

The Reconstruction of the Motives and Activities of the Last Campaign of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman*

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The last campaign of Sultan Süleyman has been broadly discussed in both the academic and public spheres, not only in terms of its political and military aspects, but also by virtue of its heroic narratives.¹ While the sultan had passed away just

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1 Pál Fodor (ed.), *The Battle for Central Europe: The Siege of Szigetvár and the Death of Süleyman the Magnificent and Nicholas Zrínyi (1566)*. Leiden; Boston: Brill 2019; idem, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire – The Ottomans in Central Europe - A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390–1566)*. (Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences) Budapest 2015, 129–133; Pál Fodor, Szabolcs Varga, “Zrínyi Miklós és Szulejmán halála.” *Történelmi Szemle* 58:2(2016), 181–201; M. Tayyip Gökbilgin, “Kanuni Süleyman’ın 1566 Szigetvar Seferi Sebepleri ve Hazırlıkları.” *Tarih Dergisi*, Sayı:21(1966), 1–14; idem, “Nagy Szolimán 1566. évi Szigetvár elleni hadjáratának előzményei.” In: *Szigetvári emlékkönyv. Szigetvár 1566. évi ostromának évfordulójára*, (ed.) Ruzsás Lajos. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó 1966, 53–59; Joseph von Hammer, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, volume: 6, trans. Mümin Çevik-Erol Kılıç. Istanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat 1984, 146–168; Pap Norbert (ed.), *Szulejmán Szultán emlékezete Szigetváron/Kanuni Sultan Süleyman’ın Sigetvar’daki hatrasi*. Mediterrán és Balkán Fórum ,VIII. évfolyam, Pécs, 2014; Zeynep Tarım Ertuğ, “Mínyatürlü Yazmaların Tarihi Kaynak Olma Nitelikleri ve Nüzhetü’l-esrâr.” In: *Tarih Boyunca Türk Tarihinin Kaynakları Semineri 6-7 Haziran 1996 Bildiriler*, (İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayınları 1997), 31–46; Fatih Başpınar, “Kanuni Sultan Süleyman’ın Son Seferine Dair Bir Mesnevi: Merâhi’nin “Fethnâme-i Sefer-i Sigetvar” Adlı Eser.” *Dede Korkut Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Araştırmaları Dergisi*; Cilt: 2 Sayı: 4 (2013); Şebnem Parlador, “Sigetvar Seferi Tarihi ve Nakkaş Osman.” *Sanat Tarihi Dergisi Sayı/ XVI/1*, (Nisan 2007), 67–108; Hüseyin Gazi Yurdaydın, “Sigetvarnâmeler”, *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, C. II–III, (Ankara, 1952), 124–136; James Tracy, “The Road to Szigetvár: Ferdinand I’s Defense of His Hungarian Border, 1548-1566.” *Austrian History Yearbook* 44(2013), 17–36. Szabolcs Varga, *Europe’s Leonidas: Miklós Zrínyi, Defender of Szigetvár (1508–1566)*, trans. David Robert Evans. Budapest: Research Center for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2016; Nicolas Vatin, *Feridün Bey «Les plaisants secrets de la campagne de Szigetvár»*. Édition, traduction et commentaire des folios 1 à 147 du Nüzhetü’l-esrârî-l-ahbâr der sefer-i Sigetvâr (ms. H. 1339 de la Bibliothèque du Musée de Topkapı Sarayı). Wien: Lit 2010.2 Istanbul Topkapı Palace Museum Library, (TSMK), Ms.

before the campaign ended, the commander of the fortress, Miklós Zrínyi, who had fought against the besiegers to the very last, was acknowledged as a national hero both in Hungary and in his native Croatia.

Nüzhet-i Esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar ‘Pleasures of the Secrets of Auspicious Men from the News of the Szigetvár Campaign’² whose author, Nişancı Feridun Ahmed Bey, was a participant and one of the most prominent eyewitnesses to the campaign as well as the private secretary³ to Grand Vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha is considered one of the most valuable source regarding the campaign. During the grand vizierate of Sokollu, Feridun Bey appointed as chief government secretary (*reisülküttâb*) and in 1574 as the chancellor of the imperial council (*nişancı*).⁴ In addition to this chronicle, another source is the history of Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, who served as a *hafız* (a Muslim person who knows Koran by heart) during the campaign and had close contact with Feridun Ahmed Bey. The third chronicle is *Fetihname-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar* ‘The book of victory of the fortress of Szigetvár’⁵ which was presented directly to Grand Vizier Sokollu by Agehi Mansur Çelebi, who belonged to the Ottoman *ulema* class.

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- H. 1339. For the transcription and facsimile editions of the manuscript, see H. Ahmet Arslantürk and Günhan Börekçi (ed.), [*Feridun Ahmed Bey.*] *Nüzhet-i Esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar. Sultan Süleyman'ın Son Seferi*. İstanbul: Zeytinburnu Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, Kitap No: 26, 2012, also translation belongs Arslantürk and Börekçi. Nicolas Vatin provides a transcription and French translation of this manuscript, «*Les plaisants secrets de la campagne de Szigetvár*». *Édition, traduction et commentaire des folios 1 à 147 du Nüzhetü-l-esrâri-l-ahbâr der sefer-i Sigetvâr*.
- 2 İstanbul Topkapı Palace Museum Library, (TSMK), Ms. H. 1339. For the transcription and facsimile editions of the manuscript, see H. Ahmet Arslantürk and Günhan Börekçi (ed.), [*Feridun Ahmed Bey.*] *Nüzhet-i Esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar. Sultan Süleyman'ın Son Seferi*. İstanbul: Zeytinburnu Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, Kitap No: 26, 2012, also translation belongs Arslantürk and Börekçi. Nicolas Vatin provides a transcription and French translation of this manuscript, «*Les plaisants secrets de la campagne de Szigetvár*». *Édition, traduction et commentaire des folios 1 à 147 du Nüzhetü-l-esrâri-l-ahbâr der sefer-i Sigetvâr*.
- 3 Abdülkadir Özcan, “Feridun Ahmed Bey.” In: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, volume: 12 Ankara 2009, 396–397; Sándor Papp, “Feridun Bey’in Münşeati: Mecmua-ı Münşe’âtü’s-selâtin. (Macaristan’a ve Erdel’e ait XVI-XVII. yüzyıl belgelerinin incelenmesi).” *Archivum Ottomanicum* 34 (2017), 129–137; Zeynep Tarım, “Sigetvarname: A Visual Source of Sultan Süleyman’s Last Campaign.” In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 411–412.
- 4 Mehmet İpşirli, “Selaniki Mustafa Efendi.” In: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, volume: 36, Ankara 2009, 357–359; Franz Babinger, *Osmanlı Tarih Yazarları ve Eserleri*, trans: Coşkun Üçok. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları 2000, 150–151.
- 5 Kübra Naç, *Agehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı* (İnceleme-Tenkitli Metin). MA Thesis, Fatih University 2013.

