a general attack for August 22nd. He gave orders to the Rumelian army to continue filling the moats. This process, launched earlier, lasted another two days. They had plenty of wood from the nearby forests. This time, however, they dug their mines by night, not during the day as before.⁶²

A crucial moment arrived. The people of Kőszeg realised that they could not expect help from anywhere as the feudal estates of Hungary and the provinces had just been ordered to Vienna. Those within the walls lost hope. Some prepared themselves for treason. They threw scrolls of paper over the walls into the Turkish camp stating that they would give up the struggle in return for a free and honorable withdrawal.⁶³ Allegedly, all of this had been prepared by one of Pasha Ibrahim's secret councillors, '*a natural born Christian.*' Grand Vizier Ibrahim and Anatolian Pasha Ayas declined the offer. Beg Feridun, however, admitted that this treason was discovered by the people of Kőszeg themselves.

Ibrahim was convinced that the defenders could not hold out much longer and news confirmed this belief. On top of all this, the mines dug overnight were not discovered within the walls. Ibrahim took success for granted, so much so that he promised the Sultan that on August 23rd he would definitely occupy the town. Upon hearing this, the Padishah made his way to the vineyards in the hills rising over the town, accompanied by his escort of Janissary guards, the *solans*, and two envoys of Ferdinand I who had

⁶¹ Paolo Giovio (Paulus Iovius): Jelenkori történetek könyve. 30. könyv, 151.

⁶² Szulejmán szultán naplói. IV. Az 1532. évi hadjárat, 176.

⁶³ Ibid. 176.

been detained in the Turkish camp: Joseph von Lamberg from Kraina and the Italian Leonardo Nogarola from Vicenza. This hill is still called the Sul-tan's Plateau in the local lore (Chernel 1877-1878: II. 33).

The Janissary army, several thousand men strong, lined up behind the gun entrenchments in four vast formations.⁶⁴ This meant that they were pre-paring to attack from four sides. The elite infantry waited for the mines placed at night to make a hole in the walls. This happened quickly and the town wall collapsed with a thunderous crash on a stretch of about 18-19 me- tres. The Janissaries rushed through the gap. They were met, however, by concentrated fire from the defenders, a shower of rocks and a group of lancers. The Turks attacked in several waves. Earthwork and earth barrels proved useful once again and the Turkish onslaught was finally repelled. However, this charge caused serious losses on both sides. *'I, too, lost my most faithful servants in this attack and my heart grieves for them bitterly,'* wrote Jurisics to Ferdinand I.⁶⁵

Ibrahim's thoroughly prepared attack became another failure. This time, however, not only the Janissary Aga but the Sultan also lost faith in Grand Vizier Ibrahim. It looked likely that the Turkish military leadership would become divided, and its members turn against each other. This was the only hope that kept the defenders alive. They were trusting that the some sort of crisis would erupt in the Turkish camp. This was not unrealistic. By this time there were extremely great losses on both sides in terms of manpower, supplies, ammunition and morale.

Sources claim that a period of regeneration ensued on both sides - and a two-day rainfall. Jurisics hopelessly entreated Vienna for help: *'Amid great danger I sent a courier to Vienna The courier returned but brought neither soldiers, nor gunpowder- so he came without bringing any hope of relief.'* The request was carried to Vienna, with the mediation of Szalónak, by the knights *Felitian von Petschach* and *Helfried von Megau*.⁶⁶ This was written by a supporter of the Supreme Commander of the Christian forces, Prince Elector of Pfalz Friedrich II, from Passau.⁶⁷ When mediation at Szalónak is mentioned, it means that

⁶⁴Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 28, 1532, 34.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 34.

