

OTTOMAN *SERHAD* ORGANIZATION IN THE BALKANS  
(1450s to Early 1500s)

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## ABSTRACT

### OTTOMAN *SERHAD* ORGANIZATION IN THE BALKANS

(1450s to Early 1500s)

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This thesis analyses the Ottoman frontier organization in the Balkans from the second half of the fifteenth century to the early sixteenth centuries. Based mainly on the archival documents, Ottoman chronicles, and the secondary sources this thesis first shows that the Ottomans already had an established and comprehensive frontier policy, long before the conquest of the Hungarian Kingdom and the subsequent establishment of a new *serhad* against the Habsburg Empire. Then, it gives specific attention to the participation of Christian military groups (*Voynuks*, *Martoloses*, and *Vlachs*) and local subjects in the Ottoman defense organization in exchange for the reduction or exemption from certain taxes. Also, it deals with the hierarchical organization in the fortresses, the composition of the garrison troops and their services. Lastly, it concentrates on the Ottoman financing methods for the garrison troops and tries to reveal the cost of the Ottoman network of fortresses.

**Keywords:** Balkans, Christian Soldiers, Fifteenth Century, Frontier Organization, Network of Fortresses, Ottoman Empire

## ÖZET

### BALKANLAR’DA OSMANLI SERHAD ORGANİZASYONU (1450’lerden 1500’lerin Başına)

Baş, Göksel

Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç Dr. Evgeni Radushev

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Bu tez, onbeşinci yüzyılın ikinci yarısından onaltıncı yüzyılın başlarına kadar olan dönemde Balkanlar’da Osmanlı serhad organizasyonunu incelemektedir. Büyük oranda arşiv kaynakları, Osmanlı kronikleri ve ikincil literatüre dayanan bu çalışma ilk olarak Osmanlılar’ın Macaristan’ı fethi sonrası Habsburglar’a karşı oluşturulan serhadden çok daha evvel iyi işleyen ve bütüncül bir *serhad* savunma organizasyonuna sahip olduğunu göstermektedir. Daha sonra bu çalışmada *Voynuk*, *Martolos* ve *Vlach* gibi Hristiyan askeri birliklere ve çeşitli vergi muafiyetleri karşılığında Osmanlı savunma organizasyonuna katılan mahalli unsurlara dikkat çekilmiştir. Ayrıca, kale personeli arasındaki hiyerarşik yapılanma, garnizon kuvvetlerinin terkihi ve askeri görevleri üzerinde durulmuştur. Son olarak, Osmanlılar’ın sınır kalelerindeki garnizon kuvvetlerini finanse etme metotları ve Osmanlı kaleler ağının masrafı ortaya çıkarılmaya çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Balkanlar, Finansman, Hristiyan Askerler, Kale Ağı, Onbeşinci Yüzyıl, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Serhad Organizasyonu



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

*“...kal’a taşla toprakla kal’a olmaz, illā adam ile olur ve adam her ne kadar çoksa fāide etmez, illā nafaka ile olur. İşte imdī bizim bildigümüz budur, bākisin siz her nice bilürseniz öyle eyleyin...”<sup>1</sup>*

#### 1. 1. Objective of the Thesis

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the process of Ottoman frontier organization in the Balkans from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> to the early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. In particular, the

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<sup>1</sup> “...a fortress is not a fortress because of stone and earth, but only because of men. And it matters not how many man there are, but how well they subsist. This, then, is as much as we know. And whatever you may know about the rest, act in accordance with that...”. (Translation by Michael D. Sheridan). Original text was taken from: Halil İnalcık, Mevlüd Oğuz, *Gazavāt-i Sultān Murād b. Mehemmed Hān: İzladı ve Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavātnāme*, second edition, (Ankara:TTK, 1989), p. 43.

network of fortresses and their military personnel, Ottoman financing policy of the fortresses in the *serhad*<sup>2</sup> zones, and the incorporation of the ordinary tax payer (*re'aya*) into the defense organization will be discussed in detail. Notwithstanding the fact that Ottoman military history in general, and the frontier studies in particular, have increasingly been drawing attention among scholars both in Turkey and abroad, their interests focus on developments beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and onwards. For the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Ottoman-Habsburg Wars, and military organization and transformation on both sides, hold a particularly significant place in the context of Hungarian military development and political change. However, Ottoman frontier organization in terms of the 15<sup>th</sup> century remains understudied and of minimal interest to historians. Therefore, this work will attempt to contribute new approaches, analysis, and conclusion towards the study of Ottoman military history in the context of 15<sup>th</sup>-century *serhad* in the Balkans. Moreover, this study asserts that the Ottomans already had an established and comprehensive frontier policy, long before the conquest of the Hungarian Kingdom and the subsequent establishment of a new border periphery with the Habsburg Empire. This study can be regarded as the first attempt to analyze the defense organization of the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century.

This thesis consists of three main chapters, each of which touches upon various aspects of Ottoman frontier organization in the Balkans, beginning in the reign of Mehmed II, until midway through the reign of Sultan Bayezid II. The first chapter concentrates on three main points. First of all, it will attempt to reveal the Ottoman

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<sup>2</sup> The combination of the words Persian “*ser*”(head) Arabic “*hadd*” (frontier). In the thesis, *serhad* and frontier are used interchangeably.



network of fortresses in the frontier zone. By analyzing data collected from various archival documents, I will map the network of fortresses, particularly those located in the northwestern Balkans, where the Ottomans shared a relatively ‘stable’ frontier zone with the Hungarian Kingdom for half a century. Also, I will give the total number of garrison troops stationed at the border zone throughout the century and assert that the number of salaried garrison troops (*‘ulūfeli*) was greater in number than those who received alternate payment for their services (*timār*). Secondly, this chapter aims to compare the Hungarian defense system with the Ottoman active frontier organization between the 1450s and 1490s. This comparison will argue that the Ottomans and Hungarians mutually affected their own development of a well-operating frontier defense organization during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The main contribution of this chapter will be the claim that centralist policies, which started with the reign of Mehmed II, integrated the border peripheries into the main Ottoman administrative bodies, in order to be able to adequately respond to the Hungarian pressures along the frontier. The term *uc* which has always been romanticized by Ottomanist scholars started to fade away from the scene.<sup>3</sup> Rather, the frontiers should be regarded as an edge of the main Ottoman administrative body in the second half of the fifteenth century. Finally, this chapter provides one of the first studies, which shows the earliest Ottoman network of fortresses and their functions in the Balkans. The main argument of the chapter is to demonstrate that the Ottomans already controlled a well-

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<sup>3</sup> The word ‘*serhad*’ refers to frontier, not the ‘march-lands’ (*Uc* in Turkish). Frontier/*serhad* can be regarded as organized edge of a particular state and more integrated into the main administrative body of the state. Marsh/*Uc* rather refers to a more independent and separate regions that controlled by the military groups which hard to control. The Ottomans, as this thesis asserts, had already an integrated frontier periphery in mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. L.K.D. Kristof, “The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries”, *Annals of the Association of the American Geographers*, no. XLIX (1959), pp. 269-274.

organized frontier zone as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The work in this chapter, therefore, can be regarded as one of the earliest contributions to the field.

The second chapter consists of three parts dealing with three main subjects. The first deals with the administration of the fortresses, the composition of the armed forces in the castles and their sub-divisions with reference to their military professions. The second part aims to show how the Ottomans re-organized and used pre-Ottoman military establishments such as *Voynuks*, *Martoloses*, and *Vlachs* for the purpose of border defense. Lastly, the study largely focuses on the subjects living in the *serhad* areas and their participation in a common defense organization. Therefore this chapter will argue that the Ottomans were pragmatic in their implementation of solutions to improve the security of their frontier, such as granting certain privileges, including tax exemptions, in order to augment defense personnel. In fact, the pragmatism which the Ottomans experienced in the frontier areas was a well-working body of the Ottoman system throughout the century.

The last chapter concerns Ottoman financing practices in regards to paid garrison troops. It also aims to demonstrate the cost of the defense system, which exceeded millions of *akçe*, annually. The allocation of Ottoman revenue sources, mostly *muqata'as*, for financing the frontier guards and the mechanisms of the Ottoman policy of expense will be examined in detail. The amount of *akçe*, which was paid for the garrison troops and its percentage among the total *muqata'a* revenue sources over years is given, as well. At the end, this chapter will argue that the Ottomans had a well established and functioning financing system for the frontier garrisons as early as the mid-1450s. Each chapter will be supported by lists, figures, and maps.

Overall, this study tries to examine the Ottoman border peripheries in a comprehensive way by including military, socio-economic and financial aspects of the frontier organization. The overlapping relations between Ottoman military and financial institutions will be analyzed to demonstrate how intertwined and inseparable these two central bodies were in the early Ottoman period. Therefore, by expanding the analysis beyond typical classical military history, this study will present military institutions along with the various interdependent mechanisms that were involved in the day-to-day functioning of border defense in the early Ottoman period.

## **1. 2. Sources and Historiography**

In this thesis, I benefited from multiple archival documents concerning military, financial and social aspects of the Ottoman frontier in the Balkans in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Prime Ministry Ottoman Archive in Istanbul hosts a number of archival documents describing the military and fiscal conditions in the *serhad* regions. Among the registers *Maliyeden Müdevver Defter* (MAD) no. 15334, (1490-91), and *Kamil Kepeci* (KK) 4725, (1484-1501), information about the number of salaried garrison troops and the fortresses in the frontier zone is provided. MAD no. 176, (1460s-1480s), and KK no. 4988, (1487s-1510s), including data concerning *muqata'a* sources and the allocated funds for garrison troops in the Balkans between 1460 and 1510. Moreover, detailed (*mufassal*) and abstract (*icmāl*) *tahrīr* registers (cadastral surveys) provide further socio-economic data for this thesis. Among them, MAD no. 1, no. 5, no. 173, no.506, no. 540, *Tapu Tahrir* (TT) no.

5, no. 16, no. 18, no. 21, no. 24, no. 1007, *Muallim Cevdet* (MC) no. 36-03, no. 76, and *Oriental Archive Collection* (OAK) no. 45/29, no. 0.90, give continuous and detailed information regarding fortresses, garrison troops, other military establishments such as *Vlachs*, *Voynuks* and *Martoloses*, and lastly, about tax exempted populations and their military services on the frontier zones between 1454- 1516. All of these different types of registers were produced by separate bureaucratic offices within the Ottoman administrative body. Therefore, all the register types have distinctive paleographic features or orders. Also, many of them were written in *siyakat*, which is the standard script form of the Ottoman bureaucracy. Due to its style, it is one of the most difficult handwriting forms for the modern scholar to specialize in. These are valuable registers, which have largely been overlooked by scholars, with some notable exceptions, and have, therefore, remained unused for the intended study.

Ottoman *tevārīhs* (chronicles) and *gazavātnāmes* (war accounts) also enrich our information concerning the conquests, wars and other events during the reign of Mehmed II and his son Bayezid II. Among them, an anonymous war account, *Gazavāt-i Sultān Murād b. Mehemmed Hān*<sup>4</sup>, gives detailed and first-hand information on the long winter campaign of Hunyadi Yanos (1443-44) and the Battle of Varna (1444). Furthermore, Tursun Bey's *Tārīh-i Ebu'l-Feth*<sup>5</sup> is one of the most important chronicles of its period. As he accompanied most of the military campaigns of Mehmed II, Tursun Bey was witness to the military and political events of the era. Also, there are many general Ottoman histories from this era, some written by the order of Bayezid II and some written

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<sup>4</sup> Halil İnalcık, Mevlüd Oğuz, *Gazavāt-i Sultān Murād b. Mehemmed Hān: İzladi ve Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavātnāme*, second edition, (Ankara:TTK, 1989).

<sup>5</sup> Tursun Bey, *Tārīh-i Ebu'l-Feth*, Dr. A. Mertol Tulum (ed.), (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1977).

independently. Among them, Mevlānā Mehmed Neşrî's *Cihānnümā*<sup>6</sup> covers the years between 1288 and 1485. The famous work of Âşıkpaşazāde, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i 'Osman*<sup>7</sup> narrates the sequence of events from 1285 to 1502. While, Behiştî Ahmed Çelebi's lesser known work *Tārīh-i Behiştî, Vāridāt-i Subhānī ve Fütūhāt-i Osmānī*<sup>8</sup> provides more details concerning the first campaigns of Mehmed II against Hungary. It also mentions the period between 1288 and 1502. Oruç Bey's *Tevārīh-i Âl-i 'Osman*<sup>9</sup>, too, covers the same period as Neşrî and Âşıkpaşazāde. Finally, the work of İdris-i Bitlisî, *Heşt Behişt*<sup>10</sup>, is a particularly enriching reference in regards to this period of Ottoman history. There are also other chronicles written in later periods, which can provide detailed information, concerning the given period, and though distanced by time, if read critically can contribute to a further understanding of historical circumstances. For instance, the chronicle of Ibn Kemāl, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i 'Osman*<sup>11</sup>, enriches our knowledge about the reign of Mehmed II and Bayezid II by giving substantial details about the wars and other events.