Some studies⁶ describe Sultan Süleyman as the creator of his own image and general imperial ideology by emphasizing support and patronage he provided for gifted writers, artists and architects to produce not only written records but also tangible cultural heritage of his reign. Likewise, Sokollu Mehmed Pasha's heavy investments in both book production and architecture, which symbolize the authority and power of the empire for the general public, provide valuable information on his position in patronage of the arts at the Ottoman court.⁷

Sokollu Mehmed Pasha was born at around 1505 in an Orthodox Christian family. While Yeşilce Mehmed Bey, came to Bosnia at around 1521 to gather children for the child levy (*devşirme*), he was studying to become a monk in the Mileševa monastery. First, he was taken to Edirne and served under Defterdar İskender Çelebi. And after the death of Defterdar, he promoted to *Enderûn* (inner court), he worked here as a *rikâb-dâr*, (groom), *çûha-dâr* (butler), *çâşnigir başı* (chief taster), eventually he became the *kapucu-başı* (the head of the doorkeepers) and started to serve in *Birûn* (outer court). He appointed as the admiral in chief (*kaptan-ı derya*) after the death of famous Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha, and a few years later as the Governor- General of Rumelia thereby he witnessed and became a participant of the troublous period between the Habsburgs, Hungarians, and the Ottomans. In 1555, he became the third vizier and from that point on he was entrusted with the extremely challenging tasks. To give an example I can state the time when the hostility appeared between the sons of the Sultan, Bayezid, and Selim, in 1558. Kanuni Sultan Süleyman sent an army under the command of Sokollu to support Selim and to ensure the unity of the empire and his Sultanate. Sokollu Mehmed appointed as the second vizier in 1561, married with İsmihan Sultan, the daughter of Şehzade Selim, and finally granted the grand vizierate after Semiz Ali Pasha died in 1565.⁸ Sokollu was a remarkable state man not only his rapid rise in the hierarchy of Ottoman bureaucracy but with his imperial

6 Christine Woodhead, "Perspectives on Suleyman," In: *Suleyman the Magnificent and His Age*, ed. Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead. London: Longman 1995, 166–171; Zeynep Nevin Yelçe, *The making of Sultan Süleyman: a study of process/es of image making and reputation management*. PhD thesis, Sabanci University 2009; Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Süleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World*. Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilisation, Cambridge University Press, 2013; Virginia H. Aksan, Daniel Goffman, *Erken Modern Osmanlılar: İmparatorluğun yeniden yazımı*. İstanbul: Timaş 2011, 131–137; Gülru Necipoğlu, *15. ve 16. Yüzyılda Topkapı Sarayı Mimari Tören ve İktidar*, translated by Ruşen Sezer. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları 2007, 47–58; idem, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg-Papal Rivalry." *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 71, No. 3, (1989), 424–426; Cemal Kafadar, "The Myth of the Golden Age: Ottoman Historical Consciousness in the Post-Süleymanic Era." In: Halil İnalçık and Cemal Kafadar (eds.), *Süleyman the Second and His Time*. İstanbul: Isis Press 1993, 37–48.

7 Uros Dakic, *The Sokollu Family Clan and the Politics of Vizierial Households in the Second Half of Sixteenth Century*. Budapest: Central European University 2012, 62–77.

8 Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Sokollu*. İstanbul: Orhaniye Matbaası 1924; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "Mehmed Paşa, Muhammed Paşa, Sokollu, Taviil." In: *İslam Ansiklopedisi*. 7, İstanbul, 1993, 595–605; Gilles Veinstein, "Sokollu Mehmed Pasha." In: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*. New ed. IX. Leiden 1997, 706–711.

vision as well. He was the most preeminent patron of the architecture and he commissioned and sponsored a huge number of artifacts. Besides that, the production of the book of Kings (*şehnâme*) escalated during his grand vizierate. Moreover, Sokollu Mehmed Pasha was almost like the main political figure of the historical writings in his era. We know that Agehi and all the other chroniclers⁹ of the campaign presented their works to the grand vizier directly, and it is also known that Gelibolulu Mustafa sent his account via Şeyh Nureddinzade and asked the pasha for the position of secretary (*kâtib*), yet he was rejected.¹⁰ Even though Feridun Ahmed does not dedicate his own history to any particular person, he places Grand Vizier Sokollu and his political virtues in the focus – and not Sultan Süleyman and Selim – by eulogizing the grand vizier’s success in managing the campaign as well as his power and subtle wit that prevented any possible threats on the death of Süleyman before the campaign was completed and Selim was enthroned.¹¹

In evaluating these narratives, I suggest that Sokollu, much like the sultan, was motivated to create his self-image by patronizing the written historical records of his own victory. Therefore, if we rely solely on those historical narratives and ignore the propagandist imperial ideologies and/or eulogizing elements within these sources, we encounter the precise story that Sokollu wanted to present. However, it is possible to construct a broader, more complete narrative with the registers of important imperial affairs (*mühimme defterleri*), documents/letters that were sent and treaties that were entered into before and after the campaign, as well as the contemporary Hungarian chronicles.

Mühimme Defteri No. 5, Decree 1500 places the exact date when the Ottoman army began its campaign by noting that the sultan’s tent was set up outside Edirnekapı and that the army encamped on Rüstem Çelebi farm on the 9th of Şevval 973 (26th April 1566).¹² While both Agehi and Feridun Ahmed supply the same date as the beginning of the campaign, Selaniki records the event as having taken place two days later, presents no background on the causes of the campaign and starts his narrative by describing the sultan on that particular day as having been as steady as a splendid minaret and stronger than all of his soldiers. Agehi and Feridun also detail the tribute that the Habsburg emperor failed to pay in time, the fortresses occupied in Transylvania (*Erdel*) by the “cursed king and his army of evil” and the bandits who

9 Gelibolulu Mustafa Âli, *Heft Meclis*, İstanbullu Seyfî, *Sigetvar Fetihnâmesi*, Merâhî, *Fetihnâme-i Sefer-i Sigetvar*. Besides from above mentioned works presented directly to Sokollu, during his reign to other works was written about the campaign, *Heft Dâstân* (writer is unknown) and Âşık Çelebi, *Sigetvarnâme*; see Yurdaydın, “Sigetvarnâmeler.”

10 Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafa Ali (1541-1600)*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986, 58–71.

11 Günhan Börekçi, “The Memory of Szigetvár and Sultan Süleyman in Ottoman/Turkish Culture.” In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 529–530.

12 Online translation guide of *Türk Tarih Kurumu* (Turkish Historical Society) has been used in calculation of the dates. <http://www.ttk.gov.tr/genel/tarih-cevirme-kilavuzu/> (accessed in Apr. 14. 2021).

tortured the Muslim communities along the roads around Buda, Gyula, Eger and Szigetvár to present the justifications for the campaign to their audience.¹³

The cases related to the last campaign of Süleyman had begun immediately after Ferdinand's death. From the documents in the archives of Vienna and a copy of the letter sent to the Habsburg emperor found in Feridun Ahmed's *Münşe'âtü's-selâtin*, we can observe that after the enthronement of Maximilian II, the Sublime Porte demanded the tribute that had been neglected for years during the reign of his father and in the meantime issued orders to settle the ongoing troubles between the new Habsburg emperor and János Zsigmond Szapolyai.¹⁴

Those troubles started to appear in 1562, when Balassa Menyhért, a Hungarian noble, who had changed sides and become pro-Ferdinand, confiscated the income from the wine harvest in Tokaj. In response, János Zsigmond appointed his commander István Báthory and captured Szatmár (Satu Mare in Rom.) and also Nagybánya (Baia Mare in Rom). By the year 1565, Lazarus von Schwendi, Maximilian II's commander, regained Tokaj and then captured, then Szatmár, Erdőd and Nagybánya.¹⁵ Around that time when Schwendi captured Tokaj on 9th February,¹⁶ the Habsburgs paid the missing tribute in İstanbul and the peace negotiations were already underway with the envoys from Maximilian II, Alberto la Wyss and Mikel

13 Arslantürk - Börekçi, *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 88–93.

14 Claudia Römer and Nicolas Vatin. "The Hungarian Frontier and Süleyman's Way to Szigetvár according to Ottoman Sources." In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 341–358; Facsimile "Urkunde 39", "Urkunde 33a" dated 1565, In: ed. Anton C. Schaendlinger and Claudia Römer: *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen an Vasallen, Militärbeamte, Beamte und Richter aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien*. Vienna 1986, 57–58/ 68–69; Facsimile "Urkunde 25", "Urkunde 27", dated 1562, "Urkunde 32", "Urkunde 33", "Urkunde 34", "Urkunde 35" dated 1565, In: Anton C. Schaendlinger – Claudia Römer: *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen an Karl V., Ferdinand I. und Maximilian II. aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien*. Vienna 1983, 67–70/76–77/87–100; Document Numbers: 69, 70, dated 1565, In: Gisela Procházka-Eisl & Claudia Römer, *Osmanische Beamtschreiben und Privatbriefe der Zeit Süleymans des Prächtigen aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2007; The copy of name (letter) sent by Sultan Süleyman to the King of Vienna In: *Mecmua-ı Münşeât-ı Feridun Bey*, volume: 2, published In: Ottoman. İstanbul: Takvimhane-yi Âmirî Matbaası 1265-1274/1848-1858, 75–76. <https://acikerisim.tmm.gov.tr/xmlui/handle/11543/588> (accessed in Apr.14.2021)