⁶⁶ Az egyetemes kereszténység ősi ellenségének, a töröknek Ausztria ellen indított második hadjáratának hiteles leírása, amiként az az elmúlt 1532. esztendőben valóban megtörtént ... Nürnberg 1539, 141.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 35

the couriers referred to reports by Jurisics, Captain of Kőszeg and Baron Longin von Puchheim. It is easy to imagine that the two messengers got into Kőszeg, under blockade, through the hills, with the help of Puchheim from Szalónak. A councillor from Vienna claimed that there were still 600 people in Kőszeg, mostly women and children who had been *'living solely on leaven for eight days.'*⁶⁸

The united Christian army of 86,000, supposedly preparing to approach Vienna, was still not ready. At any rate, as Ferdinand I had written to Jurisics after the siege, *'... we could not risk attacking the Turks by force, make them run or beat them out.'* On this occasion he admitted, *'the relief and supplies mentioned above could not reach you, as indeed even later this proved impossible.'*⁶⁹

A military spy from the Szepesség, Hans Gennersberger, returned to Kőszeg with the same disheartening news (Bakay 2001: 251). Dressed as a Turk, he entered the town during one of the attacks. All he brought with him were encouraging words from Ferdinand I. The monarch's message was read out to the defenders. Gennersberger was let down into the moat on a rope at night and he successfully reached Vienna again, even though he met some foraging Turks on the way. In order to escape he hid behind a dead camel.

On August 26th, the Turkish camp was once again preparing for a massive attack. Ibrahim issued a new command, this time also addressed to the more rested Anatolian army. Preparations for a new plan for action were made after he admitted that attacks based on exploding mines had proved a failure. They carried wood on mules and camels to the bottom of the walls.⁷⁰ They cut timber of equal lengths - almost two and a half meters each. Using these, they built pyramid-shaped towers taller than the towers along the north-eastern corner of the town wall.⁷¹ They positioned these towers so that they flanked the Fox Corner Bastion. From one they could keep the eastern wall, i.e., the fighting line of the defenders under control, while from the other they could watch over the wing on the northern stretch. When the defenders noticed this, they filled a few small wooden barrels with sulphur, tar and tallow and threw them over the wooden towers. Next they threw sheaves of corn and straw and set them on fire over the wall. They managed

⁶⁸ Egy bécsi tanácsos által Strassburgba küldött röplap... Bécs[?], Sept. 21, 1532, after 134.

⁶⁹ I. Ferdinánd király levele Jurisics Milósnak. Linz, Sept. 12, 1532.

⁷⁰ Szulejmán szultán naplói. IV. Az 1532. évi hadjárat, 176.

⁷¹ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 37-38.

to set one of the towers on fire, but the attackers soon extinguished the flames.

On the next day, August 27th, all hell finally broke loose. Thousands of flaming arrows and incendiary projectiles were fired over the town. Jurisics himself found it impossible to explain how the castle escaped catching fire. The continuing rainfall must have played a part. By this time everyone was fighting. Even the women had taken up arms. Ibrahim himself was considering deploying his regular cavalry, the *spahi*. Occasionally, repeated attacks were successfully repelled. At four o'clock in the afternoon however, another fierce Turkish charge was launched. Four Turkish flags were successfully hoisted on the walls, but a breakthrough still did not take place.

The Janissary Uprising, Negotiations and the Truce

The entry for August 28th in the Kőszeg Siege Journal states that the Turks performed their most bloody onslaughts on this day. Attacks lasted from early morning till one o'clock in the afternoon.⁷² This day, however, began with an odd interlude. Before the attacks began, Ibrahim proposed talks. In- deed, he repeated his offer three times. First he sent a committee consisting of four high ranking Turks to the bottom of the walls to talk about surren- dering the castle and the town.⁷³ Jurisics did not agree to this. They asked for another set of talks. The reply soon reached the Sultan '*who was overcome by terrible anger. The Pasha Ibrahim, however, seemed ready to help me out,*' continues the Captain of Kőszeg.

Here we must return to the promise made earlier of contrasting facts against the behaviour of the Janissaries. Why did the Janissaries decide to form a committee? What was in the background of the Janissary Aga's deci- sion? Unless these questions can be answered, Ibrahim's tactics cannot be understood; nor can sense be made of what took place within the Turkish military leadership and why the Grand Vizier repeatedly initiated negotia- tions. Clarifying this once and for all has practical as well as theoretical sig- nificance. It is important as a matter of principle because if the wrong ap-

⁷² Pangratz Swanklernak, Kőszeg város jegyzőjének leírása a város ostromáról. Kőszeg török ostroma az 1532. esztendő augusztus havában, 43.