Although there is not a comprehensive study focused on the Ottoman fortress system in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, a good number of works discuss different aspects of this significant research problem. The collections of Ömer Lütfi Barkan, Halil İnalcık, and Ahmed Akgündüz, which cover the Imperial codes (*kānūnāmes*), decrees of prohibitions (*yasaknāmes*) and decrees of orders (*ahkām*s) are significant in regards to revealing the legal basis of the Ottoman administrative, military, fiscal and judicial system. These works

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<sup>6</sup> Mevlānā Mehmed Neşrî, *Cihānnümā*, Prof. Dr. Necdet Öztürk (ed.), (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2013)

<sup>7</sup> Âşıkpaşazāde, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i 'Osman*, Prof. Dr. Necdet Öztürk (ed.), (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Behiştî Ahmed Çelebi, *Tārīh-i Behiştî, Vāridāt-i Subhānī ve Fütūhāt-i Osmānī (791-907/ 1389-1502) II*, Fatma Kaytaz (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Oruç Bey, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i 'Osman*, Prof. Dr. Necdet Öztürk (ed.), (İstanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2014).

<sup>10</sup> İdris-i Bitlisî, *Heşt Behişt, (Fatih Sultan Mehmed Devri 1451-1481)* vol. VII, Muhammed İbrahim Yıldırım (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> İbn Kemāl, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i Osmān*, vol. VII, Şerafettin Turan (ed.) (Ankara: TTK, 1991); vol. VIII, Ahmet Uğur (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 1997).

detail entire organizational structures of military and administrative groups. By analyzing these bodies of laws, it is possible to determine the organizational framework and the differences between the Ottoman administrative units in the center compared to the frontier areas.<sup>12</sup> In addition, the publication of İlhan Şahin and Ferudun Emecen concerning the imperial decrees from 1501, includes the orders which were discussed in the *dīvān* (the court) and sent to the designated places they addressed.<sup>13</sup> As they comprise many orders concerning the affairs of the fortresses, this study is helpful in terms of explaining which bureaucratic mechanisms or department were related, directly and indirectly with the administration of the frontier fortresses.

A number of scholars, who have analyzed and examined the general tendencies and concepts of the Mehmed II-Bayezid II period, deserve to be mentioned here. Franz Babinger's work, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, is one of the most influential works about the period that enlightens scholars in terms of the events and general tendencies during the reign of Mehmed II.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Halil İnalcık's extensive book, which covers many issues during the reign of Sultan Mehmed II, is one of the most influential books written about this era, in particular.<sup>15</sup> The period following Mehmed II is well documented and analyzed by Sydney Nettleton. His study of the reign of Bayezid II gives specific significance to international relations conducted between the Ottomans their European counterparts. Hedda Reindl's study concerning the same period is another

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<sup>12</sup> Ömer Lütü Barkan, *XV ve XVI ıncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları*, (İstanbul, 1943); Halil İnalcık and Robert Anhegger, *Kânûnnâme-i Sultânî Ber Müceb-i 'Örf-i 'Osmânî*, (Ankara: TTK, 1956); Ahmed Akgündüz, *Osmanlı Kanunnâmeleri ve Hukukî Tahlilleri*, vol I-X, (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2006), especially the first and the second volumes of the book includes the era of Mehmed II and Bayezid II.

<sup>13</sup> İlhan Şahin – Feridun Emecen, *Osmanlılarda Divân- Bürokrasi- Ahkam II. Bâyezid Dönemine Ait 906/1501 Tarihli Ahkâm Def'i*, (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1994).

<sup>14</sup> Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1952).

<sup>15</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerine Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I*, (Ankara: TTK, 1954).

noteworthy contribution, which examines the courts and courtiers who served Bayezid II.<sup>16</sup>

An overall study of the history of the late Medieval Balkans was written by John V. A. Fine, which concerns the general political and the military history of the Balkans from 12<sup>th</sup> to late 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>17</sup> Along with Fine's work, İnalcık's article, "The Methods of Conquest"<sup>18</sup>, now the definitive study concerning the Ottoman policy of conquest, determines that conquest functioned in stages and examines how the Ottomans managed to articulate newly conquered regions into the main body of the empire.

The above-mentioned works analyze the general developments under the rules of Mehmed II and Bayezid II. These studies focus on the early Ottoman period in general, however, those devoted specifically to the Ottoman frontier, particularly in terms of military establishments in the early modern period, focus mainly on the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. There remains an insufficient number of studies concerning the establishment and development of the Ottoman Balkan military in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A mere two short articles examine Ottoman fortresses, in both Anatolia and the Balkans, during this early period. Eftal Şükrü Batmaz's article gives a general overview of Ottoman castles, however, it does not handle their daily functioning in detail.<sup>19</sup> Secondly, the recently published article of Uğur Altuğ, claims to list the fortresses in the Ottoman Balkans, and

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<sup>16</sup> Hedda Reindl, *Männer um Bāyezīd: eine prosopographische Studie über die Epoche Sultan Bāyezīds II. (1481-1512)*, (Berlin: K. Schwarz, 1982).

<sup>17</sup> John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*, (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1987).

<sup>18</sup> Halil İnalcık, "Ottoman Method of Conquests", *Studia Islamica*, no. 2 (1954), pp. (103-129)

<sup>19</sup> Eftal Şükrü Batmaz, "Osmanlı Devletinde Kale Teşkilatına Genel Bir Bakış", *OTAM*, no. 7 (1996), pp. 3-9.

analyze the military personnel in the fortresses.<sup>20</sup> However, Altuğ misreads many of the names of the fortresses and confuses some military groups with Janissaries. Moreover, he does not provide his texts with needful maps, that show and analyze the fortress network system in the late fifteenth century.

The term ‘military revolution’ was introduced by Gábor Ágoston and Rhoads Murphey and their contribution to the military history of the Ottoman Empire, therefore, deserves special attention. Thanks to their stimulating works, the historiography on military history in Turkey could find a new field of studies.<sup>21</sup> There are some other historians who contributed this field with their comprehensive studies, such as Caroline Finkel<sup>22</sup>, Feridun Emecen<sup>23</sup>, Asparuch Velikov and Evgeni Radushev<sup>24</sup> and Cladua Römer<sup>25</sup>. Most of these studies, however, deal with the problem of Ottoman military establishments in Hungarian territories in defense of the Habsburgs. Many Hungarian researchers give a special importance to Hungarian frontier organization from the middle

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<sup>20</sup> Uğur Altuğ, ‘XV. Yüzyılda Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Kaleleri ve Geçirdikleri Yapısal Değişimler’, in Ahmet Özcan (ed.), *Halil İncılık Armağanı III* (İstanbul: Doğu Batı, 2017), pp. 74-106.

<sup>21</sup> Gábor Ágoston, pp. 567-582; *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapon Industry in the Ottoman Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). “Disjointed Historiography and Islamic Military echnology: The European Military Revolution Debate and the Ottomans”, Mustafa Kaçar and Zeynep Durukal (eds.), *Essays in Honour of Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu* (İstanbul: IRCICA, 2006), For his other works on the Ottoman military technology and organization *vis a vis* its European counterparts, see: “Firearms and Military Adaption: The Ottomans and the European Military Revolution, 1450-1800”, *Journal of World History* 25.01 (2014), pp. 85-124;; “Habsburgs and Ottomans: Defense, Military Change and shifts in Power”, *The Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 22/1 (1998). For the work of Rhoads Murphey, see: *Ottoman Warfare, 1500-1700*, (London: UCL Press, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Caroline Finkel, *The Administration of Warfare: The Ottoman Military Campaigns in Hungary, 1593-1606*, (Vienna: Verband der wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaften Österreichs, 1988); “The Cost of Ottoman Warfare and Defence”, *Byzantinische Forschungen* 16 (1990), pp. 91-103.

<sup>23</sup> Feridun M. Emecen, *Osmanlı Klasik Çağında Savaş*, (İstanbul: TİMAŞ, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Asparuch Velkov and Evgeni Radushev, *Ottoman Garrisons on the Middle Danube based on Austrian National Library MS MXT 562 of 956/1559-1550*, (Budapest: Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica, 1996).

<sup>25</sup> C. Römer, *Osmanische Festungsbesatzungen in Ungarn zur Zeit Murad III*, Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, (Vienna, 1995). These works should also be given for this field: M. L. Stein, *guarding the Frontier: Ottoman Border Forts and Garrisons in Europe*, (London: Tauris, 2007); A. C. S. Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); David Nicolle, *Ottoman Fortifications 1300-1710*, (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2010).



ages to the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>26</sup> However, they mainly discuss the Hungarian elements of defense, and ignore the developments of Ottoman defense organization, before the Turkish conquest of Hungarian Kingdom. Therefore, one remains with the impression that the elaborate establishment of the Ottoman frontier zone was initially established on Hungarian soil after the conquest. However, quite to the contrary, the argument of this thesis will conclude that a well organized Ottoman defense system had already been established long before the Ottomans and the Hungarians began to share a common frontier zone.

Not including some isolated studies, the socioeconomic nature of the peripheries has, in general, received more attention and analysis than the military status and organization of the frontier zones along the Ottoman boundary. Olga Zirojević's monograph regarding Ottoman military organization in Serbia, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, discloses in detail Ottoman establishments along the periphery of the state and thus must be mentioned here. She analyzes Ottoman military establishment and the different military groups, such as *Voynuks* and *Martoloses* along the Serbian border over an extensive period of time. She also examines the network of fortresses in the region as they were organized and managed by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>27</sup> In the same way, the military organization in Bulgaria is addressed by Radushev, who tries to analyze

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<sup>26</sup> Gyula Káldy-Nagy, "The First Centuries of the Ottoman Military Organization", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 31/2 (1977), pp. 147-183; János M. Bak and Béla K. Király, *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*. (War and Society in Eastern Central Europe, vol III.) (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1982); Géza David and Pál Fodor, *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe. The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*. (The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage. Politics, Society and Economy. Ed. By Suraiya Faroqhi and Halil İnalcık. Vol. 20.) (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2000); Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire: The Ottomans in Central Europe- A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390-1566)*, (Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2016).

<sup>27</sup> Olga Zirojević, *tursko vojno Uredjenje u Serbiyi 1459-1683* [Ottoman Military Organization in Serbia 1459-1683] (Institut D'histoire Monographies. Vol. XVIII), (Belgrade, 1974).

the Niğbolu (Nicompolis) *Sancağ* and details the gradual military and social transformation of the region from the mid 15<sup>th</sup> to the early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Radushev's main aim, however, was to find the place of the local Christians within the Ottoman frontier organization.<sup>28</sup> S. Parvera, too, covers the same region, though focusing on the later periods.<sup>29</sup> Rossitsa Gradeva continues this work on Bulgaria but limits her study to the Vidin region in the period between 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>30</sup>

Further studies focused on the *sancağ* of Bosnia, also cover the reign of Mehmed II and Bayezid II. The scholar, Hazim Šabanović, in this manner produced much work regarding the *sancağ* -and later- *Pašalık* of Bosnia from the mid fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries.<sup>31</sup> Hatice Oruç's studies on Bosnia should also be mentioned here. Most of her work is also related to the Bosnian *sancağ*.<sup>32</sup> She gives detailed information about the establishment of administrative units in the related region after its conquest.

There are some interesting studies concerning three distinct groups that deserve attention: *Voynuks*, *Martoloses* and *Vlachs*, which were the pre-Ottoman military troops in the ranks of the Ottoman armies. These groups served the Ottoman administration for various military purposes. Yet, in this respect, studies on the *Voynuks*, one of the largest Christian military establishment in the Balkans, seem lacking. There is only one monograph in relation to the *Voynuk* establishment in the Ottoman Empire. Yavuz Ercan's

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<sup>28</sup> Evgeni Radushev, "Ottoman Border Periphery (Serhad) in the Vilayet of Niğbolu, First Half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century", *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 34, pp. 141-160.

<sup>29</sup> S. Parvera, "Balgari na služba na Osmanskata Armija, Voennopomošni zadatženij na gradskoto naselenie v Nikopol i Silistra prez XVII vek", *Kontrasti i konflikti ve Balgarskoto obštstvo prez XV-XVIII vek* (ed. E. Grozdanova - O. Todorova), Sofia 2003, s. 226-254

<sup>30</sup> Rossitsa Gradeva, "War and Peace along the Danube: Vidin at the End of the Seventeenth Century", *Oriente Moderno*, no. 81 (2001), pp. 149-175.

<sup>31</sup> Hazim Šabanović, "Bosna i Hercegovina", *İstorija Naroda Jugoslavije*.