15 Ferenc Forgách, *Emlékirat Magyarország állapotáról Ferdinánd, János, Miksa királysága és II. János erdélyi fejedelemsége alatt*. Trans: Borzsák István. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó 1982, 231–241; [Bánffy György], "Második János ... török császárhoz menetele" In: Zay Ferenc, *János király árultatása. Kis Péter: Magyarázat.[Bánffy György]: Második János ... török császárhoz menetele*, ed: Bessenyei József. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó 1993, 119–121; Claudia Römer and Nicolas Vatin. "The Hungarian Frontier and Süleyman's Way to Szigetvár according to Ottoman Sources", 355; James D. Tracy, "Tokaj, 1565: A Habsburg Prize of War, and an Ottoman Casus Belli." In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 361; Szabolcs Varga, "Miklós Zrínyi, Captain-General of Szigetvár (1561–1566) – His Organisational Activity and Death." In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 389.

16 Bánffy György, "Második János ...", 113; James D. Tracy, "Tokaj, 1565: A Habsburg Prize of War, and an Ottoman Casus Belli", 363–370.

Černović (Cernovith).¹⁷ Consequently, all those ambiguous, misleading acts on the Habsburg side were raising doubts and distrust at the Sublime Porte.¹⁸

In the meantime, following János Zsigmond's constant requests for aid in letters to the Porte, Mustafa Pasha, the beylerbeyi (governor) of Temesvár (Timișoara in Rom.) and Arslan Paşa the beylerbeyi of Buda assigned to support him.¹⁹ In August of 1565, with the intervention of the governor of Temesvár, Erdőd (Ardu, Erdeed in Rom.) was recaptured first, followed by Szilágycseh (Cehu Silvaniei, Bömischdorf in Rom.), Nagybánya and Szatmár. In negotiations between the envoys, both parties agreed on a truce. The beylerbeyi of Temesvár and János Zsigmond returned to their military headquarters soon after, and the news started to spread that while the Habsburgs were pretending to retreat, some of their troops simply remained in the territory.²⁰ Despite the fact that Maximilian had appointed an envoy to declare that he was to return the fortress he had captured to Transylvania and that he accepted the conditions that were issued in the *nâme-i hümayun* (letter of Sultan),²¹ a letter was seized in the meantime which made it clear that Schwendi had no intention of retreating.²² After the Ottoman troops returned to their original headquarters, the renewal of the Habsburg siege of Nagybánya and Szilágycseh was reported to the Sublime Porte both by the beylerbeyi of Temesvár and János Zsigmond as well.²³

On the other hand, Hungarian chronicles provide other details of Maximilian's acts to seek support from the Porte. The emperor informed the sultan of his correspondence with János Zsigmond, and of the latter's intention to enter into a peace agreement with the Habsburgs without the consent of the sultan. Once János Zsigmond became aware of this "evil trap", he asked permission to leave for İstanbul to defend himself and also to speed up the court's intervention against the rising Habsburg pressure.²⁴ However the Porte declined János Zsigmond's request and informed him that given the current dire circumstances in his country, he should not

17 Schaendlinger-Römer: *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen an Karl V., Ferdinand I. und Maximilian*, "Urkunde 33" dated February 17, 1565.

18 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (BAO), 5 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri, 973 / 1565–1566, Decree: 259, 260, 278 Ankara 1994; Beltold Spuler, *Die europäische Diplomatie in Konstantinopel bis zum Frieden von Belgrad (1739)* 3. Teil, Bd. 11, H. ¾. 1935, 324–325; Josip Žontar, "Michael Černović, Geheimagent Ferdinands I. und Maximilians II., und seine Berichterstattung." In: *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchives*, 24 (1971), 169–222.

19 Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Süleyman'ın 1566 Szigetvar Seferi Sebepleri ve Hazırlıkları", 3–4; Mühimme 5, Decrees: 54,99,108,154.

20 Bánffy György, "Második János ...", 119–120; Gisela Procházka-Eisl & Claudia Römer "Osmanische Beamtschreiben und Privatbriefe der Zeit Süleymāns des Prächtigen aus dem Haus", Nr: 99, dated 1565; Mühimme 5, Decrees: 331, 332.

21 Mühimme 5, Decrees: 259, 260.

22 Mühimme 5, Decree: 332.

23 Mühimme 5, Decrees: 436, 491, 492, 493.

24 Bánffy György, "Második János ...", 120.

leave for İstanbul at all. And immediately afterward, it was decided that the sultan would intervene against the Habsburgs personally.²⁵

In addition to these causes, modern historians have placed an emphasis on what lay behind the sultan's personal participation in the campaign: it was to compensate for the failure of the Malta campaign and for the intense pressure from certain groups who criticized his absence on the battlefield for almost ten years and his eremitic life in court.²⁶ Even if this is not based on any archival sources, I can draw an inference that Sokollu played a vital part in constructing and orchestrating this public pressure on the court.

For the first time, in Karaçelebizade's history, *Süleymannâme*, we encounter a different opinion that gives us a hint of the pressures.²⁷ Here the chronicler recounts that Şeyh Nûreddînzâde Müslîhiddin had a dream of the Prophet condemning Süleyman for not fulfilling his mission of jihad. When Şeyh told him about this dream, the Sultan immediately decided to launch a campaign against the infidel and participate himself. According to Selaniki, Şeyh was, with his dervishes, on the front lines during the siege. Hammer also cites that Şeyh Müslîhiddin as openly criticizing Süleyman for not performing his duties of jihad.²⁸

Şeyh Nûreddînzâde Muslihuddin was a prominent leader of the Halveti order, and it is claimed that he had a close relationship with Sokollu Mehmed Pasha and his family.²⁹ Even though it is difficult to verify, it is quite possible that Nûreddînzâde expressed dissatisfaction in society or more precisely among the janissaries, and he was a key member of a pressure group that the grand vizier himself was responsible for leading.³⁰ In his chronicle, Feridun Ahmed criticized the late vizier Semiz Ali Pasha's personality for a lack of "vigor and courage" with the example of his relationship with the Habsburg envoys in terms of the tribute they paid.³¹ According to Ahmed, Semiz Ali did not care about the regularity or classification of the money received from the Habsburg Empire and thus the Habsburgs often classified the money they were obliged to pay as a gift, not as tribute.³² This is one of the reasons

25 Mühimme 5, Decree: 330

26 Gökbilgin, "Kanuni Süleyman'ın 1566 Szigetvar Seferi Sebepleri ve Hazırlıkları", 6; Hammer, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, 153.

27 Karaçelebizade Abdülaziz Efendi, *Kitab-ı Süleymannâme*. Ed. Said Efendi. Bulak Matbası 1248/1847, 184–186.

28 Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selaniki*. Ed. Mehmet İpşirli. İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi 1989, 31; Hammer, *Büyük Osmanlı Tarihi*, 153, 211.

29 John Curry, *The Transformation of Muslim Mystical Thought in the Ottoman Empire. The Rise of the Halveti Order, 1350-1650*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2010, notes: 50, 191; Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Aesthetics of Empire: Arts, Politics and Commerce in the Construction of Sultan Süleyman's Magnificence." In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 154–155.

30 Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire*, 131.

31 Claudia Römer and Nicolas Vatin. "The Hungarian Frontier and Süleyman's Way to Szigetvár according to Ottoman Sources", 351.