⁷³ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinand királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 37.

proach is taken with regard to these important details, the entire history of the siege of Kőszeg is bound to be misinterpreted. It is also important from a practical point of view because the sources include a plausible explanation for the final outcome without having to leave it to our imagination.

There are fragments of sources which, without such analysis, are likely to mislead the historian and the reader. *'Pasha Ibrahim, however, seemed ready to help me out.'* This sentence is a quote from the Captain of Kőszeg. This is indeed misleading, but can be understood if the following is considered: Tamás

Nádasdy received a letter from Lorine Hirnik, his *servitor* at Léka, with reference to Jurisics: *'Lord Mikolicz is commending Pasha Ibrahim highly. If it had not been for him, he would have been finished and done for. He had known him when he was still an envoy with the Emperor (i.e. the Sultan - author's note) and he wants him to serve him till the end of his life while retaining his rank. Lord Mikolicz has already written to say to Ferdinand that hereafter he could just as well give his castles to whores to protect as he had done to these worthy gentlemen. And that Lord Mikolicz believes your Highness much more than before concerning affairs at Buda, etc.'*⁷⁴ This fragment does contain some very pointed criticism of Ferdinand I as well as an approximation to the point of view held at Buda, to Szapolyai's pro-Turkish policy, but it is easy to misunderstand.

In Hungary a whole body of literature has accrued about how Jurisics symbolically surrendered Kőszeg to the Turks. This is why it is surprising that Ibrahim's situation has not been analysed in detail. Had this been done, it would have revealed that this was nothing like a plain case of surrender. It is commonly known that Jurisics declined all offers and demands made by the Grand Vizier and it is worth noting exactly what Ibrahim offered Jurisics. According to the first version, Kőszeg would be spared if Jurisics became a taxpayer to the Buda vassal of the Turks. According to the second, Jurisics was supposed to pay *'two hundred Hungarian gold Forints instantly to the Captain of the Turkish infantry'* the Aga of the Janissaries.⁷⁵ What Ibrahim stated was that the Sultan had donated Kőszeg to the Aga of the Janissaries. The reason for this was that the Janissaries had suffered the most during the siege of Kőszeg.

At this point it is worth quoting the Janissaries sent to the Sultan saying that they wanted to fight. *'It is high time for it (i.e. for fighting - author's note) and*

⁷⁴ Hirnik Lőrinc lékai szervitor levele urának, Nádasdy Tamásnak. Léka, Sept. 4, 1532, 45-46.

⁷⁵ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 37.

anyway, they are more willing to meet their deaths in battle than to die of starvation.⁷⁶

There is no need to be shy about qualifying these events. What happened was as good as a Janissary rebellion in the Turkish camp at Kőszeg. They had to be pacified by some means or other. They had always been, after all, the force able to decide the outcome of battles and sieges. As previously mentioned, because of this the Sultan was forced to make them some sort of a promise. He pledged that after the occupation of Kőszeg the Janissaries could have all the spoils of war including all the food that could be found in the town. Ibrahim was in a difficult position because he came into conflict with the Aga of the Janissaries. At this point in the siege, discontent among the Janissaries was the gravest reason why Grand Vizier Ibrahim was forced to become involved in negotiations. *'The Pasha Ibrahim, however, seemed ready to help me out,'* wrote Jurisics in the above quote. There was more in the background to his openness to negotiations than the fact that the military occupation of Kőszeg had failed for three weeks. The crisis amid the Turkish leadership also forced Serakser Ibrahim to do the same. The talks took place between two parties of sharply unequal status who knew each other from much earlier times in Constantinople. Just as the Grand Vizier was under pressure from the Janissaries, it cannot be forgotten that Jurisics risked his life going to the Turkish camp for talks, *'the captain of the Janissaries demanded ... that I should let him enter the castle, all alone, so that he could survey the cavalry in-side.*

⁷⁷ That must have been an interesting scene. During the talks conducted by the Grand Vizier, the Aga of the Janissaries demanded that he should personally, be allowed to check the conditions of the defence. He did not trust the captain of the castle, but he was equally distrustful of the Grand Vizier. This latter fact is decisive. It proves that the loss of confidence was now complete within the Turkish military leadership.