<sup>32</sup> Hatice Oruç, "15. Yüzyılda Bosna Sancağı ve İdari Dağılımı", *OTAM*, no. 18 (2006), pp. 249-271.

work on the *Voynuks* covers the period between the first centuries of Ottoman rule in the Balkans and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>33</sup> However, since the scope of the book is quite large, Ercan does not give much detail regarding *Voynuk* organization in the fifteenth century. Some Bulgarian researchers have also published a number of works, which also include some analysis of *Voynuk* groups.<sup>34</sup>

*Martoloses* constituted one of the oldest established military units that were broadly used by the Ottomans for centuries. Milan Vasić's works are among the oldest and detailed studies on the *Martoloses*.<sup>35</sup>

The problem of Vlachs, the third group is, however, a long-disputed subject for historians. The latest contribution, by Vjeran Kursar, analyzes the previous contributions on the subject and provides new information and perspectives on the *Vlachs*.<sup>36</sup> He gives a general overview of the identity of the Vlach, their roles, and status in the Western regions of the Balkans between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Ottoman economic and fiscal history has been a particular favorite of scholars for the past several decades, and many of these studies are of great benefit in regards to fiscal and military administration.<sup>37</sup> Plenty works have been published focusing on 'budgets',

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<sup>33</sup> Yavuz Ercan, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Bulgarlar ve Voynuklar*, (Ankara: TTK, 1989).

<sup>34</sup> A. Velkov, B. Cvetkova, V. Mutačieva, G. Gălăbov, M. Mihailova, M. Stainova, P. Gruevski and St. Andreev (eds.), *Fontes Turcici Historiae Bulgaricae*, vol. V, (Serdicae: In Aedibus Academiae Litterarum Bulgaricae, MCMLXXIV (1974)).

<sup>35</sup> Milan Vasić, "Die Martolosen im Osmanischen Reich", *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 2 (1964), pp. 172-89; "The Martoloses in Macedonia", *Macedonian Review* 7, no. 1 (1977), pp. 31-41; "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Martoloslar", Kemal Beydilli (trans.), *Tarih Dergisi* 31 (1977), pp. 47-64.

<sup>36</sup> Vjeran Kursar, "Being an Ottoman Vlach: On Vlach Identity(ies), Role and Status in Western Parts of the Ottoman Balkans (15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)", *OTAM*, no. 34 (2013), pp. 115-161.

<sup>37</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "H. 933-934 (M. 1527-1528) Mali Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe Örneği", *İÜİFM*, XV, 1-4 (1953-1954), pp. 251-329; Halil Sahillioğlu, "Bir Mültezim Zimem Defterine göre XV. Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı Darphane Mukataaları", *İÜİFM*, XXIII, no. 1-4 (1962-1963), pp. 145-218; Halil Sahillioğlu, "1524-1525 Osmanlı bütçesi", *İÜİFM Ord. Prof. Ömer Lütfi Barkan'a Armağan*, XLI, 1-4 (1985), pp. 415-452; Halil İnalcık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. I, (Cambridge:

that should be mentioned here. They cover the problems of revenue sources, the annual ‘budgets’ of the empire and particular economic systems. Baki Çakır’s particular study on the *muqata’a* system discusses the functioning mechanisms of the aforesaid system within the conceptual and technical framework.<sup>38</sup> The edited book of Erol Özvar and Mehmed Genç covers the state ‘budgets’ from 16<sup>th</sup> to late 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>39</sup>

As mentioned above, there are plenty of works concerning the different aspects of the Ottoman socio-economic and military history throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. However, the studies on military and the economic history of the Ottoman Empire concentrate on aforesaid centuries. My thesis will attempt to bring information and perspectives on the Ottoman frontier organization in the context of network of fortresses, the financing mechanisms of the frontier fortresses and lastly, the participation of the local populace into the defense organization in the fifteenth century.

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Cambridge University Press, 1994); Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, (İstanbul: ÖTÜKEN, 2000); Ahmet Tabakoğlu, *Osmanlı Mâlî Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Dergâh, 2016); Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Kurumları*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2007); Baki Çakır, “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Bilinen En eski (1495-1496) Bütçesi ve 1494-1495 Yılı İcmali”, *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. XLVII (2016), pp. 113-145.

<sup>38</sup> Baki Çakır, *Osmanlı Mukataa Sistemi (XVI-XVIII. Yüzyıl)*, (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003).

<sup>39</sup> Mehmed Genç and Erol Özvar (eds.), *Osmanlı Maliyesi: Kurumlar ve Bütçeler*, II vol., (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2006).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **OTTOMAN FRONTIER ORGANIZATION IN THE BALKANS**

#### **2.1 Mapping the Frontier: The Ottoman Chain of Fortresses in Rumelia in the Late Fifteenth Century**

It is a well-known fact that it is impossible to imagine a clear cut-demarcated borderline in reference to early modern frontier zones. Rather, we rely on the physical features of the land or sphere of influence between two neighboring states, which claim sovereignty over aforementioned lands. Fortresses, in this manner, are indicators of frontier zones. Not wire-mesh fences, as we see today's world, but a chain of fortresses that defined the borders of different sovereign states in the early modern world. The 'fortress was the representative marker of frontier space; it marked the edge of the power of a sovereign entity'.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Palmira Brummet, 'The Fortress: Defining and Mapping the Ottoman Frontier in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in A.C.S Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 31.

The Ottomans, too, shared common frontier zones with several of their foes. Rivers, mountains, passages, and marshes formed the physical indicators of these border zones. And the Ottomans, indeed, used these strategically important physical features for securing the inner lands by conquering or building castles in critical passages since they started their major conquest in the Balkans.<sup>41</sup> The most important fortresses on the Eastern bank of the Danube River, except Kilia (Ott. Kili) and Bilhorod-Dnistrovski (Ott. Akkerman), had been already conquered by the Ottomans by the end of the fourteenth century. From then on, the River Danube formed a natural front line between the Ottoman Empire and the Principality of Wallachia.<sup>42</sup> However, with the conquests of Serbia (1454-1459), the Morea (1460), the Southern part of the Kingdom of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1463-1464), the coastal and inner cities of Albania and Zeta and lastly, the conquests of Kilia and Bilhorod-Dnistrovski in 1484, the Ottoman frontier zone acquired a relatively stable form for nearly a half century in Rumelia.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Gábor Ágoston previously mentioned these case within the context of the relationship between the gradual expansion of the Ottomans in the Balkans and their awareness of geography: '*With regard to the Ottoman's understanding of geography, the available evidence suggests that that Ottoman policy-makers not only understood geography but clearly were capable of thinking in larger strategic terms. As examples one can point to the gradual and systematic conquest of the Black Sea coast and the Danube Delta up to the 1480s, and the capture and construction of strategically important forts along major river routes, such as the Danube, the Tigris and the Euphrates. The Ottomans recognized the importance of the Danube as early as the late fourteenth century and occupied all strategically vital fortresses along the river during the next 150 years*', see: Gábor Ágoston, 'Where Environmental and Frontier Studies Meet: Rivers, Marshes and Forts along the Ottoman-Hapsburg Frontier in Hungary', in A.C.S Peacock (ed.), *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 58.

<sup>42</sup> During his campaign against Wallachia (1461), Mehmed II took two important fortresses on the opposite side of River Danube to observe and secure the river passages. These fortresses are Giurgiu (Ott. *Yergöğü der öte yaka*) and Hulovnik (*Burgaz Niğbolu der öte yaka*). These fortresses would constitute key passage points for the Ottoman *akincis*, which were Ottoman raider parties, during their operations against the Principality of Wallachia.

<sup>43</sup> Of course, we must add that the Ottoman-Venetian war of 1499-1503 changed the borders in the Peloponnese region and resulted in the Ottoman gains of the important Venetian strongholds in the region, such as Moton, Coron, Lepanto (Ott. İnebahtı), Navarino (Ott. Anavarin) and Durazzo (Ott. Draç). On the other hand, the frontier zone in the Northern west region remained relatively stable without any major gains from both sides. The Ottoman advance to the Hungarian border would start in 1512, '*when the troops of Bosnian Pasha overran Srebrnica, Tesanj and Sokol, and thus reached the river Sava*'. See: Frenc Szakály, 'The Hungarian-Croatian Border Defense System and Its Collapse', in János M. Bak and Béla Király (ed.),

By looking at the rapid and effective conquests of Serbia and Bosnia, and the subjugation of Wallachia, we may assume that Ottoman decision makers designed a conscious Danubian strategy. This strategy was based on acquiring the control of all important castles and passages along the Danube River, in order to protect the inner Ottoman territories. In this respect, some statements of Ottoman chroniclers about the Ottoman Danube strategy give us subsidiary information. For instance, İdris-i Bitlisî narrates that there must have been no castle or possession on the Ottoman side of the River (Danube) in order to protect the Muslim lands from the Hungarian ‘infidels’. Therefore, the only remaining castle, which was situated on the Ottoman side, in Belgrade, must be conquered.<sup>44</sup>

Another chronicler, Behiştî Ahmed Çelebi, specifically draws attention to the importance of holding the Ottoman bank of the Danube River and the city Belgrade, for the protection of the Ottoman core territories. He wrote, that Mehmed II aimed to take Belgrade and other regions around the river so that he could succeed in fashioning the Danube as a border against the ‘infidels’ (Hungarians) so that they could not attempt to attack the Ottoman banks of the river.<sup>45</sup>

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*From Hunyadi to Rákóczi War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary* (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Collage Press, 1982), p. 150.

<sup>44</sup> “Sultan, Tuna nehrinin beri tarafındaki müşriklere ait bütün beldelerin ele geçirildiğini, artık hududun nehre kadar dayandığını, Tuna suyunun beri yakasında Ungurüs kafirlerinin mutlaka sığınacakları bir yerin kalmaması gerektiğini aklından geçiriyordu. Ancak, sadece Belgrad kalesi Tuna ve Sava arasında, müslümanlar tarafından fethedilmemiş bölge olarak kalmıştı...Böyle bir kalenin fethi, ehl-i imanın emniyeti için elzemdi.”, taken from İdris-i Bitlisî, *Heşt Behişt, VII. Ketibe* (Fatih Sultan Mehmed Devri 1451-1481), Muhammed İbrahim Yıldırım (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 2013), p. 135.

<sup>45</sup> “...[K]ast itdi ki Tuna’yı serhad, süğür ide Belgrad’ı –ki Tuna ile Sava ortasında vaki’ olmuşdur ve gürizgah-i eşrar-i küffardur- illa kâfire berü yakada melce ü melaz kalmaya.”, taken from Behiştî Ahmed Çelebi, *Tārīh-i Behiştī, Vāridāt-i Subhānī ve Fütūhāt-i Osmānī* (791-907/ 1389-1502) II, Fatma Kaytaz (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 2016).

If the whole documental sources are taken into the account, one must say that there two types of fortresses in the Ottoman Balkans in terms of the payment methods. The first method was the allocating the *timār* revenues for the fortress personnel. This method was the common practice for the Ottomans until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. The second method, on the other hand, was based on the allocation of some *muqata'a* revenues as salary for the fortress garrison troops. This system would become widespread after the mid-1470s. As this chapter aims to analyze that there occurred a significant change in the Ottoman financing practices with regard to the frontier fortresses. Most of the frontier fortresses once received *timār* would be replaced by the garrison troops who started to receive salary ('*ulūfe*').<sup>46</sup> By analyzing the *timār*, *muqata'a* and muster roll registers, it is possible to show this transformation in the context of the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman frontier organization.

Belonged to the last years of the reign of Mehmed II, a tax-farming register<sup>47</sup> (*muqata'a*) provides both revenue sources and the expenses of certain groups of soldiers, such as the guards at the frontier castles. While a roll-call,<sup>48</sup> dated to 1491 (H. 895-896),

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<sup>46</sup> Although our distinction between the fortresses with regard to their methods of payment ('*ulūfeli* and *timārli*) seems as a new classification, the Ottomans already used this distinction to define the fortresses and the guards. For instance, 31 fortresses were enlisted as “with salary” (*bā 'ulūfe*) in the register of Bosnia in 1530; 91, 164, *MAD 540 ve 173 Numaralı Hersek, Bosna ve İzvornik Livaları İcmal Tahrir Defteri (926-939/1520-1533)*. II. vol, (Ankara: T. C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2006), p. 218. Apart from this, the guards in the sancak of Smederevo were subjected to this kind of a classification: “*müstahfizân nefer 2860: bā timār: 59, bā 'ulūfe: 2801*”. See: *MAD 506 Numaralı Semendire Livası İcmal Defteri (937/1530)*, (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009), p. 45.

<sup>47</sup> *MAD 176*, includes the revenue sources within the *mukataa* system such as mints, mines, salt pans, customs and ports in the sanjaks of Rumelia and Anatolia. Analyzing this document, we can find information about the border castles, their soldiers and expenses, which were made for them for a given period of time. The document covers the years between 881-884 (1476-1480), which corresponds the last years of the reign of Sultan Mehmed II.

<sup>48</sup> *MAD 15334*; entitled *Mevâcib-i Cemâ'at-i müstahfizân-i Kul'â-yi Vilâyet-i Rumili* (The payments of the Guards of Castles in the Province of Rumelia). This muster-roll (master-roll?) was used before, but not in a large scale. See: Gábor Ágoston, “Firearms and Military Adaption: The Ottomans and the European Military Revolution, 1450-1800”, *Journal of World History*, Volume 25, Number 1, March 2014, pp. 85-124. Also recently Uğur Altuğ published an article on the Ottoman castles in Rumelia in the 15th Century. See; Uğur Altuğ, ‘XV. Yüzyılda Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Kaleleri ve Geçirdikleri Yapısal Değişimler’, in



includes the *ulūfeli* (paid) fortresses, their soldiers. Together with the payment sources (*muqata'a*), they help us to see the chain of fortresses in Rumelia in the late fifteenth century.