32 Géza Dávid, "XVI. Yüzyılda Osmanlı-Hasburg Mücadelesinin Bir Kaynağı Olarak Mühimme Defterleri" *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi* No 53 (2011), 329–330.

that he praises the new vizier's tough stance against the Habsburg envoys and his firm position on the issues at stake and provides a great deal of information on how Sokollu orchestrated such matters and the campaign itself.³³

The troops had received the orders that the campaign would begin on the fifteenth day of *Ramażan* (5th April). However, because of the relapse of the sultan's illness, the process stopped for a certain time. Then, as Selaniki states, with a magnificent ceremony on 29th April 1566, the Ottoman army set out for Szigetvár. Every component of the army, including the ill sultan, was seen as divine on that day.³⁴ The sultan set out on horseback and, immediately afterward, continued by carriage, while Sokollu Mehmed Pasha never rested during the journey, always one stop ahead to check the roads and stops to prevent any trouble that would cause the sultan any discomfort.³⁵

Selaniki has the army reaching Belgrade after forty-nine days, and the decree written to the bey of Kocaili confirms this by describing the army as being encamped in Belgrade on the 1st day of *Zilhicce* (19th June).³⁶ Since there was an unexpected flood on the River Sava, the most convenient place to build a bridge was in the area around the Böğürdelen (Szabács) fortress.³⁷ Further, according to Agehi, on the 9th of *Zilhicce* (27th June), the imperial tent (*otağ-ı hümayun*) was built around a fortress called Zimony (Zemun in Serb.).³⁸ Six days before that, a noble order (*nâme-i şerif*) had been sent to János Zsigmond who is often referred as “the son of the King” in the Ottoman sources, requesting him to come to Balçık first. A few days after preparations had been made, he boarded the ships that had been sent for him and joined the army in Zimony.³⁹ There is a great deal of detailed information on how János Zsigmond was received in both Ottoman and Hungarian chronicles. The Ottomans employed all the ceremonial and symbolic means at their disposal to provide an opulent reception for *qurāl oğlı* (the son of the king). He was then summoned to the warfare tent, where he was afforded the opportunity to detail his current circumstances with the Habsburgs in the presence of the viziers and the sultan himself; he was gratified by the honor of kissing the hand of Süleyman, who called him “my son”.⁴⁰ According to the chronicle of Forgács Ferenc, the bishop of Várad, the sultan promised to János Zsigmond that he would be his guardian against the enemy and that he was ready to die on the battlefield on his mission of conquering Vienna.⁴¹

33 Arslantürk - Börekçi, *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 89.

34 *Agehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 139–140; *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 14–15.

35 *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 98; *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 18.

36 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 19; Mühimme 5, Decree: 1954.

37 Mühimme 5, Decrees: 1747, 1757, 1784, 1790, 1871, 1923; Arslantürk - Börekçi, *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 99.

38 *Agehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 148; Mühimme 5 Decrees: 1977, 1981.

39 Mühimme 5, Decree: 1987; Bánffy György, “*Második János ...*”, 124–125.

40 Bánffy György, “*Második János ...*”, 127; *Agehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 149–150; *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 21–22; *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 100–103.

41 Forgách, 266.

Even though the final destination was clear, the route of the campaign was still undetermined at back time. Yet certain troubles around the fortress of Gyula, Eger and Szigetvár were long in the focus.⁴² Agehi reports that János Zsigmond made a request to advance towards Eger. It is known that Pertev Pasha, who had been ordered to conquer Gyula (the siege of this fortress took 63 days and according to the studies it was one of the long-standing sieges in Hungary)⁴³ earlier agreed on that route as well (document II in Appendices).⁴⁴ Thereby, we understand that after the consultations, it was decided to move towards Eger.⁴⁵

However, the plan was changed soon after. In Selaniki's account, the route was changed because Zrínyi had already amassed both ammunition and soldiers at the fortress and allied with Hungarian and Croatian nobles to become the next king of Hungary.⁴⁶ Therefore, when Süleyman was informed of the intensity of the current situation, he issued the command to advance on Szigetvár to extinguish this threat immediately.

The dates vary in the chronicles for the arrival of troops. While Selaniki provides no information on the matter, Feridun Ahmed dates it to the 22nd of *Muharrem* (9th August) and Agehi records it has having occurred on the 21st of *Muharrem*.⁴⁷ They all point out that the sultan left his carriage after a long time and entered Szigetvár on horseback. Zrínyi greeted the sultan with gunfire. For Selaniki, this act implied that they would not surrender easily and that Zrínyi's sole purpose was to regain the seal/freedom of Hungary.⁴⁸ Indeed the fall of the fortress lasted longer than expected. On the fourth day of the siege, Zrínyi lost hundreds of men and retreated from the old town. Immediately thereafter, the Ottomans captured the new town. The sultan's army attempted several attacks in the month of *Şafer*.⁴⁹ Both sides suffered heavy losses from those attempts. It was also quite challenging for the Ottoman army, which was fighting with all its might to seize the outer and inner fortress, and even Sokollu Mehmed Pasha had survived gunfire by Feridun Ahmed during these attacks.⁵⁰ In the

42 Gisela Procházka-Eisl & Claudia Römer, *Osmanische Beamtschreiben und Privatbriefe der Zeit Süleymāns des Prächtigen aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien*, Nr: 46, dated 1556; Nr: 59, dated 1563; Nr: 66.

43 József Dusnoki-Draskovich, "A gyulai vár 1566. évi ostromának idörendje", In: *Nyitott múlt. Tanulmányok, történetek Gyuláról, Békés vármegyéről és a fordított világról*. Gyula 2000, 126–137; József Kelenik, "The Sieges of Szigetvár and Gyula, 1566." In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 397–410.

44 Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi (T SMA) E.0443.

45 Gyula Káldy-Nagy, "Suleimans Angriff auf Europa." *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, vol. 28, no. 2, (1974), 210.

46 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 22–23.

47 *Ágehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 168; *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 111.

48 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 28–29.

49 *Ágehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 172–174.

50 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 30.

meantime, after a lengthy siege, Pertev Pasha seized the fortress of Gyula.⁵¹ Four days after the third attack, after one of the heads of the janissary garrisons had placed a bomb (*humbara*) in the outer part of the fortress, the explosion caused a huge breach and the janissaries that entered there took the outer fortress first, and then the inner fortress the following day.⁵²

It is known that Sultan Süleyman died during the preparations for the conquest of the inner fortress and did not survive to see its fall; however, the chronicles do not provide consistent information as to the exact date. Feridun Ahmed records the event as having taken place on the night of the 21st of *Şafer*, and Agehi dates it to the night of the 22nd of *Şafer* (7–8th September). Selaniki's account agrees with the latter date, but he puts the time at dawn.⁵³ Even though there is a widespread view that Süleyman died a few days before the fall of the fortress, he passed away within the same day with the fall of the inner fortress: 21st of *Şafer* (7th September).⁵⁴ However, the central issue here is Sokollu's success in taking all the necessary precautions to keep the Sultan's death a secret until the troops marched back to Belgrade and met the new sultan, Selim.

First of all, Sokollu settled the restless janissaries, who were already entertaining doubts about Süleyman's health, by assuring them that the sultan would attend Friday prayers. Still, after the fall of the fortress, the janissaries continued to create disturbances and demand their war bonus. Then, Sokollu gathered the divan together, informed the other members about the existing situation and appointed the head of the janissaries, Ali Ağa, to make the payments and keep the crowd under control. In the meantime, while he was taking all precautionary measures within the army, Sokollu spread news and sent letters to address the rumors of the sultan's absence for the Habsburgs and Hungarians as well.⁵⁵

In his chronicle, Forgách recounts that far from being aware of the sultan's death, they thought he would spend the winter in Buda.⁵⁶ In fact, Sokollu had ordered his nephew, Sokollu Mustafa, who became beylerbeyi of Buda after the execution of Arslan Pasha during the campaign, to restore the roads to Buda and prepare the palace for the winter. Feridun Ahmed narrates that the day on which the siege had ended, separate letters were sent to Selim to report both on the conquest and the death of his father. Here, Sokollu advised Selim to declare that he would be joining his father at Buda to winter there and set off immediately.⁵⁷

51 József Dusnoki-Draskovich, "A gyulai vár 1566. évi ostromának időrendje.", 126–137.

52 *Ágehi'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sighetvar't*, 174–177; *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sighetvar*, 129–136.