It was after these failed talks that Ibrahim ordered the attacks that took place on August 28th. By this time the Turkish Sultan had left Kőszeg and set up camp one day's distance from the town. The final developments took place without him. The Grand Vizier had completely lost patience and did not trust the Janissaries, so he deployed his cavalry. That the *spahi* should be forced to take part in a siege was unprecedented. The onslaught was concentrated once more on the north-east. They employed planks to connect the

⁷⁶ Egy névtelen jelentése Hans Katzianer alsó-ausztriai captain generalnak. Gesse, (Gottschée), Aug. 17, 1532, 114.

⁷⁷ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 39.

pyramid-shaped fighting towers and the wall. Invasion was launched simultaneously along the two side walls of the Rókafok (Fox's Corner) Bastion. The Turks were only a hair's breath from victory when something else unprecedented occurred: no fewer than eight Turkish flags were raised up onto the walls.⁷⁸ News of this soon reached the church of St. Jakab and the chapel of St. Katalin where the multitude of old people, women and children who had survived the previous trials and tribulations had gathered. They believed that the right of asylum in these sacred places would protect them should the Turks break through the walls. Hearing of the emergency, this crowd of people panicked. In their terrible fear they began to scream and shout and each concerned for the lives of their loved ones, they rushed toward the endangered stretch of wall. The invading Turks took this noise to mean that armed soldiers who had been hiding in the houses were now approaching, so they backed off. The Turkish onslaught halted (Lelkes 1960:17). The defenders launched a counter-attack and even snatched two of the Turkish flags. Later they threw these out of the castle after the Turks.

It is worth noting the legend which later came to be associated with this event. Tradition has it that on this day the figure of St. Martin appeared on the walls, and with his sword drawn forced the Turks to retreat. Paolo Giovio, the Italian historiographer writing about Charles V, incorporated this story in Chapter 30 of his book: *'The Turks said that they heard the vigorous shouting of the guard breaking out, all intact, from inside the castle and then in the air they caught sight of a rider with his sword drawn who threatened them as they carried on with the attack. This cannot have been anyone other than the figure of St. Martin...'*⁷⁹ The humanist historian also added that at times of hardship St. Martin always came to the rescue of the people of Szombathely. *'... anyway'*, he went on to say, *the fact that this miracle did indeed happen is proved by Nicolizza who revealed this story to me in Vienna, after much questioning.'* We suggest that the reader not laugh at this legend. It is like a nut - you need to break it up in order to get to the nourishing part. What happens if Giovio's insert only differs in terms of genre? In other words, it is a form for transmitting a story the essence of which is true? Miklós Istvánffy also borrowed this element. *'... a rider of vast and imposing stature with shining weapons dashed out from the castle... This engendered such an unusual degree of fear and horror in the Turks that they retreated from the walls*

⁷⁸ I. Ferdinánd király levele Jurisics Miklósnak. Linz, Sept. 12, 1532, 49.

⁷⁹ Paolo Giovio (Paulus Iovius): Jelenkori történetek könyve. 30. könyv, 154.

*in a frenzied rush.*⁸⁰ In Istvánffy the scene turns into a migrant motif, indeed Pannonia's patron saint, St. Martin, becomes the protector of Kőszeg. Aside from this borrowing and the fact that St. Martin is known to have a similar cult in Italy and Vienna, there is one remarkable element. Other sources are unanimous in stating that after this last battle the Turks could not be prevailed upon to start another attack. *'They interpreted the shouting and screaming of our women and children to mean that we had concealed armed militia within the houses and this made them turn on their heels. Behold, the Great God Almighty came to our rescue.'*⁸¹ This was the most essential moment. The attackers completely misunderstood the panic that had erupted within the walls. At the same time, the defenders were unable to explain why the Turkish attack had suddenly ended. Charles V's historiographer apparently was not satisfied by the explanation given by Jurisics - that what had happened could only be explained as a miracle from God. These events were given the stamp of authenticity by including the intervention of the patron saint of Pannonia. Lodovico Dolce, historiographer to Ferdinand I, also borrowed this.⁸² Benedikt Kuripecsics, interpreter to the envoys, who had watched the siege from the Turkish camp, wrote, *'without the help of God nothing would have helped. Instead the two parties came to a mutual agreement.'*⁸³