Castle	Modern Name	Ottoman Province	Total Soldiers <sup>49</sup>
Jabyak	Zabljak	İskenderiye	97Mü+100A=197
Hlivne	Livno	Bosna	81Mü
Liş	Lezhës	İskenderiye	104Mü
Mezistre	Mistra	Mora	104Mü
İzvornik	Zvornik	İzvornik	53Mü+100Ma+156A= 259
Uzice	Užice	Laz İli	28Mü
Podgoriçe	Podgorice	İskenderiye	100A
Eğriboz	Negroponte	Eğriboz	300A
İlbasan	Erzen	İlbasan	102A
Semendire	Smederevo	Semendire	443Mü+600A+400Ma= 1443
Güzelce	Žrnov (Avala)	Semendire	39Mü+100Ma=139
Hulovnik	Turnu	Niğbolu	47Mü
Yergöğü	Giurgiu	Niğbolu	53Mü
Sokol	Soko Grad	Laz İli	29Mü
Koçlat	Kuşlat	İzvornik	43Mü
Sivricehisar	Ostrovica	Laz İli	30A
Perin	Perin Grad	İzvornik	26Mü
Korintos	Korint	Mora	198Mü+46A=244Mü
Argos	Arhos	Mora	156Mü

Ahmet Özcan (ed.), *Halil İnalçık Armağanı III* (İstanbul: Doğu Batı, 2017), pp. 74-106. However, Altuğ reads castles' list for MAD 176 and MAD 15334 is rather incorrect or missing parts. Therefore, we are going to list the castles correctly and while reading it, we will also give their modern names and positions on the map.

<sup>49</sup> Since a castles' inventory is composed of different garrison troops, we used the abbreviations to identify them. The abbreviations used for this list are as follows:

**A:** *rü'esa* ve '*azebân* (infantrymen who protect the harbours and river passages), **As:** '*azebân-i süvari* (mounted '*azebân*), **Ap:** '*azebân-i piyade* (infantry '*azebân*) **C:** *cebeciyân* (armours?), **Cr:** craftsmen, **Ma:** *Martolosan* (marauders), **Mü:** *müstahfizân* (guards), **T:** *topçuyân* (artillerymen), **Z:** *zenberekçiyân* (crossbowmen), **Tü:** *tüfenkçiyân* (harquebusiers), **Us:** '*ulūfeciyân-i süvari* (paid mounted soldiers), **Y:** *yeniçeriyân* (janissaries), **M:** Muslim, **Ch:** Christian, **Me:** Mehteran, **Cm:** *hademe-i mesacid* (cami/mosque personnel)

Holumiç	Khloimoutsi	Mora	101Mü
Karitena	Karytania	Mora	85Mü
Balya Badra	Patras	Mora	120Mü+13A=133
Kalavrita	Kalavryta	Mora	45Mü
مقيلو	?	Mora	90Mü
Akçahisar	Kruje	Akçahisar	51Mü
Güvercinlik	Golubac	Semendire	200Mü
Toboy	Doboj	Bosna	39Mü
Kilidbahir	Kilidbahir	Gelibolu	181Mü
Gelibolu	Gelibolu	Gelibolu	349Y+223A=572
Hırsova	Harşova	Silistre	53Mü
Arkadya	Arkadia	Mora	85Mü
İstanbul	İstanbul	Istanbul	444A
Petril	Petril	Arnavud	35Mü
كلير	-	Petreşyan	44Mü
<b>Total Castle</b>			<b>Total soldiers</b>
34			5539

**Table I: List of ‘Ulūfeli (Paid) Castles and Soldiers in Rumelia According to MAD 176 (See: Map I)**

As can be seen above, the number of salaried guards in the whole of Rumelia was about 5,500 between the years 1476-1481. Most of the guards were concentrated on the Ottoman-Hungarian border in the North-Western Balkans, along with the Adriatic coastal line, which Ottomans referred to as *Arnavud ili*, and the Morea. The North-Western Balkans, which included Serbia, Bosnia and the Morea region were already conquered between the years 1454 and 1466. In addition to this, the Ottoman offensive of 1477-79 against Albania and Zeta resulted with the Ottoman control of the most strategic castles

and cities in the region: Zablyak in 1477, Alessio (Liş) in 1478, Kruje (Akçahisar) and Skadar (İskenderiye) in 1479.<sup>50</sup>

Another register<sup>51</sup> gives us the number of paid garrisons in Rumelia in 1490-91. Different from MAD 176, this register includes the total number of salaried castles in Bosnia and Herzegovina region. In addition to this, the castles in the Morea, which are registered in MAD 176, do not appear in MAD 15334. Firstly, they were already conquered by the Ottomans, but their guards were not *'ulūfeli*/paid, so they received *tımār* revenues.<sup>52</sup> Secondly, during the reign of Bayezid II, new castles along the frontier zone were conquered or built. For instance, Bilhorod (*Akkerman*) and Kilia (*Kili*), which were two strategic fortresses controlled by the Principality of Moldova (*Boğdan*), were conquered by imperial troops led by the sultan himself in 1484. Moreover, several castles in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Hersek*) were conquered by Ottoman pashas and sanjak-beys after the death of Mehmed II. In Herzegovina region, the castles of Novi (*Herceg Novi*), Klobuk, Sokol, Ćmotski, Vrgorac, and Ljubiski were taken by Ottoman local forces between the years 1481 and 1493.<sup>53</sup> However, we do not have enough information on the

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<sup>50</sup> After that Ottoman victories in Zeta and Albania region that the Venetian control was shaken. *'The peace of 1481 between Ottomans and Venice was concluded that left Venice in possession of a strip of coastal territory that included Ulcinj, Bar, Budva and Kotor.'* See: John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Late Twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*, (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1987), pp. 595-604.

<sup>51</sup> MAD 15334.

<sup>52</sup> For instance, in the year of 1468-69, the guards of the fortresses of *İvranduk* (Vranduk) and *Susid* (in Gračanica region) were *tımār* holders, according to land register of Bosnia, Mc.76. See: Mc. 76, the castle of *Susid* (37Mü, in MAD 15334 28Mü): fol.130a and the castle of *İvranduk* (21Mü, in MAD 15334 40Mü): fol.133a. For a detailed study on this register, see: Hatice Oruç, "15. Yüzyılda Bosna Sancağı ve İdari Dağılımı", *OTAM*, vol.18, January 2005, pp. 249-271. Oruç's article emphasizes the administrative units in the sanjak of Bosnia. It does not include the number of *tımār* holders or guards who received *tımār* as payment. Also, in MAD 15334, it is not clear which if any are *'ulūfeli* castles in the Morea. However, by looking at MAD 176 we can find 8 *ulufeli* castles in the Morea. These eight castles' guards might be sth have begun receiving *tımār* revenue through an imperial edict in later period (btw. 1481-1491).

<sup>53</sup> John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans...*, p. 601. All aforementioned castles appear in the register MAD 15334. Fine has doubts whether the region of Ćmotski was taken by Ottomans in 1492 or 1493.

castles in Bosnia, which were newly acquired after the death of Sultan Mehmed II. According to MAD 15334, only Vinac (*Vinča*) was taken by Yakup Pasha, the Sanjak-bey of Bosnia.<sup>54</sup>

Castle	Modern Name	Province	Total Soldiers
Istanbul	Istanbul	-	104Mü+2T+558A= 664
Akhisar	Prusac	Bosna	141Mü+2T+13Us = 154
Toricani	Toričan	Bosnia	53Mü+2T= 55
Kılıç	Ključ	Bosna	77Mü+2T= 79
Kamengrad	Kamengrad	Bosna	59Mü+1T=60
Miglay	Maglaj	Bosna	49Mü+1T= 50
Srebreniçe	Srebrenica	İzvornik	47Mü+3T= 50
Toboy	Doboj	Bosna	50Mü
Telcak	Teočak	Bosna	52Mü+1T+15Ma=68
Limoçek	Imotski	Hersek	48Mü+1T=49
Virbelice	Vrh-Belice	Bosna	28Mü+1T=29
Travnik	Travnik	Bosna	138Mü+2T=140
İvranduk	Vranduk	Bosna	40Mü
Susid	Gračanica region	Bosna	27Mü+1T= 28
Hlavne	Livno	Bosna	80Mü+4T= 84
Belgrad	Beograd (Nevesinje)	Bosna	34Mü+1T=35
Prolosice	-	Hersek	8Mü+2T=10
Novi	Herceg Novi	Hersek	69Mü+2T=71
Klobuk	Klobuk	Hersek	19Mü+1T=20
Sokol	Sokol Grad (Dunave)	Hersek	36Mü+1T=37
Liboşek	Ljubuški	Hersek	36Mü+1T=37
Resan	Risan	Hersek	19Mü+1T=20

However, according to MAD 15334, it is sure that Imotski, Vrgorac and Ljibuski were already held by the Ottomans at the beginning of the year 1492 (*Rebiyyü'l-evvel* 897).

<sup>54</sup> MAD 15334, p. 76: '... the castle of Vinac ... between Jajce (and Akhisar) was conquered by Yakup Pasha on 18 Zi'l-hicce 896 (22 October 1491)'. Also, some castles in Bosnia neither appear in Mc. 76, nor MAD 176; but, they are seen in MAD 15334. These castles are: Doboj, Ključ, Kamengrad, Maglaj, Toričan, Vrh-Belice and Prusac. They might also be conquered within the years 1481-92.

İskenderiye	Scutari	İskenderiye	243Mü+5T+1C+1Cr=250
Jabyik	Zabljak	İskenderiye	39Mü+1T=40
Depe Döğen (Podgoriçe)	Podgorica	İskenderiye	35Mü+1T=36
Medun	Medun	İskenderiye	31Mü+1T=32
Mavrik	Mavrik	İskenderiye	22Mü+1T=23
Perin	Perin Grad	Laz İli	23Mü+1T=24
Sivrice	Ostrovica	Laz İli	30Mü+1T+30Ma=61
Maglic	Maglič	Laz İli	11Mü
Sokol	Soko Grad (Ljubovija)	Laz İli	31Mü+10Ma=41
Uzice	Užice	Laz İli	30Mü
Resava	Manasija Monastery	Semendire	53Mü+4ChT=57
Güvercinlik	Golubac	Semendire	78Mü+2MT+3Me+40ChZ+20ChTü+ 49Ma+8Cr+50A= 250
Koçlat	Kušlat	İzvornik	20Mü+2T+21Y=43
Vidin	Vidin	Vidin	59Mü+2MT+3ChT+9Ze+77Ma=150
Yergöğü der Öteyaka	Giurgiu	Niğbolu	57Mü+2T=59
Burgaz Niğbolu (Hulunik der Öte Yaka)	Turnu	Niğbolu	49Mü+2T=51
Hırsova	Hârşova	Silistre	77Mü+3T=80
İzvornik	Zvornik	İzvornik	76Mü+8MT+10MTü+10Mze+100Ma +200A=404
Güzelce	Žrnov (Avala)	Semendire	35Mü+2T+100Ma+100A=237
Semendire	Smederevo	Semendire	300Mü+11MT+35ChTü+40ChT+40C hZ+400Ma+ 31As+73AAc+ 433Ap+317A= 1680
Akçahisar	Krujë	Akçahisar	148Mü+2T=150
Koyluca	Kulič	Semendire	131Mü+7T+12Cr+100Ma=250
Hram	Ram	Semendire	76Mü+4T+3Cr+100Ma+65A=248
Tepedelen	Tepelenë	Arnavud İli	5Mü+2T=7
Kefalonya	Kephalonia	Karlı İli	7Mü+1T+36Y+40A=84
Akkerman	Bilhorod- Dnistrovski	Akkerman	380Mü+4C+19MT+4Cr+4Me+4Cm+ 31As+469Ap= 915
Kili	Kilia	Kili	298Mü+5Me+8Cr+18MT+5Cm+1C+ 400A=735

Burgaz Fenarlık der sinur-i Yayçe	Kaštel	Bosna	20Mü
Virkorac	Vrgorac	Hersek	12Mü+1T=13
Rog	Rog	Hersek	14Mü+1T=15
Počitel	Počitelj	Hersek	20Mü
Vinčač	Vinac	Bosnia	50Mü <sup>55</sup>
Avlonya	Vlorë	Avlonya	326A
Gelibolu	Gelibolu	Gelibolu	347A
Galata	Galata	Istanbul	31Cr
Liş	Lezhës	İskenderiye	20Mü*+42Mü**=62
<b>Total Castle</b>			<b>Total Soldiers</b>
<b>58</b>			<b>8.632</b>

**Table II: List of ‘Ulūfeli (Paid) Castles and Soldiers in Rumelia According to MAD 15334 (See: Map II)**

Furthermore, if we take another register<sup>56</sup> into account, which includes the guards stationed at the newly conquered or built castles in the Morea as a result of the war with the Venetians between the years 1499-1503, we find the total number of ‘ulūfeli (paid) guards in Rumelia at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

<sup>55</sup> We do not have information about the number of garrison troops for the castle of Vinac in MAD 15334. Perhaps, the castle was recently conquered while this muster roll was composed by the Ottomans. Furthermore, an introductory text in the section of the aforementioned castle supports this hypothesis ‘... the castle of Vinac ... between Jajce (and Prusac) was conquered by Yakup Pasha on 18 Zi’l-hicce 896 (22 October 1491)’, MAD 15334, p.76. I found the total garrison numbers within the castle, but not the composition, from another *defter*, KKd.4988, a *muqata’a* register from 1489-1508. According to this source, the castle had 50 guards and their salaries were paid by incomes of the saltpan of *Selanik* (Theseloniki) in 1494-1498, KKd 4988, p.48.