53 *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sighetvar*, 140; *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 39.

54 Gökbilgin, *Kanuni Sultan Süleyman*, 143–147; Fodor – Varga, "Zrínyi Miklós és Szulejmán halála", 194–199; Börekçi, "The Memory of Szigetvár and Sultan Süleyman in Ottoman/Turkish Culture", 523.

55 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 35–39.

56 Forgách, 291; See also Appendices I:4 "şimden şoñra teveccüh-i hümayünüm Budün câniblerinedür. From now on, I will imperialy turn towards Buda part."

57 *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sighetvar*, 150–158.

Moreover, one of the letters (document I in Appendices) that he sent after the siege was to János Zsigmond written in the last day of *Şafer* (15th September).⁵⁸ Therefore I evaluate this letter (*nâme*) as proof of the precautions that Sokollu took during the siege and as a source in respect of the conquest of Jenő (Borosjenő, Ineu in Rom.) as well. In this document, the grand vizier first shares the good news to János Zsigmond that the campaigns of Szigetvár and Gyula have been successful and, that Zrínyi has been killed. He then reports that Pertev Pasha has been commanded to conquer Jenő.⁵⁹

While Peçevi mentions that the fortress of Jenő was captured two or three days before the conquest of Szigetvár⁶⁰ Mihai Maxim reports the date as 25th July.⁶¹ However, this document provides sufficient clarification that Jenő was taken by Ottoman troops immediately after Gyula and Szigetvár. Additionally, Forgách notes that after the conquest of Gyula, Pertev Pasha destroyed the nearby fortress and Jenő fell after 23 days of resistance.⁶² Shortly, the troops under the command of the second vizier, Pertev Pasha, did not return to headquarters after Gyula and instead were occupied with the seizure of nearby fortresses; moreover, the beylerbeyi of Budin (Mustafa Pasha) and the beylerbeyi of Rumelia were assigned to seize the fortress of Boboşca (Babócsa) by taking their own troops with them in addition to three thousand janissaries from the headquarters in Szigetvár.⁶³ While the remaining troops were occupied with the restoration of the fortress and its surroundings, a third letter was sent to Selim by viziers who were aware of the intensity of the situation and had reached the conclusion that it was becoming more difficult with each passing day to keep the janissaries at bay. In that letter, they declared that the army had been in the same territory for sixty days and that they were still keeping a secret of the death of the sultan for thirty-five days so as not to embolden the enemy and not to weaken the morale of the soldiers. However, news of the enthronement (*cülus*) had begun to spread, so Selim needed to arrive as soon as possible and take command of the army.⁶⁴

58 Mihail Guboglu, *Paleografia și Diplomatica Turco-Osmana. Studiu și Album*. Bukarest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romîne 1958, Faksimile 19. This document in Guboglu's book is a copy of the original one. Original copy can be founded in the city archives of Regensburg. The copy of the document was given to an institute called Academiei României de Constantin I. Karadja. The document was previously published by Theodor Menzel with a transcription and translation and also by Heinrich Zimmerer, "Ein Sultansbrief in Regensburg" In: *Historischer Verein für Oberpfalz und Regensburg: Verhandlungen des Historischen Vereins für Oberpfalz und Regensburg* 64, with a German and Italian translation. Regensburg 1913, 237–246.

59 *Paleografia și Diplomatica Turco-Osmana. Studiu și Album.*, Faksimile 19.

60 Peçevi İbrahim Efendi, *Peçevi Tarihi*. Volume: 1. Ed. Bekir Sıtkı Baykal, Kültür Bakanlığı/467 Ankara, 295.

61 Mihai Maxim "Yanova" In: *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, volume: 43, Ankara, 2013, 316–317.

62 Forgách, 289.

63 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 38; *Agehî'nin Fetih-nâme-i Kal'a-i Sigetvar'ı*, 175–176; *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 154.

64 *Mecmua-ı Münşeat-ı Feridun Bey*, 95–96; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi - İstanbul'un Fethinden Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın Ölümüne Kadar*, II. TTK, Ankara 2016, 416–417, note:1.

Finally, the army was gathered with the news that Selim was on the way on the 3rd of *Rebi'ül-ahir* (18th October). According to Selaniki and Feridun Ahmed, the new sultan met his army and late father in Belgrade.⁶⁵ Feridun Ahmed recounts that following the official announcement of the death of Süleyman and the second enthronement of Selim in Belgrade, negotiations with Habsburg Emperor Maximilian II began immediately. The emperor blamed János Zsigmond for provoking and manipulating the sultan with lies and false reports and insisted that it was he who had endeavored to soothe the intensity of the situation. At the end, with the Treaty of Edirne, it was decided that the two empires would maintain the peace and that the Habsburgs would continue to pay tribute to the Ottomans.⁶⁶

The campaign of Szigetvár is interpreted by some of the 21st century historians as relatively insignificant and almost without any target. Nevertheless, after evaluating the chronicles and archival documents, we can see that the ultimate goal of this last campaign was to overcome the growing power and dominance of the Habsburg Empire. Hungarian historians emphasize that the Ottomans found it necessary to establish an inordinately large number of soldiers to preserve their position in the territory in the second half of the 16th century, compared to the first half. During this period, the number of soldiers was only doubled in two provinces in Hungary, while more or less the same number of soldiers had defended all the fortresses in the Balkans in the first half of the century. Considering all of these sources and studies, we can state that the Ottomans decided to campaign against the King of Vienna to stabilize the growing pressure from Austria. Arguably, this campaign failed to fulfill its goals or expectations as it was constructed. However, it is also not impossible to interpret the campaign as a futile initiative. According to the studies, at the beginning of Ottoman rule, the province of Buda was running a deficit, but immediately after the campaign, due to the significant increase in territory and the stabilization of the Ottoman taxation system in the 1570s, the province became self-sufficient for a short time and even covered ninety percent of the soldiers' payments. This short-term sufficiency is considered as an achievement.⁶⁷ Therefore, it seems fair to say that with the campaign of Szigetvár, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman had left (1) a far stronger province on the conquest route extending from Belgrade via Buda towards Vienna and (2) a long-term goal for his successors to achieve: the defeat of the Habsburg Empire.⁶⁸

65 *Tarih-i Selaniki*, 44; *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 200.