In this last siege the defenders lost 60 lives. This is a high number particularly when you consider that the entire siege took 418 casualties. Jurisics himself was also wounded, struck by a *spahi's* lance and hit by a bullet from a Janissary's gun. According to the interpreter of the Turkish envoys, *'on the Turkish side they lost 2,000 men.'*⁸⁴ Siegmund von Weixelberg, captain of Kraina, wrote to the Styrian Captain to say that according to Ibrahim's servant, the Grand Vizier *'had lost 5,000 Janissaries and his best warriors at Kőszeg.'*⁸⁵ The Siege Journal speaks of considerably lower figures, mentioning only 765

⁸⁰ Istvánffy Miklós: A magyarok történetéből. Kőszeg ostroma - Jurisics Miklós (1532), 66.

⁸¹ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 38.

⁸² Lodovico Dolce: Az e néven első Ferdinánd császárnak életírása, 165.

⁸³ Kuripecsics Benedek jelentése I. Ferdinánd király követeinek követjárásáról. May 3-Sept. 2, 1532, 84.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 84.

⁸⁵ Siegmund von Weixelberg krajnai kapitány levele Hans von Ungandnak, a stájer captain generalnak. Neudau, Aug. 20, 1532, 115.

Turkish casualties.⁸⁶ As already indicated, by this time the Sultan was no longer staying at the Kőszeg camp. He received the news from Beg Jafer, a member of the Sultan's cavalry guard, who had carried the message to Sza-kony, Sopron County. According to his news, Kőszeg had surrendered to the army of Sultan Suleiman. The Padishah gave the courier 500 gold coins and a caftan, and raised his income by 10,000 Akche.⁸⁷ This was a customary reward to messengers with good news and a way of celebrating the recent victory.

Serakser Ibrahim was just as desperately in need of the truce as Jurisics himself. *'As the Turkish Emperor saw the great strength and brave hearts of the Christians, he was quite overcome with despair as he had been camping outside Kőszeg with all his army for 25 days. His men and beasts were suffering. As soon as he had a chance to depart in dignity, the Porta invited the Captain to express his humility and acquiescence and reached a truce with him.'*⁸⁸

The essential point is that the two parties reached a truce. The agreement was made by Grand Vizier Ibrahim, taking great care to make sure that from the Turkish point of view it should look like surrender. Ibrahim was also in sore need of such an appearance - partly because of the Padishah and partly because of the Janissary Aga. Talks were initiated by Ibrahim to take place in the Grand Vizier's tent erected on the grassy commons of the town. Jurisics arrived there wounded. It was with reference to his injuries that he declined Ibrahim's proposal. Ibrahim had asked him to escort him to the Sultan's camp so that Jurisics could kiss the Sultan's hand. *'I noticed about him',* wrote Jurisics, *'that he understood quite clearly why I was reluctant to go to the Emperor (i.e. the Sultan - author's note) and that I thought highly of him.'*⁸⁹ This was a significant gesture on Ibrahim's part: he spared Jurisics the pain of having to kiss the Sultan's hand.

Before he left the castle to go the Turkish camp, he impressed upon the guards that if he were to come to harm while away, they must not surrender the town or the castle on his behalf. Before this happened, an hour was spent in talks about what was to be done with the citizens of the town and

⁸⁶ VaML. KFL. 179. sz. Dürküshe Belegerung vor Günß Im Monat Augusti des 1532 Jars. 4. A róla készült forráskiadványban még nem szerepel a török áldozatok száma, de ezt azóta megfejtették.

⁸⁷ Szulejmán szultán naplói. IV. Az 1532. évi hadjárat, 177.

⁸⁸ Pangratz Swanklernak, Kőszeg város jegyzőjének leírása a város ostromáról. Kőszeg török ostroma az 1532. esztendő augusztus havában, 43.