\* The list of discharged (*ma’zūl*) guards was not given separately for the castle Lezhës. Their names were recorded under the register of Golubac castle, MAD 15334, p. 45.

\*\* Other discharged soldiers’ name recorded in the register of Zvornik castle, *ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>56</sup> KK. 4988. This register is a *muqata’a defter*, which includes the revenues from the Saltpan in Selanik, between 1489-1509.

Castle	Modern Name	Province	Total Soldiers
Moton	Methone	Mora	528Mü+450A+30As=1008
İnebahtı	Lepanto	Mora	319Mü+500A=819
Koron	Coron	Mora	323Mü+500A=823
Anavarin	Navarino	Mora	360Mü+200A=560
Draç	Durazzo	Avlonya	129Mü+500A=629
Gördos*	Korint	Mora	50Mü
Burgaz-i Cedit <sup>57</sup>	Antirrio	Angelo Kasrı	101Mü+6 T= 107
Balya Badra <sup>58</sup>	Patras	Mora	160Mü
Ayamavra		Angelo Kasrı	100 A
Voniçe	Vonitsa	Angelo Kasrı	50 A
<b>Total Castle</b>			<b>Total soldiers</b>
<b>10</b>			<b>4.306</b>

**Table III: List of Ulüfeli Castles and Soldiers in Morea Region According to KKd. 4988, in 1501-1502 (See: Map III)**

As we see above, after four years' war against Venice, seven new fortresses entered into the Ottoman control. Along with the other salaried garrison troops, the

\* In this list, the castle of Korint (*Gördos*) was written differently than in the register of MAD 176. KKd 4988, p. 19: كوردوس , MAD 176, p. 154: قورينتوس.

\*\* Methone, Lepanto, Navarino, Durazzo, Coron, Aya Mavra and Vonitsa were conquered by the Ottomans during the war (1499-1503).

<sup>57</sup> After the conquest of Lepanto on 28 August 1499, the construction of a new castle (*Burgaz-i Cedit*) started in accordance with the order of Bayezid II. According to Ibn-i Kemal, the castle had two polygonal artillery tower at the narrowest point of the entrance of Korinthos Bay: 'Rebī'u'l-evvelin on üçünde (18 October 1499) hisarun ikisini bile ābād idüb, mühimmlerin gördüler. 'Azabdan yeniçeriden hisar erleri koyub, her birinün içine yigirmi büyük top kurdular.', see: Ibn-i Kemal, *Tevārīh-i Āl-i Osmān*, VIII. Book, edited by Ahmet Uğur, (Ankara: TTK, 1997), p. 190.

<sup>58</sup> The castle of Patras, too, was an Ottoman possession since 1460. See: Ayşe Kayapınar, 'Osmanlı Döneminde Mora'da Bir Sahil Şehri: Balya Badra/Patra (1460-1715', *Cihannüma Tarih ve Coğrafya Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Volume I, 1 July 2015, p. 71.

Ottomans had to place over 4,000 guards at aforementioned seven castle in order to maintain security in the region. Thus, at the beginning of sixteenth century, the total number of *ulūfeli* (paid) guards who were stationed at the castles in Rumelia exceeded 12,500.<sup>59</sup>

As a result, at the end of the fifteenth century, it must be indicated that the Ottomans already had a well-established network of fortresses in the frontier zone whose paid garrison troops exceeded 12,000. The other garrison troops who received *tīmār* incomes are excluded from the above list. In the next pages, the establishment of the Ottoman frontier organization and its transformation, in the context of the network of fortresses, will be discussed. Moreover, a comparison between the Hungarian frontier organization *vis a vis* the system of the Ottomans will provide a more comprehensive point of view regarding the situation along the Ottoman and Hungarian border in the fifteenth century.

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<sup>59</sup> Actually, the total sum of the number of guards in 1502 was 12,908. However, we have to avoid relying on exact numbers for this year. Various possibilities, such as the Ottoman policy of increasing/decreasing the number of frontier troops or their losses during the war (loss of Kephallonia against the Venetians), hinder us from making such estimations.



## 2. 2. A Comparison: Ottoman Network of Fortresses and the Hungarian Defense System in the Late Fifteenth Century Western Balkans

Even at the turn of 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Hungarians were already aware that their new and strange neighbor to the south, would become a great threat in the near future. The first serious Hungarian attempt to wipe out this danger was to organize and/or support the crusades. The crusade of Nicopolis (1396), which resulted in a catastrophe, is an example. On the other hand, the famous “long campaign” led by Hunyadi Janos (1443-44) would nearly achieve its aim. The sultan could barely halt the army of Hunyadi in the passage of Zlatitsa, and both sides had to retreat due to heavy losses, as well as due to harsh winter conditions. One year later, however, the danger for the Ottomans was even greater. Having passed the Danube River in mid-October, the crusader army, led by Wladyslaw, king of Poland, and Hunyadi Janos, overran the fortresses along the river. Meanwhile, Sultan Murad II was busy suppressing a large-scale rebellion in Anatolia. After he heard the news from the Balkans, the Sultan swiftly mobilized his troops and was able to cross the Dardanelles in record time. Finally, the two foes met in Varna, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1444. The result was an overwhelming Ottoman victory: most of the crusaders were wiped out, and the defeat also cost the life of the king and Cardinal Caserini.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Also, we have to add the 1448 operations of Hunyadi and his defeat at Kosovo Polje. For the literature on the Crusade of Varna, see: Halil İnalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I*, fifth edition, (Ankara: TTK, 2014); Halil İnalcık, Mevlüd Oğuz, *Gazavât-i Sultân Murâd b. Mehmed Hân: İzladî ve Varna Savaşları (1443-1444) Üzerinde Anonim Gazavât-nâme*, second edition, (Ankara:TTK, 1989); Colin Imber, *The Crusade of Varna, 1443-1444*, (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

From this day forward, no European powers would come together and collectively initiate a military attack against the Ottomans. The Ottomans, on the other hand, were free to implement any desired actions and realized that nothing could prevent them from pursuing their ambitions in the Balkans. The Hungarians, however, were well aware that they were alone in terms of confronting the oncoming Ottoman incursions directed towards the Western Balkans.<sup>61</sup>

Before and after the unsuccessful crusade initiatives against the Ottomans, the Hungarians implemented two main strategies of defense to protect their inner territories: building out buffer states and forming a new defense system through the construction of new fortresses in the Lower Danube. These initiatives were first introduced by Sigismund of Luxemburg, the Hungarian King (1387-1437), and later Holy Roman Emperor (1410-1437). For instance, the Hungarians succeeded in making Serbia their vassals and the Serbian despot also agreed that the lands of Macva, with the fortresses of Belgrade and Golubac (Ott. Güğercinlik), would be given to Sigismund.<sup>62</sup> Such attempts were relatively

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<sup>61</sup> In 1448, Hunyadi's chancellor Janos Vitez wrote to Pope Nicholas V on the Ottoman danger: *'If my memory does not fail me, the spiteful weapons of the Turks have been lurking around Europe for a hundred years now. They subjugated Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria and Albania in quick succession... casting them into servitude, depriving them of their religion, forcing into them a foreign faith, foreign morals, foreign laws, and the language of the infidels. They showed no mercy either to the rights of man or to those of God...The devastating plague spread from there towards all the other neighbors. Recently, it nearly penetrated into the hearth of Europe, gaining a foothold close to our country and homeland... For over sixty years, we have firmly withstood the scorching wrath of war, relying on our own resources and with the arms of a single nation. Though exhausted by the numerous defeats, the warfare and the mourning, we are persevering. ... To sum everything up in a few words: we have never suffered so much by any other foe, and apart from the memory of freedom, we are left with nothing but our weapons and courage, as many a time we have fallen into extreme peril...Because there is no cruelty that we have not endured and it will never end, whether we lose or win: the enemy will always be at our neck, for its hatred is greater even than its strength. Even now our enemy... wants not victory, but revenge us.'* taken from: Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire: The Ottomans in Central Europe- A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390-1566)*, (Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 2016), p. 27.

<sup>62</sup> The negotiations were completed on May, 1427. However, after the main Ottoman campaign in Serbia in 1428, George Brankovic had to accept Ottoman suzerainty. After the crusade of Varna in 1448, the sultan recognized Serbia as a free state on the condition that Serbia pay a yearly tribute. See: John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, pp. 524-528.

successful. However, during the second half of the fifteenth century, all the buffer states except for the north-western parts of Bosnia had fallen under Ottoman control.<sup>63</sup>

Sigismund's initiative of developing a new system of defense, on the other hand, made a lasting impact on the Hungarian defense strategy in the Lower Danube. For a better handling of the defense, Sigismund ordered that the castles in lower Danube must be given to royal hands, and new fortresses must be constructed from Szöreny to Nándohérvár (Belgrad), as well. Later, a few important castles in Bosnia such as Jajce and Srebernik were incorporated into the system.<sup>64</sup> Before the main Ottoman attacks on Serbia and Bosnia, the medieval Hungarian Kingdom managed to build up a new defense system in the southern part of the country. Although this system was not distinctly well-developed, it was sufficient enough for the defense of the Kingdom and would soon be effectively improved. It was Mathias Corvinus, the son of Janos Hunyadi and the king of Hungary, who would succeed to form a coherent and relatively effective defense system in the southern realm of the Kingdom.

The fall of former buffer states, one by one into Ottoman hands in the second half of the fifteenth century, created greater danger for the inner lands of the Kingdom of Hungary. For the first time, the Ottomans and the Hungarians began to share a permanent territorial frontier zone. Only the Bosnian fortresses around the Jajce formed the buffer

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<sup>63</sup> The whole of Serbia, excluding Belgrad, was conquered in 1459. Bosnia, except the northern part, was occupied in 1463-64, and Wallachia and Moldavia were subjugated after the middle of the fifteenth century. See: Pal Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire*, p. 51.

<sup>64</sup> Géza Pálffy, "The Origins and Development of the Border Defense System Against the Ottoman empire in Hungary (Up to the Early Eighteenth Century)" in *Ottomans, Hungarians and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*, Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds.) (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2000), pp. 8-10; Ferenc Szakály, "The Hungarian Croatian Border Defense System and Its Collapse", in *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, János M. Bak and Béla K. Krály (eds.), (Brooklyn: Brooklyn College Press, 1982), p. 143.

zone, apart from the Hungarian mainland.<sup>65</sup> By sharing the same border, both Hungarians and the Ottomans implemented a policy of protecting the border zones, especially after rapid and intensive clashes, which resulted in the Ottomans mainly dominating the Western Balkans.

This new situation came to signify an era of relative ‘peacetime’ along the front. It was characterized by unauthorized, non-state-led confrontations, composed of raiding parties and local troops of pashas or bans, who participated without the initiation of the imperial troops. This sixty years of ‘peace time’ was firstly a result of a kind of stalemate between the Ottomans and the Hungarians<sup>66</sup> and secondly, shifts in the foreign policies of the two foes in different directions.<sup>67</sup> For instance, after the unsuccessful confrontation against the Ottomans, Mathias Corvinus turned all his attention from the southwest Balkans to the Central Europe<sup>68</sup>: The war for the lands of the Bohemian crown (1468-79), and the war for Austria (1479-87). The Ottomans, too, had already gone to war with Venice for the domination in the Aegean Sea and Albania (1463-79). Also at the beginning

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<sup>65</sup> Jajca was conquered by the Ottomans during the Bosnian campaign in 1463-64. One year later, the counter-offensive of Mathias Corvinus resulted with the capture of Jajca and other small castles around it. Jajca would be the center of the Bosnian Banate for the next seventy years. See: Richárd Horváth, “The Castle of Jajce in the Organization of Hungarian Border Defense System under Mathias Corvinus”, *Stjepan Tomašević (1461. -1463.) – slovo srednjovjekovnoga Bosanskog Kraljevstva*, (Sarajevo: Hrvatski Institut za povijest, 2013), pp. 93-97.