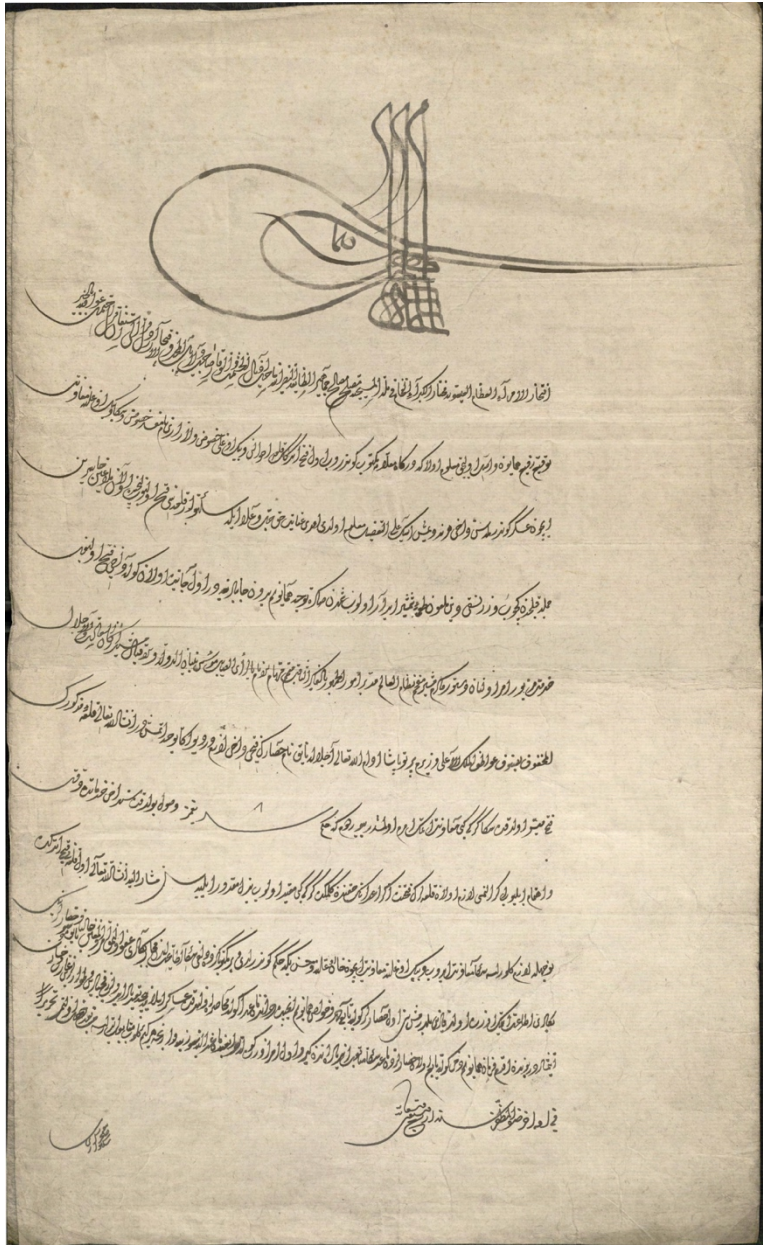
66 *Nüzhet-i esrârü'l-Ahyâr der-Ahbâr-ı Sefer-i Sigetvar*, 276–277.

67 Gábor Ágoston, “Macaristan’da Osmanlı-Habsburg Serhaddi (1541-1699): Bir Mukayese” In: *Osmanlı’da Savaş ve Serhad*. Ed. & trans: Kamuran Şakul. İstanbul: Timaş 2013, 215–224; Klára Hegyi, “Ottoman Defence System in Hungary.” In: *The Battle for Central Europe*, 315–319.

68 Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire*, 132.

Appendices

Document I



Sokollu Mehmed Pasha's letter (nâme) to János Zsigmond Szapolyai 1566⁶⁹

1. İftihârü l-ümerâ'i l-i'zâmi l-î'sevîye muhtârü l-küberâi' l-fihami fî milleti l-mesîhîye muşlihu masâlihi cemâhîrû t-ţâyifeti n-nasrânîye sâhibü ezyâli l-ħaşmet ve-l-vaqâr şâhibü delâyil el-mecd ve-l-iftihâr Erdel qırâli İstefân qırâl, ħutimet 'avâqibühü bi-l-ħayr
2. tevqî'-i refî'-i hümâyün vâşil olıcaq ma'lûm ola ki dergâh-ı mu'allâma mektûb gönderüb ol feth êtdügiñ qal'e aĥvâlin ve Bebek oĝlı ħuşuşın ve Lâzârî nâm müfsid ħuşuşın ve saña ve Bebek oĝlına mu'âvenet
3. için 'asker gönderilmesin daĥi her ne demiş iseñ 'ale t-tafşil ma'lûm oldı imdi 'inâyet-i ħaqq-ı celle ve 'alâ ile Sigetvâr qal'esi feth olunub içinde olan melâ'în-i ħâsirîn
4. cümle qılıcdan geçüp ve Zrinsqî-i dîn-i mel'un ta'me-i şimşîr-i ibrâr olub şimden soñra teveccüh-i hümâyünüm Budün câniblerinedür ol cânibde olan Güle daĥi feth olunub
5. ħidmet-i mezbûr emr olunan destûru mükerrerem müşîrü müfahhem nizâmu l-'âlem müdebbîrü umûri l-cumĥûr bi-l-fikri-s-şâkib mütemmimü mehâmi l-enâm bi-r-reyi-s-şâyib mü'essisü bünyâni d-devlet ve-l iqbâl müşeyyedü erkâni s-se'âdet ve-l-iclâl
6. el-maĥfûfu bi-şunûfi 'avâţıfu l-meliki l-â'lâ vezîrüm Pertev paşa edâm Allâhu te'âlâ iclâlehu Yanov[a] nâm ħişâruñ fethi daĥi lâzımdur deyü aña teveccüh etmişdür inşâ'a llâhu te'âlâ qal'e-i mezkûruñ
7. fethi müyesser olduqda saña geregi gibi mu'âvenet etmek emrüm olmuşdur buyurdum ki ħükme-i şerîfimüz vuşul bulduqda sen-daĥi ħidâmâta diqqat
8. ve ihtimâm eyleyüb eger alınması lâzım olan qal'elerüñ fethinde eger â'dânuñ ħaqqından gelmekde geregi gibi muqayyed olub bezl-i maqdûr eyleyesiz müşârün ileyh inşâ'a llâhu te'âlâ ol qal'eyi feth êtdükde
9. ne-vechle lâzım gelirse saña mu'âvenet edüb ve Bebek oĝlına mu'âvenet için Ĥân oĝlına ve Ĥasan bege ħükme gönderildi ve bir mektûbuñuzda daĥi saña ita'at eden Macâr begleri afv olunmaq emr olmaĥın ĥâliyâ Yanöva ve Desnov⁷⁰ ħişârlarınun
10. begleri itâ'at etmek üzere oldukları bildürmişsiz ol ħişârlar Güleye tâb'idür ve ħavâşş-i hümâyünüm içindedür andan mâ-'adâ Güle muĥâşara olunduqda 'asâkir-i islâmîye nice te'addîler edüb azıqcıların ve davarların gâret u hasâret

69 Mihail Guboglu, *Paleografia și Diplomatica Turco-Osmana. Studiu și Album*. Bukarest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romîne 1958, Faksimile 19. This document in Guboglu's book is a copy of the original one. Original copy can be founded in the city archives of Regensburg. For this article, I used both of the documents.

70 Desnó, used in medieval Hungary in the form of Desznye, then as Dészne. According to Istvánfi Miklós, Pertev Pasha captured the castle of Jenő, Világos and Desnó. Miklós Istvánffy, *Magyarok dolgaíróól irt históriája. Tályai Pál XVII. századi fordításban. I/2*. Ed. Benits Péter. Budapest: Történelmi Források, Balassa Kiadó, 380.

11.  tmiřlerd r bundan aqdem ferm n-i h m y num dađı G leye t bi‘ olan hıř rlardan saňa mut ba‘at edenlere andan ger  ol emr  zere G le tev bi‘nden m -‘ad[ ] eline s zine varınca her kim gel b mut ba‘at ederlerse min ba‘d dahl olunmaz
12. tađr ren fı ev h r-i řeferi l-muzaffer sene erba‘ ve-seb‘ n ve-tis‘ami‘e
13. be-yurt-i řađr -i Sigetv r