⁸⁹ Jurisics Miklós jelentése I. Ferdinánd királynak. Kőszeg, Aug. 30, 1532, 39.

Jurisics's subjects. At the talks the two parties aimed primarily at concluding what had happened in Kőszeg while bearing in mind mutual interests. It must be emphasized that this took place between clearly uneven parties. The transaction did not even have an official character, as Jurisics was not negotiating in the name of Ferdinand I. '*Pasha Ibrahim and I held talks about a certain matter, and he requested that I should alter the report to your Majesty about it,*' wrote Jurisics to Ferdinand I.⁹⁰ In this matter we must resort to guess-work. We do not know what he was supposed to report about, but it has no particular significance, either, as it did not affect the truce. Ibrahim arranged for the Sultan to donate the town and castle of Kőszeg altogether to Jurisics. We might say that the Sultan considered Kőszeg as good as conquered. At the same time, he left the Captain of Kőszeg in possession of all that was already his. Jurisics accepted this but instead of kissing Ibrahim's hand, he kissed his caftan '*for the sake of greater honour.*' The affair was heavily laden with Oriental symbolism. The Sultan's Journal said, '*This morning (26th day of the month of Moharrem year 939, i.e. August 28, 1532 - author's note) Mikola, Beg of the castle, pleaded for mercy and as he had been envoy to king Ferendus earlier, it was granted to him. Thus, coming out to the Pasha he handed the castle over to him. The Pasha held a divan at which all Beks kissed his hand.*'⁹¹ After this meeting the council of Grand Viziers sent Beg Jafer to the Sultan at Szakony to tell him, '*the castle has been conquered.*'⁹²

Whether the symbolic act of hoisting the Turkish flag on the castle ever took place or not cannot be proven. According to Italian humanist historiographer Paolo Giovio, and to Istvánffy who bases much of his writing upon this source, this act was one of the conditions for being granted free and honourable withdrawal from the castle. Jurisics himself does not say a word about this. Some analysts simply reject the possibility (Récsey 1883: 458). Quite naturally, Turkish sources speak of surrender, and not only of Kőszeg, it must be added but they wrote the same about Graz which was never even under siege. This became part of Turkish propaganda and a case of self-justification (Hammer-Burgstall 1963: 117-118). At the same time, the Captain of Kőszeg castle described how the Aga of the Janissaries remained extremely distrustful. Jurisics could only disarm him by declaring that he would not accept responsibility for the Spanish and German soldiers left be-

⁹⁰ Ibid., 40.

⁹¹ Szulejmán szultán naplói. IV. Az 1532. évi hadjárat, 176-177.

⁹² Ibid., 177.

hind in the castle (Katona 1794: 823). *'talked a lot with Lord Mikolicz about the precision and stratagems that were applied at Kőszeg - had they not been applied, there is no castle in Germany as far as the great Köln that they might not have conquered (unless the German gentlemen take better care than presently),'* wrote the *servitor* of Léka to Tamás Nádasdy.⁹³ What he said was true. This was the first time in the history of sieges against Hungarian castles that the method of laying counter-mines was used. It is also true that during his time as envoy, Jurisics had gained a thorough understanding of the Oriental way of thinking.

Withdrawal: The Confrontation that Failed to Take Place

On August 30, 1532, the Turkish camp retreated in the knowledge that all their efforts had failed. The age, however, was not one to recognize the reality of a truce, only the terms of conquest and surrender. Even contemporaries looked on the affair with great suspicion. On September 1, 1532, one day after the Turks departed, even Ferenc Nádasdy, who had co-operated with Jurisics, wrote to his son Tamás Nádasdy that Ibrahim had demanded 2,000 young maidens and women from Jurisics. He said Jurisics had discussed this demand with his men and promised Ibrahim that he would fulfil it (Károlyi-Szalay 1882: 223). As has been shown, nothing of the kind was mentioned at the talks. This was truly an absurdity. Lőrinc Hirnik speaks about similar falsehoods: *'The news went round Vienna that Lord Mikolicz had allowed three pashas into his house and treated them to fabulous meals every day. The same was said about me by a German bandit who had been with me at Léka but ran away in secret. ... And those beasts believed it all.'*⁹⁴