<sup>66</sup> The Hungarians had always been a fearful enemy for the Ottomans so that chronicals always compared the Hungarians to an Islamic myth, the *yec’üc* and *mec’üc* tribes who, according to Islamic belief, would appear before the doomsday and fight against humanity. Also, chronicals refer to the Hungarians as *Üngürüs-i beni asfer* (blonde Hungarian people). According to Islamic belief, the messiah will engage an eternal war against these people (*beni asfer*). Ahmed Çelebi saw Mehmed II as the messiah who was engaged in an eternal fight against the Hungarian *beni asfer*: “he (Mehmed II) was crowned of the mahdi to fight against the Hungarian *beni asfer*”, see: Behiştî Ahmed Çelebi, *Tārīh-i Behiştî Vāridāt-i Sübhānī ve Fütūhāt-i ‘Osmānī (791-907 /1389-1502) II*, Fatma Kaytaz (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 2016), p. 289.

<sup>67</sup> Géza Pálffy, “the Origins and Development ...”, p. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Despite the fact that Mathias Corvinus’ mercenary army launched a successful campaign for Szabács in 1476, he realized that the Hungarian Kingdom was not able to carry out an offensive war against the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, he accelerated the process of forming a new southern border defense system. See: András Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat: Hungarian Politics and Defense in the Jagiellonian Period” in *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, János M. Bak and Béla K. Király (eds.), (Brooklyn: Brooklyn College Press, 1982), p. 160.

of the 1470s, Mehmed II faced the danger of a new rising Turkoman state in Anatolia: the Akkoyunlus. Only after the defeat of Uzun Hasan at the Battle of Otlukbeli (1473), could Mehmed II turn all of his attention to the Aegean and Adriatic Seas.

It was in this era of relative 'peace time' that Mathias Corvinus managed to reorganize the southern defense system. His main goal was to unify the southern regions, from the Adriatic coast to the Eastern Carpathians, under the command of three military officials. As a first step, the unification of the offices of the *ban* of Croatia-Dalmatia and Slovenia was completed. Thus, he would be able to subordinate the commanders of the frontier castles, and also the mobile troops of the area, under a unified control of the Croatian-Slovanian *ban* (*banus Croatiae et Slavoniae*) from the sea to the lower Danube.<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile, in a similar manner to the Croatian-Slovenian territories, he organized the region of the Lower Danube into a unified border system. The result was the emergence of the position of captain-general of the Lower Parts (*supremus capiteneus partium regni Hungariae inferiorum*), which was controlled by the high sheriffs of the County Temes.<sup>70</sup> From then on, the captain-generals of the regions stationed their soldiers at the frontier castles and behind the fortresses, they also disposed their *banderia* forces, who were responsible for hindering Ottoman raiding parties into the inner lands. Alongside their military services, the captain-generals were also responsible for the civil administration of the area. Lastly, the third defense office was led by the Voivode of Transylvania (*vajvoda Transilvania/Transilvaniensis*).<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-11.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

After the reforms of Mathias Corvinus, the network of the chain of fortresses, first organized by King Sigismund, seemed to be fixed into a coherent system:

The southern part of the defense system consisted of two parallel lines of border fortresses. The Southern line stretched from the fortress of Szörény via Orsova, Szentlázsló, Nándorfehérvár, Zimony, Szabács, Szrebernik, Jayca, and Knin up to Skardona to and Klissza. On the other hand, the second line behind the first defense line stretched from Lugos, Karánsebes, and Temesvár via Pétervárad, the minor castles of the Szerémség and Dubica, Krupa, Bihács to Zengg on the Dalmatian coast.<sup>72</sup>

All of the fortresses on the defensive line were in royal hands, and aside from a few located in Croatia, the salaries of the guards in the castles were paid by the central treasury. The castles were protected by several thousand Hungarian and Slavic garrison troops. As for cavalry units, the Hungarians deployed in the frontiers zones, light mounted soldiers, which consisted of Hussars and *Voynuks*.<sup>73</sup> The force of flotilla (*naszád*)<sup>74</sup> also played an important role, especially in the region of Szabács and Belgrade. These boatmen, who were of Slavic origin mostly, like the Hussars and *Voynuks*, had many tasks: to hinder the advances of Ottoman Danubian fleet in the Danube and Sava Rivers, to transport Hungarian troops on their plunder raids into Ottoman territories and to hamper the passing attempts of the Ottoman troops into the Hungarian mainland for plunder.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>73</sup> The Hungarian documents do not make a distinction between Hussars and *Voynuks*. In any case, their origins were from Southern Slavic groups who served Hungarians as light cavalry units or garrison troops in castles, in return for specific tax exemptions. See: András Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat...”, p. 169. Kubinyi asserts that *Voynuks* were semi-dependent peasants who served the Hungarians at frontier zones in return for tax exemptions. He also continues that these *voynuks* were auxiliary troops, just like the *Voynuks* in the Ottoman lands. However, we must indicate that the Ottoman *Voynuks* were active combatant military groups similar to timariot *sipahis* in 15<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the Ottoman state recognized them as *askeri* (the members of the ruling class) and gave them the right of inheritance. Of course, both *Voynuks* who fought for the Hungarians and the Ottomans might be from same origin, but, we must consider the possibility that their status might be different because of the internal policies of the Ottomans and the Hungarians upon them. More detailed analysis will be given in the later chapters of the thesis.

<sup>74</sup> *Naszád* units had very similarities with ‘*azeb*’ garrison soldiers in the Ottoman fortresses.

<sup>75</sup> Ferenc Szakály, “The Hungarian Croatian Border Defense System...”, p. 148.

Unfortunately, we do not have a series of documents related to the number of Hungarian garrisons in the southern frontier zone from the late fifteenth century. The only source of information is a record by the Royal vice-treasurer<sup>76</sup>, which is dated back to 1511. According to document, 7817 garrison troops were paid by the Hungarian treasury, and most of them were deployed in the Lower Danube, their numbers exceeding 5,000. In Croatia, there were 2,457 soldiers in total, and 300 in the Transylvania region.<sup>77</sup> We are not sure, indeed, but can make estimations concerning the Hungarian salaried troops for previous years. At any rate, we can assert that a radical fluctuation in the number of garrison troops did not occur during the years between the 1490s and 1510. However, it is also reasonable to suggest that there were even more garrison troops before the 1500s. Faced with serious economic and fiscal problems, the upkeep of the whole system became an ever-increasing burden for the Jagellons.<sup>78</sup> Also, they might have allocated some of the royal revenues for those frontier soldiers which, resulted in decreasing the state treasury. By examining the Hungarian treasury records and the expenses for the year 1511, the following data reinforce our statement. The estimated revenues of the Hungarian treasury for 1511 was 200,000 gold florins, and the treasurer recorded that the expenses of the garrison troops alone corresponded to 138,178 florins.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, more than the half of the royal revenues were paid to the frontier castles in each year. The burden, at the end,

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<sup>76</sup> András Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat: Hungarian Politics...”, p. 73.

<sup>77</sup> The list of garrisons and the deployed soldiers as follows:

The Castle of Temesvár: 650, minor Fortresses in Temes and Szörény: 285, the castle of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade): 2100, the castle of Szabács: 350, minor fortresses in Croatia: unknown, the castle of Jajca: 700, minor Bosnian fortresses: 275, the castle of Szrebernik: unknown. For a detailed table, see: András Kubinyi, “The Road to Defeat: Hungarian Politics...”, p. 74.

<sup>78</sup> Op. Cit.: “...the country’s tax base- not least because of the Ottoman depredations – shrank year by year. So, for example, the number of war tax units (*portae*) in Slovakia decreased between 1494 and 1516 by 17,4 percent.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

resulted in the dissolution of the Hungarian southern border system, which was once effective and coherent enough to halt the Ottoman attack on the mainland.

The Ottoman fortress system, particularly in the Hungarian theater, changed and consolidated over time, as well. The main factors that made the Ottomans reorganize their border defense system in the Northern-Western Balkans involved a response to certain developments, which can be seen in the Hungarian border defense organization from the second half of the fifteenth century. As mentioned before, when the Ottomans and their Hungarian foes started to share a *de facto* front, the main changes in their policies in terms of frontier security seemed inevitable, as the two foes were unable to defeat each other. A new kind of a military equilibrium appeared in the Western Balkans that would continue for nearly half a century, until the Ottoman success against the Hungarians, beginning with the reign of Suleyman I, disrupted the mentioned balance of power. It is worth noting that the Ottoman–Hungarian border did not witness the involvement of any imperial troops from either side when referring to border clashes during this half century. The only exceptions include the successful Hungarian attack of Bosnia in 1480, and the failed attempt of Bayezid II to capture Belgrade in 1492. Rather, what characterized this period was the mutual raids and plunders directed by the troops of begs or bans residing within the border regions. Moreover, besides the events mentioned, the Ottomans and the Hungarians were regularly engaged in renewing peace. Such that, before the agreement of 1483, some thirty truces had been signed by representatives of the both sides.<sup>80</sup> Of

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<sup>80</sup> Pal Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire...*, p. 52.



course, these treaties were far from being seriously treated on the ground, and therefore, local engagements and raids from both sides continued, even if a truce had been signed.<sup>81</sup>

After the conquest of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Serbia (1459-1464), three new Ottoman *sancaks* emerged along the Hungarian frontier zone. The first *sancak*, which was a neighbor to the *sancak* of Vidin, was formed under the name of *sancak* of Braničeva. The Danube River in the north, and the Morava River in the west and the sanjak border of Alacahisar (Krusevac) in the south, formed the borders of this new *sancak*. The *sancak* of Braničeva was enlarged in 1467 and reorganized under the name of *sancak* of Smederevo.<sup>82</sup> The *sancak* of Smederevo would remain the most important military and administrative center in the Hungarian frontier zone, until the conquest of Belgrade in 1521 when the Ottoman border started to expand toward the West.

The *sancaks* of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the other hand, constituted the far western frontier zone between the Hungarians and the Ottomans. After the successful attack of Mathias Corvinus in 1464, Bosnia was shared between the Hungarians and the Ottomans. On one hand, the southern regions of the River Sava (Macva, Soli, Usora, Vrbas, Donji Krayi) were held by the Hungarian Kingdom, on the other hand, south of

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<sup>81</sup> After the treaty of 1483, new treaties had also been signed by representatives of both sides. In this regard, the Ottoman chroniclers give us detailed information. To illustrate, according to Oruç Beg the Hungarian representatives for peace arrived to the Ottoman capital in the following years: 1487, 1490, 1496, 1497, and 1498. See: *Oruç Beğ Tarihi: Osmanlı Tarihi (1288-1502)*, Necdet Öztürk (ed.), (Istanbul: Bilge Kültür Sanat, 2014), pp. 202-217. A draft version of the treaty sent by the Corvinus and signed in 1487 in particular, concerns the Ottoman plunders deep into Bosnian lands. Mathias Corvinus particularly complained about two Ottoman pashas for their aggressive military actions in the frontier areas. See: Tayyip Gökbilgin, “Korvin Mathias (Mátyás)ın Bayezid II.e Mektupları Tercümeleri ve 1503 (909) Osmanlı-Macar Muahedesinin Türkçe Metni”, *Belleten*, no. 87 (1958), pp. 377-381. Moreover, we have information regarding the expenses of the feasts that were spent for the Hungarian envoys in the years of 1487, 1488, 1489. For the year 1488: “ziyâfet-i elçi-yi Ungürüs-i müteferrika, Mevlânâ Muhiddin kâdı-yı Edirne, 10 Şa’ban 893 (20 July 1488), 471 akçe”. KK.d, fol. 214a.

<sup>82</sup> See: Alexander Fotia and Michael Kiel, *Semendire*, TDV, vol. 36, p. 467. Also, for the first tahrir register of the sanjak of Braničova, see: Halil İnalcık, Evgeni Radushev, Uğur Altuğ, “Fatih Sultan Mehmed Döneminde Tuna Boyunda Osmanlı Düzeni”, vol. I. The book is forthcoming. I would like to Evgeni Radushev for providing this book for me.

Bosnia was under Ottoman control (Lasva, Rama, south of Uskoplje). On the Adriatic side, the Ottomans held most of the region, except the coastal strongholds such as Novi, Klobuk, and Risano.<sup>83</sup>

Initially, the Ottomans placed garrison troops into the castles located in the above-mentioned *sancaks*, whose income was allocated through the *timār* system, i.e. through tax-collection of assigned regions to each soldier. Quickly over time, however, the Ottomans would make major changes in regards to this policy. The cash payment practice of garrison troops would become a well-known Ottoman method of maintaining soldiers in the castles. However, this method differed from region to region. Before the conquests of Serbia and Bosnia, some garrison troops and auxiliary components of the castles in Niğbolu (Nicopolis), Yergöğü (Giurgiu), and Holovnik (Turnu) such as *Martaloses*, masons, boatmen, and gunners etc. were paid in cash, however, this practice was later abandoned. Instead, some tax exemptions were replaced with cash payments and the other garrison troops also began to serve incomes designated from *timārs*.<sup>84</sup> The *sancaks* of

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<sup>83</sup> The sanjak of Bosnia and Herzegovina were formed in 1463, see: Hatice Oruç, “15. Yüzyılda Bosna Sancağı ve İdari Dağılımı”, *OTAM*, 18/2005, Ankara 2006, p. 25. Also, for the first tahrir defter of Bosnia, see: MC. 76 (1468/69), İstanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi. Muallim Cevdet Yazmaları.