Translation

The pride of the great Christian princes, the chosen of the illustrious dignitaries in the nation of the Messiah, the restorer of the proper course of the peoples of the Nazarene community, he who trails the skirts of pomp and stateliness, the possessor of the signs of glory and pride, King Stephen of Transylvania, may he find the true path. Upon the arrival of the lofty decree, may it be known that the letter you sent to my Sublime Porte, in which you talked about the conditions of the fortress you conquered and the issue of Bebek’s son, and the rebel named Lazar and also about sending soldiers to support you and the son of the Bebek and everything you mentioned became known in details. Now the fortress of Szigetv r was conquered by the glory and sublimity of the God Almighty, all the cursed enemies inside the castle were put to the sword and Zr nyi, (the man of) the cursed religious became the food of the righteous sword. From now on, I will imperially turn towards the Buda side; Gyula, which is on that side, was also conquered. And the aforementioned services were entrusted to the venerable, the respectable marshal, the basis of the order of the world, the cautious and glorious commander of people, the astute one, the supplementary and the most significant of all creatures, the indefectible, the builder of the state, the one who is exalting the foundation of honor and prosperity, who is encompassed by the variety of gifts of the highest King, the possessor of grace, my supreme vizier Pertev Pasha, may God glorify his dignity, moved towards the fortress named Jen  by stating that it needed to be conquered. Once the aforementioned fortress will be conquered with the help of the almighty God, I have commanded you to provide the right assistance. I have ordered that when my imperial order arrives, you should also be careful and assiduous in service, be it the conquering the castles that need to be captured or in order to vanquish the enemy, you shall rightly carry out the best effort possible. An order was sent to the son of the Bebek, the son of the Han, and to Hasan Bey to support you in every aspect in case of need after we conquer the aforementioned fortress with the help of the almighty God. You also report that the Hungarian Beys who follow you were granted pardon and therefore, now the beys of Jen  and Desn  fortresses are about to surrender as well. Those fortresses are subject to Gyula and within the imperial domain. Apart from that, while Gyula was besieged, the army of Islam intruded several times, plundered, and harmed the foragers and the cattle. Prior to this, my imperial order is, those who submitted to you from the fortresses subject to Gyula, apart from the subjects of Gyula whoever comes to obey and becomes the servant, from now on with this order, you should not intervene them.

Written on the last day of the victorious řafer/ (September) from the year 974/1566.

In the settlement of the Szigetv r plain.

The letter from Pertev Pasha to Sultan Süleyman⁷¹

1. ‘arz-ı bende-i bî-vücūd budur ki bundan evvel āsitāne-i se‘ādete gönderilen çavuş qulları fermān-ı şerīflerin irād edüb mefhūm-i münifinde
2. lütf-i ‘ināyetlerinden ve merḥamet-i ‘ālīşānlarından ‘asker-i islāma ḥayr du‘āların rehber edüb ‘ināyet-i ḥaqqā sipāriş olunduğı ve Drava tuğyān üzere
3. olub Sigedvār üzerine varmaqdan ferāgat edüb inşā’a llāh Vāradinden geçilüb doğru qal‘e-i Egrī üzerine var-
4. ılacağı ve ol cānibe varılcaq Ṭemeşvār cānibinde olan ‘askere fāyide olduğı fermān-ı şerīf olunmuş ma’lūm-i şerīfleri ola ki tā iibtidādān
5. se‘ādetle sefere niyet olunduqda gāh Sigedvār cānibine ve gāh Egrī cānibine gidilmesi tedārük olunduqda Sigedvār tarafında olan ümerā
6. qulları ve ol cānibūñ mūte‘alliqleri ekşer ol cānibe meyl edürmeden ḥ[h]ālī degiller idi leykin ne Sigedvār tarafına ve ne Egrī tarafına meyl ü
7. te‘alluqı olmayub mahzā pādişāh-i islāma ḥayırlusın fikr edenler devlet u se‘ādet ile Egrī cāniblerine vārılmaq oladur deyü söylerlerdi
8. inşā’a llāh qudūm-i şerīfleriyle qal‘e-i Egrī ve aña tāb‘i olanlar fetḥ olunub ve ol cānibūñ küffārı mesdūd olub Erdel vilāyetinden
9. ötürü dah[h]ji bunca yıllardan berü çekilen ıztırābdan inşā’a llāh ḥalāş olunduğından gayri se‘ādetlü pādişāh ḥazretlerine ve ‘asker-i islāma daḥi
10. evlādur deyü söylenür ve Sigedvār memleketimiz kenārıdır beglerine nazār olunub quvvet vēriline eyyām-i se‘ādetlerinde her zemānda qapusun açdırmayub inşā’a llāh ol daḥi fetḥ olur deyü ekşer sözleri bu idi şöyle kim evvel Sigedvāra düşülüb bu yıl-i mübāreq qadem-i şerīfleriyle
11. Egrī cāniblerine varılmaya vilāyet-i Erdel gavğasından ḥalās olunmayub yıllarca dūkenmez ‘azīm seferler ve işler lāzım olur deyü söylerlerdi
12. ve-l-ḥāşıl devletlü se‘ādetlü islām pādişāhımızuñ re‘y-i şerīfleri cümleye gālibdür emr [u] fermān se‘ādetlü pādişāhındur ḥ[h]ūdā te‘āla cemi‘i murādātların
13. ḥayriyle müyesser eyleyüb eksüklüğün göstermeye ve nihān buyurılmaya ki bundan evvel Ṭuna yalısında geçit olan Ḥarām iskelesine gelindükde
14. geçid gemileri el vērüğine göre ihmāl olunmayub geçmek üzere olunduğı ve Ṭuna geçildükden soñra tevaqquf olunmayub fermān olunan maḥalle
15. varılır deyü ‘arz olunmuş iidi eyle olsa iskele-i merqūmiye gelindükde ṭob ‘arabacıları ketḥūdāsı elli qıta‘a boş ‘arabalarıyle ḥāzır⁷² bulunub
16. ve zārbūzanlar ḥāzır bulunmamağıyla zikr olunan zārbūzanlar Belgrād ve Semenderede ḥāzırdur⁷³ deyü alınmasıyçün mezbūr Belgrād ve Semendere qādılarına
17. ve dizdārlarına emr-i şerīf gelüb emr-i şerīf mücibince mezkūr qal‘elerde mevcūd bulunan yarakdan yigirmi sekiz qıta‘a zārbūzanlar

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72 Im orijinal: ḥāzır

73 Im orijinal: ḥāzırdur

18. getüdilüb ve mirî tobcı başı dađı Belğrâdda hâzır⁷⁴ bulunmađıyla mâ'adâsıyçün deñizden 'Alî begle gelen gemilerdedür deyü ketğüdâsına
19. mektüb gönderüb ve bâqî qalan zârbüzanlar için dah[h]i mezbür 'Alî beg bendelerine âdemler gönderilüb ve nehr-i Tuna dađı gâyet tuğyân üzre
20. olmađıyla geçid yeri ziyâde vâs'i olub gemiler el vërdüğine göre geçilmekte ya'alem Allâh hiç bir vechiyle ihmâl olunmayub ol ecilden zârüri
21. öte yaqada berü yaqada bir qaç gün oturmağ lâzım gelüb ve gemilerde olan zârbüzanlar için dah[h]i tevaqquf olunmayub göçilüb 'aqabmazca
22. zârbüzanları getürmek için ve Vidin sancağibegi bendeleri olanca sipâhîleriyle ve ba'zi yeniçeriler ve bir miqdar tobcular 'arabacılar ile gidüb Harâm
23. iskelesinde eliqonilub eyyâm-ı se'âdetlerinde inşâ'a llâh anlar dađı 'aqabmazca gelmek üzeredür ve bu bendeleri dah[h]i fermân-i şerîf mücibince
24. mağalle-i me'mure teveccüh olunub Temeşvâr ve Lipovaya uğrayub ve andan inşâ'a llâh dâru l-harb olan mağalle erişmek üzeredür ve Temeşvâr
25. beglerbegisi emr-i şerîfle qal'e dövmege alub gitdüğü eđer bacalüşqalardur ve eđer kolombüralardur ve bârüt-i siyâh ve sâyir yât u yarak
26. ve serâhördür kifâyet eder deyü âsitâne-i se'âdete mühürlü defter gönderüb 'arz eylediği üzre inşâ'a llâh eyyâm-i se'âdet-i pâdişâhîde
27. ola ki kifâyet eyleye ve mağall-i me'mure varilub mülâqât olındugda inşâ'a llâh her huşûş mümküniyle görilüb gâyet-i zârüri olan huşûş
28. lâzım gelürse vâq'î üzre âsitâne-i se'âdete 'arz olunmadan ğayri tedârüke mümkin olmaduđı m'alüm-i şerîfdür ve Temeşvâr beglerbegisi
29. Temeşvâra tâb'î olan 'askerden ve Rum elinden dađı ta'yîn buyurulan ümerâdan qal'e-i muğşarasına kifâyet edemez deyü bundan evvel âsitâne-i
30. se'âdete 'arz edüp leykin eđer 'askere ve sâyir huşûşa inşâ'a llâh se'âdetlü pâdişâh-i dîn-penâh hazretleri himmet-i 'âliyeleri ve
31. mübârek hayr du'âları 'askeri islâm üzerine dirîğ degildür ve memleket ağvâlinde ve zâd u zevâde huşûşundan istifsâr
32. buyurulursa ekşer bu câniblerde bir iki yıldur-ki bazı 'asker geçmekden hâli olmamađıyla arpa huşûşı temâm müzâyaqa üzre olub
33. ve re'âyâ tayıfesi memleket zabtılarınıñ zülmünden ekşer qariyeleri qârar eyleyüb qalancaları dađı şikâyetinden hâli olmadukları sebebden
34. dah[h]i qasaba-i Parâkan nâm menzilden Temeşvâr beglerbegisine bir iki defa hükm-i şerîf yazilub gönderilmiş idi-ki eđer itâ'at üzre olan
35. re'âyâlardur ve eđer harbî olan re'âyâlardur yerlü yeründe oturub devâm devlet-i pâdişâhîye meşğül olmaları bâbında oñât istimâletler
36. vëriye deyü i'lâm olunub ve gönderilen aħkâm-i şerîfenüñ şüreti dah[h]i yazilub hâliyâ küstâhâne se'âdetlü pâdişâh hazretlerine gönderildi
37. ve her menzile varmazdan evvel ilerü yeniçeri qullarınızdand ve bölük halqından yasaqçılar gönderildiği muqarrerdür şol huşûş ki mümkindür eyyâm-i