Sultan Suleiman did not risk confronting the Imperial Army which in the meantime had united in Vienna. The Turkish war leaders were bothered by the fact that they would have to launch an offensive with Wienerneustadt at their back (Bucholtz 1968: 108). They never took a single step. The much feared irregular cavalry of the Turks, the *akinji* were ordered to move in the direction of Linz. This was the last foray for Beg Kasim and his 10,000 cavalrymen. The objective of the Turkish leadership was to engage the united Christian forces to allow for the peaceful retreat of the Sultan's united army,

⁹³ Hirnik Lőrinc lékai szervitor levele urának, Nádasdy Tamásnak. Léka, Sept. 4, 1532, 47.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

turning around at Wienerneustadt, moving through Gleisdorf, Graz, Leibnitz, Maribor (Marburg), Varasd and Pozsega towards Nándorfehérvár. The trick worked, but the *akindji* died to the last man.⁹⁵

Lower Austria, Styria, Kraina and even Karinthia regretted that earlier they had sent all their soldiers to defend Vienna. The eastern provinces became practically easy prey to the retreating Turks (Bariska 1983: 107). This is confirmed by a great amount of data, much of which rely on Turkish sources (Barcza 1932: 15). Charles V could march away to Italy at the head of his troops in the belief that he was invincible. This meant the disintegration of the unified Christian troops. Suleiman, returning without a single defeat, was received amid great pomp and form in Istanbul on November 21, 1532. And on the 16th of October Gritti gave up the siege of Esztergom. Hieronimus de Zara, Ambassador of Ferdinand I in Stambul, informed Katzianer in March 1532 that the Port had ordered a cease-fire on the borders of Alois Gritti's and János Szapolyai's countries.⁹⁶

Thus, the Turkish campaign of 1532 ended without the armies of the two great opponents ever engaging in battle. It had begun as a war of pan-European significance, in which Kőszeg unexpectedly became principal actor. This was the only instance in the history of this town when the castle and the town showed exemplary co-operation. This could not have happened without the exceptional personality of Miklós Jurisics. Equally inevitable was the co-operation of the various estates of society which forged Western Hungary and the Austrian hereditary provinces into one unit. The last Turkish contingent left the vicinity of Kőszeg at 11 o'clock on the 30th of September 1532. It is in memory of this, that since 1778 the bells of Kőszeg toll, till this very day, at 11 o'clock every morning.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Paolo Giovio (Paulus Iovius): Jelenkori történetek könyve. 30. könyv, 158-159.

⁹⁶ Új híradás a Római Királyi Felső és a nagyhatalmú Török Császár között nemrég kötött egyezségéről és békéről Bécs (?], after March 2, 1533, 137-138.

⁹⁷ VaML. KFL. Kőszeg város tanácsülési jegyzőkönyve. Protocollum. 1770-1778. Kőszeg, April 2, 1778, 43-44.

4 BRIEF SUMMARY

Today we see considerably more clearly than ever before the history of the Turkish campaign of 1532 and, within that, the siege of Kőszeg. It seems that in the summer of 1532 Sultan Suleiman's forces had crossed the Rába in extremely unfavourable weather. In this border region they came up against unexpected and concerted resistance on behalf of the nobility of Western Hungary and the Austrian hereditary provinces. In early August 1532, the main body of the Turkish army, 50,000-55,000 men who lacked siege-guns, besieged one of the centres of resistance, Kőszeg. The joint defence of the fortified town and castle gained technical superiority over the three weeks of the siege. The succession of failed attacks and the famine that ravaged the Turkish camp led to a rebellion among the Janissaries in the camp at Kőszeg. Therefore, the Grand Vizier Ibrahim proposed unconditional peace talks with Miklós Jurisics, head of the defence forces. The Turkish forces lost over three weeks in Kőszeg and marched away between the 28th-30th of August. They never confronted the Christian forces which united at Vienna. Instead, the Sultan turned his army around at Wienerneustadt and, ravaging the Eastern part of the hereditary provinces and Slavonia, returned with his forces to Istanbul.

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