<sup>84</sup> “Cemâ’at-i hizmetkârân-i kal’a-i Niğbolu ve Holovnik ve Yergögi, evvel ulûfe yerlermiş, kesilmiş, harâc ve ispence virmezler hemân öşrlerin ve bağların rûsûmlerin virürler cem’-i avârızdan muâf ve müsellemlerdir amma martoloslar öşr ve rûsûm virmezler:

Bölük-i kalafatçıyân, neferen 26

Bölük-i gölciyân ve keştibân, neferen 36

Bölük-i martolosân ki, kenâr beklerler, nefer 12

Bölük-i neccârân ve bennâyân, nefer 25

Bölük-i neccârân ki gemi hizmetindedir, nefer 7

Bölük-i zenberekciyân, nefer 28

Bölük-i topçıyân, nefer 11

Bölük-i haddâdân ve haddâd-i cingeniyân, nefer 17

Bölük-i urgancıyân, nefer 6

Bölük-i martolosân ki kal’aya hizmet ederler ve sancak begi her ne maslahat olursa bunları gönderir, nefer 54

Bölük-i zenberekciyân-i kal’a-i Holovnik, nefer 33

Bölük-i topçıyân-i kal’a-i Holovnik, nefer 8

Bosnia and Smederevo now, in the 1460s, had the reputation of being the most important frontier regions of the Ottoman Empire, and the *sancak* of Niğbolu, including the *sancak* of Vidin, lost their primary positions of importance as frontier provinces.

The Niğbolu and Vidin examples would have taken place in Bosnia and Semendire in the opposite direction.<sup>85</sup> Within the years 1466- 1491, respectable amount of castles whose garrisons received *tımār* replaced by the cash payment system (*‘ulūfe*). Since the fortresses in the *sancaks* of Smederevo and Bosnia were more important in terms of defense against the Hungarians, more garrison troops were stationed in the fortresses along the Hungarian front. With the establishment of new fortress system in those *sancaks*, the Ottomans would pay their salaries by allocating *muqata’a* sources not *tımār*. This was the main change of the Ottoman frontier organization in terms of the financing mechanism. By examining the Ottoman imperial tax-registers (*tahrīrs*) we are able to identify the fortresses and the number of garrison troops who were deployed especially for the vilayets of Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>86</sup>, Smederevo<sup>87</sup>, and Vidin<sup>88</sup> for the time interval of 1455-1490s. The result will show that the Ottomans reduced the number of castles with *tımār*, and replaced them with the fortresses whose garrison troops were paid

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Bölük-i zenberekçıyân-i kal’a-i Öte yaka-i Yergögi, nefer 55’’, taken from İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, fol. 69a and 69b. Also, for a detailed analysis of the changes in Niğbolu province on the tax exemptions of the local auxiliary components, see: Radushev: Evgeni Radushev, ‘‘Ottoman Border Periphery (Serhad) in the Vilayet of Niğbolu, First Half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century’’, *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 34 (1995), pp. 141-160.

<sup>85</sup> Actually, the example in the Morea region shows certain similarities with Niğbolu region. The Morea was conquered in the 1460s, and according to the MAD 176 *mukataa* register, there were seven castles whose personnel were receiving payment in cash. In total, 1043 *ulufeli* personnel were serving in these fortresses in the year 1477/78, see: table 1. But, the payment sources of these castles were allocated to *tımār* in later period. We do not know when this event occurred since we do not have any *tahrir* registers concerning the Morea between 1460s and 1520s.

<sup>86</sup> MC. 76 (1468/69), *İstanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi Muallim Cevdet Yazmaları* and TT 24 (1486/87), *Tapu Tahrir Defteri*. Also, a detailed *tahrir* register for the Herzegovina, see: TT 05 (1477/78).

<sup>87</sup> TT 16 (1477), *Tapu Tahrir Defteri*. Also, for the former vilayet of Braniçova: MAD 05 (1467/68).

<sup>88</sup> MC. O. 090 (1455) and MAD. 01 (1483/84).

in cash. While the frontier fortresses were paid in cash, the fortresses located inner zones were financed by *timār* revenues. This process, in this manner, would be occurred in 20-30 years.

In the year 1455, there were four fortresses whose garrison troops were paid by *timār* incomes in the vilayet of Vidin. The castle of Vidin had 18 garrison troops, 21 in the castle of İsfirlik, 20 in Bane and 7 in Belgrade.<sup>89</sup> In total, 66 garrison soldiers served in the castles of the *vilayet* of Vidin. What is remarkable is that the castle of Vidin itself had only 18 garrison troops. It is known that Vidin and its countryside were plundered by Hungarian troops led by Hunyadi Yanos in 1454, and the city of Vidin was also set on fire. Thus, most of the garrison troops at the castle could have been killed or taken as a prisoner during this raid. As far as we can understand from the register, the destruction was so large that some of the remaining guards of the castle were not able to show their *askeri berats* (the edict sent from the capital to prove their military service) due to the fact that they had been burned.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, the *tahrīr* register of the year 1483 shows that there is no major change in the number of *timārli* garrison troops in the *vilayet* of Vidin. According to the register, the castle of Vidin had 18, Flordin 17, Belgrad 9, Bane 20 and İsfirlik had 11 *timārli* guards, which totaled 75 guards served in the castles of the *vilayet*.<sup>91</sup>

As can be seen from the documents that the fortresses in Vidin region were protected by small number garrisons. Next to the *vilayet* of Vidin, there were two fortresses in the *vilayet* of Braniçeva. According to the *tahrīr* of Braniçova in 1467/68, the fortress of Resava had 37 garrison troops who received *timār* as income.<sup>92</sup> However,

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<sup>89</sup> İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, fol 29b – 55a.

<sup>90</sup> İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, fol 29b – 33b.

<sup>91</sup> MAD 1.

<sup>92</sup> İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, pp. 248-269.

the military personnel in the castle of Golubac were paid in cash. Also, along with the professional guards, certain non-Muslim auxiliary troops received salary in the castle of Güğercinlik (Golubac). Among them, 102 people received a salary for their military service in the fortress.<sup>93</sup> What is important here is that the number of garrison troops in the castle of Golubac exceeded 200. Besides, another salaried group, too, served in the fortresses for different military purposes. The number of salaried garrison troops was always more compared to those receiving *timār* in Smederevo region.

In the left side of the Braničeva, the *sancak* of Bosnia constituted one of the other frontier regions against the Hungary. After the conquest of Bosnia region, there were 17 fortresses in the region that all the guards protected them received *timār*. According to the register of 1466/67, the castles and their troops are as follows:<sup>94</sup>

Castle	Soldiers
Klučevač (Ključevac)	22 Mü
Borovač (Borovac)	9 Mü + 1 MT + 1 Artilleryman= 11
Kreševa (Kreševo)	41 Mü
Čerševa (Črešnjevo)	26 Mü
Prozor (Prozor)	19 Mü
Susid ( Susid -Gračanica-)	37 Mü
İvranduk (Vranduk)	20 Mü + 1MT= 21
Bobofçe (Bobovac)	23 Mü
Hodidede (Hodidjed)	25 Mü + 1ChT= 26
İzvecan (Zvečan)	42 Mü + 1MT + 1Y= 44
Yeleç (Jeleč)	18 Mü + 1MT= 19
Dobrun (Dobrun)	15 Mü

<sup>93</sup> These 102 people were comprised of 40 crosbowmen, 10 arquebusers, 3 blacksmiths, 5 carpenters and 43 *martaloses*: Ibid., pp. 272-273. In addition, the main garrison troops of the Güğercinlik castle, including crosbowmen and *martoloses* might had been paid in cash for same year. MAD 176: ‘*mevâcib cema’ât-i müstahfizân ve ‘azebân ve zenberekçiyân ve martalosân-i kal’a-yi Güğercinlik .... sene 882 (1477), 200 neferen*’, p. 347a. Even after 10 years, these groups’ salaries were still paid along with the main garrison troops in 1477. Thus, all the personel of the Güğercinlik castle were *ulufeli* in 1467/68.

<sup>94</sup> MC. 76 (1468/69), *İstanbul Atatürk Kütüphanesi. Muallim Cevdet Yazmaları*, fol. 226a – 328a.

Borac (Borač)	21 <b>Mü</b>
Višegrad (Visegrad)	20 <b>Mü</b>
Mileševa (Mileševo)	20 <b>Mü</b>
Samabor (Samabor)	74 <b>Mü</b>
Todevač (Tođevac)	5 <b>Mü</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>444</b>

**Table IV: List of Fortresses with *Timār* Income in Bosnia, 1466/67**

In total, 444 guards protected the fortresses in the *sancak* of Bosnia. Since we do not have another information about the paid garrison troops in the Bosnian region in the 1460s, it seems that the whole Bosnian region was only protected by the garrison troops who received *timār*.

Thanks to the detailed and series of *tahrīr* registers, we have more information on the numbers of the *timārli* garrison troops in the *sancaks* of Bosnia, Hersek and Smederevo in the 1470s. For instance, there were only two castles with *timār* income in Semendire. Sivricehisar (Ostrovica) were protected by 20 guards<sup>95</sup>, and 39 guards served in the castle of Resava.<sup>96</sup> New castles in the register of Herzegovina also draw our attention. For the year 1477/78, the list of *timārli* castles in Herzegovina was as follows:

<b>Castle</b>	<b>Soldiers</b>
Libošek (Ljubuški) <sup>97</sup>	36 <b>Mü</b> + 1MT =37
Rog (Rog)	Protected by <i>Voynuks</i> (numbers are not indicated)

<sup>95</sup> TT 16, pp. 558-570. Also, 30 '*ulūfeli* ' *azebān* soldiers were serving along with the *timārli* garrison troops in the castle. See: Table 1.

<sup>96</sup> TT 16, pp. 707- 727. Resava had 37 guards in the year of 1467/68.

<sup>97</sup> Fine writes that Ljubuški was at the hands of Augustin Vlatkovic, an Ottoman vassal. However, in this register (for the year 1477), the castle was an Ottoman castle, see: John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*..., p. 601.

Kluj (Ključ)	28 <b>Mü</b>
Mostar (Mostar)	35 <b>Mü</b>
Blagay (Blagaj)	42 <b>Mü</b>
Počitelj (Počitelj) <sup>98</sup>	21 <b>Mü</b> + 1 <b>MT</b> = 22
Klobuk (Klobuk) <sup>99</sup>	25 <b>Mü</b> + 1 <b>MT</b> = 26
Samabor (Samabor) <sup>100</sup>	47 <b>Mü</b>
Mileševa (Mileševo) <sup>101</sup>	22 <b>Mü</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>

**Table V: List of Fortresses with *Timār* Income in Hersek, 1477/78**

When we look at the garrison troops in the four sanjaks, who received *tīmar*, we observe that more than 750 garrison soldiers served at 30 fortresses within the years 1455-1477. Of course, we should take it into consideration that at least three new castles were captured by Ottoman forces in the Hersek region. Under these circumstances, the number of *timārli* garrison troops was about 750-800 in Hersek, Bosnia and Smederevo regions. This number can be regarded as few for the entire western frontier fortresses for the people who do not know there were also other fortresses in the region. However, *muqata'a* registers from the mid-1470s show that there were also salaried garrison troops in aforesaid regions. Moreover, the number of salaried troops were much more compared to those who received *timār*. The archival findings prove that the majority of castles in those frontier areas were paid in cash, and their commanders were appointed by the center, as

<sup>98</sup> Počitelj was taken by Ottoman forces in 1471, see: Fine, p.587.

<sup>99</sup> Klobuk was taken by the Ottoman forces in 1477, see: Fine, p.587.

<sup>100</sup> Samabor had 74 guards in 1467/68 register.

<sup>101</sup> Mileševa had 20 guards in 1467/68 register.

well. This trend started in the reign of Mehmed II, and it became a widespread practice in the following periods.

Although sources, which were prepared for and specify the payments and expenses of *‘ulūfeli* castles are unavailable before 1491, a careful reading of certain tax-revenue registers can provide information regarding some of these castles in Rumelia. In 1477-78, a *muqata’a* register<sup>102</sup> shows that 5,539 garrison soldiers stationed in 34 castles, in the whole of Rumelia were paid in cash.<sup>103</sup> Among the 34 fortresses, 11 were in the *sancaks* of Bosnia and Smederevo. 2,317 paid garrison troops served in these fortresses, which equaled 41.5% of the total paid soldiers in the whole of Rumelia. Also, the number of 2,317 paid garrison soldiers was far greater when compared to 750 *timār*-holder garrison troops who were also stationed in the inner zones of the frontier provinces. When all of these numbers and corresponding information are evaluated, the following result is reached: the transformation of the financing mechanism for the fortresses started in the 1470s. By allocating more money to the frontier castles, the Ottomans could manage to station more troops in those castles. This meant that the Ottomans put more troops in the frontier fortresses so that the defense of the frontier zones were further strengthened. Otherwise, it could not possible to increase the number of soldiers by giving them limited *timār* income. (See: Map IV)

Just before the death of Mehmed II, the Ottoman fortress organization in the Balkans underwent a series of significant changes. In 1477/78, the Hungarians directed a raiding campaign in the Smederevo region and caused such significant damage that the

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<sup>102</sup> MAD 176.