74 Im original: hâzır

38. se'âdetleründe inşâ'a llâh taqşîrât olunmaduđı mulâhaza-i şerîf buyurıla ve inşâ'a llâh maħalle-i me'mûre varlıub muħâşara-i 'ümürine mübâşeret
39. olunduqda vâqi' ħâl tafşîl ile gene 'arz olunur ħayırlar müyesser ola inşâ'a llâhu te'âlâ bâqî fermân dergâh mu'allânuñdur
40. bende-i bî-vücüd Pertev

Translation

The petition of this insignificant servant is that the sergeants who were formerly sent to the threshold of felicity brought your noble order in its glorious content; the following was ordered through his grace and lofty mercy; he guided the army of Islam by his prayers and commissioned (them) to the mercy of God, and he renounced to advance towards Szigetvár due to the heavy flooding in the river of Drava, and if God permits, (he) hopes to cross Varadin,⁷⁵ and to arrive at Eger and that will be for the benefit of the soldiers of Temesvár.⁷⁶ It is for your noble knowledge that, since from the beginning, when the intentions were formed to campaign with prosperity, and when the preparations were made to advance towards either to Szigetvár or Eger, the commander servants in Szigetvár and the appurtenant of that side mostly favored to go that part, yet it was not tended and tied neither to Szigetvár nor to Eger, only the Sultan of Islam thought of the best and said that (the army) must arrive at Eger with excellence and prosperity. If God permits, the fortress of Eger and its subjects will be conquered with his noble arrival, and the infidels of that part will be blocked off; after the salvation from the misery that caused by the province of Erdel for years, now it is said that prosperous highness and the army of Islam will be more preferable. And Szigetvár is in the border of our fatherland when it is commanded to its beys, and when the pressure is applied, under his prosperous rule, the doors of it will be open and with the help of God, it will be conquered as well. (They) said whoever goes to Szigetvár before and not to set his blessed foot in Eger within this year, (then) it will not be possible to avoid from the wrangling of Erdel, and it will be required to carry out grand campaigns and works which will last for long years. In short, the noble judgment of our illustrious and prosperous Sultan of Islam overcomes all the world; the noble order belongs to the prosperous Sultan; may almighty God destinies him all of his intentions with excellence and not to show his absence. May this be not hidden from your knowledge that it was submitted before, when we arrive at the port of Haram which became a passage for Danube shore, to cross it without omission since the crossing ships were convenient, and after (we) cross the Danube, we will not wait and arrive at the place that was ordered. If so, the colonel of cannon carriages is ready with the fifty troops of empty carriages, and the cannons which are not present, yet the aforesaid cannons now are ready in Belgrade and Semendere.⁷⁷ And a noble command was received by the judges and castellans of the aforementioned Belgrade

75 Pertovaradin

76 Timișoare

77 Smederevo

and Semendere; in conformity with this noble command, twenty-eight troops of cannons will be taken from the armors that exist in the before mentioned fortresses. And a letter was sent to his colonel that the commander of the artillery is standing ready in Belgrade as well, and the others (cannons) are in the ships, coming along with Ali Bey, from the sea, and the men sent to (his) subject Ali Bey for the rest of the cannons. The river of Danube is in a heavy flood, yet the point of crossing is highly wide, with no doubt, and since the ships are already suitable, there should not be any omission by any means to cross over. For this reason, it is necessary to lodge in this and that shore, yet should not stop even for the cannons in the ships, and pass over to transport this big number of cannons and his servant the Sancakbey of Vidin went with all of his cavalymen and some janissaries and some artillerymen and carriage seized in the port of Haram and with the help of God, they will too about to arrive in big numbers under his/sultan's prosperous rule. And I, your servant, am also turning towards the authorized place and after stopping by in Temesvár and Lipova, about to arrive in the place of the battleground. The Bey of Temesvár sent a sealed list to the Sublime Porte stating that the *bacaloşcas* and *kolomboras*,⁷⁸ the black powder and so on, and the armor and the *serahors*⁷⁹ that he went to hit the fortress with, are sufficient. As (the Beylerbeyi) submitted, if God permits, if the Sultan of all people too will find them sufficient, (I) will arrive at the place of order and every matter that discussed will be settling up as much as possible and if any matter would be highly mandatory, it is known that is not possible to provide a remedy without submitting to the Sublime Port. The beylerbeyi of Temesvár submitted to the Sublime Porte before, that the soldiers subject to Temesvár, and also from the umera appointed from Rumelia will not be enough to besiege the fortress, however with the help of God the prosperous, the illustrious Sultan – the protector of faith – will not keep denying his supreme beneficence about the matter of soldiers and similar issues, and his sacred blessing on the army of Islam; and if a detailed explanation of the provisions and the situation in the province will be asked, mostly, since one or two years some of the soldiers could not be taken over in this territory the matter of barley is in distress; and the population of the subjects is mostly had enough of the tyranny of the captors, and even the remainders are continuing to complain. That is why, for one or two times, we wrote and sent a noble command to the Bey of Temesvár from the station called Parakan, concerning that if the obedient subjects and the other ones who are not under the truce stay orderly, it was informed that it should be given *istimalets*⁸⁰ to pursuit the continuity of the most glorious Sultanate and the copy of the noble command was written and sent to the audacious, prosperous Sultan as well. It is definite that before arriving at each stop advanced janissary servants and security guards from your subjects of the troop were sent. This matter is possible that a noble thought should be

78 Types of the Ottoman cannons.

79 The unit of the army fixes the roads and the bridges during the campaign.

80 The protection of the non-muslims of the territory with an approach showing kindness to create an attraction for the imperial authority.

commended with the help of God, there will not be any absence from his prosperous rule and if God permits after (I) arrived the place of order and get down to the work, the conditions will be submitted with their details. With the help of a glorious God, the best of all will be destined (to us). The everlasting order belongs to the Sublime Porte. I, Pertev, (your) insignificant servant.