<sup>103</sup> See: table 1.



Ottomans had to add a new defense wall and moat line to the fortress of Smederevo.<sup>104</sup> Also, two years later, in November 1480, the counterattack launched by King Mathias deep into Bosnia, led to the destruction of the sanjak capital Vrh-Bosnia and caused a great plunder and destruction of the region. The destruction was so great that at least 100,000 Serbians were removed from Serbia and Bosnia, and re-settled by King Mathias into the depredated areas of Hungarian frontier.<sup>105</sup>

In 1483, Bayezid II signed a truce with the Hungarians, soon after he came to the throne. This truce was also a sign of the new upcoming Ottoman policy in the frontier region. This policy included the greater fortification processes, increasing the number of salaried garrison troops and reducing of *timār* holder guards. After this date, even though the incursions from both sides continued, the Ottomans were also engaged in strengthening the border defense, either by constructing new fortresses or deploying more garrison troops into the Hungarian *serhād*. In fact, the change was affected by the results of an earlier Hungarian attack into Bosnia in 1480, before Bayezid II's truce. Zvornik, which had the geographical feature where the Bosnian, Serbian and Hungarian roads intersected, became the new *vilāyet* center under the same name in 1480.<sup>106</sup> Thus, the reason behind the establishment of a new *sancak* in the frontier region was to strengthen the Bosnian part of the defense system. Moreover, in terms of the construction process of fortresses, and the resulting change in the development of the frontier system, one of the most important steps was experienced in the *sancak* of Smederevo.

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<sup>104</sup> The provoked incursions of Bosnian Sancak Beg caused these counterattacks. See: Alexander Fotia and Michael Kiel, *Semendire*, p. 601.

<sup>105</sup> Jelena Mrgič, "Transition From Late Medieval to Early Ottoman Settlement Pattern: A Case Study on Northern Bosnia", *Südost-Forschungen*, no 65/66, 2006/2007, pp. 56-57.

<sup>106</sup> Nenad Moacanin, *Žvornik*, TDV, vol. 23, p.553.

In the spring of 1483, Bayezid II assembled his army and went on a campaign into the Smederevo region, not to seek war, but the construction of two castles in order to strengthen the section between the fortresses of Smederevo and Golubac. Later on, these two castles would be referred to as Hram (Ram) and Koyluca (Kulič). According to the Ottoman chronicles<sup>107</sup>, the construction process lasted two months. Both castles were made of stone, and the surroundings of the fortresses were protected by a moat full of water. Furthermore, a number of cannons (*darbzen* in the text) and muskets were deployed inside the castles, as well as several hundred janissaries and ‘*azeb* troops were stationed inside the fortresses. Undoubtedly, these two new fortresses resolved the great defense gap between the castles of Smederevo and Golubac.<sup>108</sup>

Other developments also followed in the sancak of Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the only remaining roll-call<sup>109</sup> concerning the list of paid garrison soldiers in Rumelia (1490/91), new castles emerged in the frontier zones. These castles, however, are neither recorded in the *tahrir* nor *muqata’a* registers between 1466-1478. The first main characteristic of these castles was the fact that they were salaried fortresses. Secondly, their positions were direct across either the Hungarian or Venetian border. Moreover, this register shows an overall transformation in the Ottoman frontier

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<sup>107</sup> Almost all the chroniclers mention this spring campaign of Bayezid II. But, the most detailed information is given by Ibn Kemal: “*Sultān-ı zamān, sahib-kirān-ı cihān, vüzerā-yı rüşen-ray ve ümerā-yı kār-āzmayūn irşādiyle Morava kenārında Belgrad civarında olan hisārıları, ki elsine-i ‘ibādda Koyluş (Kulič) ve Hirem (Ram) dimegle iştihār bulmuşlardur, ol diyārın muhāfazası emrinde gayet mühimm ü lâzım oldukları sebebeden imāret olunmak buyurdi. Mezkūr kal’aları merhūm ..... Muhammed Han kış seferinde Ungurus elinden alub, harāb itmişdi; kafir onları ağaçdan yaptururdu... Bir ayda ol iki hisārın ‘amik- u sahik hendeklerini kazub sengin ü metin divārlarını yapub üstivār itdiler. İçlerine yeniçeriden ve ‘azabdan bir nice yüz hisar koyub, her birine bir mu’temed-i serāmedi dizdār itdiler...Burclar dürcleri darbzen ile bedenler de dehen-i tüfek-i tārık-şiken ile toldi.*”, see: İbn Kemal, *Tevārīh-i Âl-i Osmān*, vol. VIII, Ahmet Uğur (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 1997), pp. 48-49.

<sup>108</sup> While the construction was in progress, surrounding castles too, were repaired. To illustrate, a new polygonal cannon tower was added to the walls of the Castle Güğercinlik, which was to provide superior artillery fire for blocking the river side in case of unauthorized attempts of passage. See: *Semendire*, TDV, p. 601.

<sup>109</sup> MAD 15334.

organization in the context of their payment systems. Particularly in the Bosnia and Herzegovina region, most of the fortresses whose troops received a *timār* as payment in the 1460s and 1470s now began to receive a cash salary. To illustrate, 15 new fortresses emerge in the document.<sup>110</sup> According to the roll, 831 garrison troops served in these fortresses between 1491-92. Also, the number of salaried troops stationed in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Zvornik, Smederevo, and Vidin were 4,770 in 1491. The total number of paid soldiers in the whole of Rumelia in the same year was 8,632. Thus, 54.8% of the paid soldiers were stationed in the fortresses that neighbored the Hungarian Kingdom. Therefore, the majority of soldiers guarding the frontier were now receiving a salary, rather than collecting their income from a *timār*. This clearly demonstrates that the center directly connected itself to the soldiers along the frontier and also shows when and how quickly this change occurred. Also, by adding more salaried troops in the new and conquered fortresses, the Ottoman further strengthened the main defense force in the network of fortresses.

By examining the *tahrīr* register of the *sancak* of Bosnia compiled in 1486/87 (TT 18), a change in the number of *timār* holding garrison troops can also be observed. The total number of the garrison troops who received their payment in *timār* holdings in Bosnia was 276. By comparing the two registers, we can see below that the number of garrison troops who received *timār* payments in the same castles, reveals a minor increase during a 20-year period (49 soldiers).

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<sup>110</sup> The fortresses are listed as follows: Akhisar (Prusac), Toricani (Torican), Kluj (Ključ), Kamengrad (Kamengrad), Maglay (Maglaj), Virbeliçe (Vrh-Belice), Travnik (Travnik), Prolosice (?), Novi (Herceg Novi), Risan (Risano), Koçlat (Kušlat), Burgaz Fenarlık (Kaštel), Virkoraç (Vrgorac), Sokol (Soko Grad) and Vinçaç (Vinac).

Castle	MC 76 (1466/67)	TT 18 (1486/87)
Hodidede ( Hodidjed)	26	36
Bobofçe (Bobovac)	23	56
Kreševa (Kreševo)	41	57
Prozor (Prozor)	19	25
Višegrad (Visegrad)	20	20
Dobrun (Dobrun)	15	19
Yeleç (Jeleč)	19	21
İzvecan (Zvečan)	44	23
Ključovaç (Ključevac)	22	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>276</b>

**Table VI: *List of Fortresses in Bosnia and Comparison of the Numbers of garrison Troops between 1466 and 1486***

However, within a 25 year period, there occurred an organizational change in the Bosnian region. The garrison troops of seven fortresses in Bosnia and Herzegovina began to receive regular salaries, where they once received payment in the form of *tumār* holdings.

Castle	MC 76 (1466/67)	MAD 15334 (1491)
Susid ( Susid -Gračanica-)	37	28
İvranduk (Vranduk)	21	40
Libošek (Ljubuški)	37	37
Rog (Rog)	?	15
Počitel (Počitelj)	22	20
Klobuk (Klobuk)	26	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>160</b>

**Table VII: *List of Castles in Bosnia started to receive salary after the 1460s***

A similar change also occurred in Smederevo region. It seems that two fortresses in Smederevo region, Resava and Sivricehisar (Ostrovica), began to receive salary after 1477. Whole fortresses in the region now received salaries. According to MAD 15334, 61 garrison soldiers served in Sivricehisar, and 57 other soldiers protected Resava.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, a general transformation of the payment system occurred both in Bosnia and Smederevo region.

Thus, the Ottoman chain of fortresses in the Western Balkans was formed as follows in the 1490s: Vidin and its four surrounding castles in the *sancak* were formed on the eastern bank of the Ottoman border defense system against the Hungarian Kingdom. The center and the key line of the fortress system was protected by 15 castles in the *sancaks* of Smederevo and Zvornik. Smederevo, Rram, Kulič, and Golubac formed the first line of defense along the Danube Rivier to Vidin. Avala (Žrnov), Soko Grad, Užice, Maglič, Ostrovica, and Resava set up the second and the inner line of the defense system in the *sancak*. The Western side of the chain continued to be lined up with five castles in the Zvornik region where four of them were clustered around the center of the *sancak*, Zvornik, along with the passages and the Drina River. Among them, Perin and Teočak undertook the duty of the outpost position, and Srebrenica and Kušlat protected the southern region of the sanjak. The eastern bank of the chain, which was Bosnia, stretched from Teočak and ended at the Adriatic coast. The first line of this defense section was protected by the fortresses whose garrison troops were paid in cash. These fortresses were, Vrh-Belice, Doboy, Ključ, Kamengrad, Vranduk, Kaštel, Travnik, Toričan, Vinac, Prusac, Livno, Ljubuški, Klobuk, Rog, Imotski, Beograd, and Počitelj. Travnik and Prusac were

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<sup>111</sup> Sivricehisar: (TT 16, 1477/78, 20 garrison soldiers), Resava: (MAD 05, 1466/67, 37 garrison soldiers; TT 16, 1477/78, 39 garrison soldiers).

the centers of the chain that made up the first line of defense in Bosnia. Behind this first line in the region, the chain which made the second line of defense was spread out throughout Bosnia. Also, these fortresses that formed the second line were *timārli*. (See, Map V.)

As a result, when we analyze this data collectively it is possible to argue that the Ottomans replaced all the *timār*-holder castles with salaried ones in the places that were closest to the border areas. Meanwhile, all remaining *timār* holder castles were located in the inner parts of the *serhad sancaks*, while the other castles, which paid salaries in cash, dominated the frontier region. 8 castles in total were replaced with *‘ulūfeli*, and 16 other castles in the region were captured or built during the reign of Bayezid II. Thus, the very first line of the castle defense system was formed by those castles that staffed with troops who were paid in cash, and the *timārli* castles stayed on the secondary line, located on the inner and safer areas. Thus one can state that the *ulufeli* castles were the “armor of the well-protected domains (*timār* lands)”.

This military and financial change began during the reign of Mehmed II, but it was during the reign of Bayezid II that the Ottoman border defense system was re-established in an organized and coherent way.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE FORTRESSES: HIERARCHY, MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND SUBJECTS IN AND AROUND THE CASTLES**

#### **3. 1. Hierarchy and Military Organization among the Guards in Fortresses and the Composition of the Salaried Troops**

There were various military groups situated within the Ottoman fortresses in the fifteenth century. Subdivided into different professional services, these groups, as a whole, formed the main defense system of the fortresses. The variety of professions in the fortresses was likely less diverse before the mid-fifteenth century. However, in locating new service groups active in the fortresses after the mid-fifteenth century, the composition of the garrison guards became more complex. The rate of complexity in this composition increased especially in the frontier fortresses, due to the fact that the military activity in those castles was particularly involved, and this required new military elements who were divided in accordance with their professional services. The administrative function of

these various groups within one fortress, on the other hand, was organized under a standard chain of command.

### 3.1.1. *Dizdārs*

*Timār* and roll-call registers from the fifteenth century reveal that there was an existence of a standard hierarchical organization among the guards. All of the castles had a commander, named as *dizdār*. In the administrative regions of *sancak* begs where fortresses were also located, all of the *dizdārs* were under the direct command of these governors.<sup>112</sup> *Dizdārs* were responsible for the administration of the fortresses and the garrison troops who were under their command. Their authority was mostly limited to military routines within the fortresses, such as maintaining security inside castles and around the castle grounds, securing the castle treasury, handling appointments or the dismissal of guards, observing the prisoners in dungeons, patrol duties, and defending the fortresses in the case of a hostile assault.<sup>113</sup> The capital could directly appointment a *dizdār* and during the appointment process, future *dizdārs* were usually selected from among the Janissary or *Sipāhi* corps.<sup>114</sup> On July 14, 1492, since the former commander of the Akkerman Fortress died, the Center appointed Hamza, a high-ranking Janissary officer

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<sup>112</sup> Eftal Şükrü Batmaz, “Osmanlı Devletinde Kale Teşkilatına Genel Bir Bakış”, *OTAM*, no. 7 (1996), p. 4.

<sup>113</sup> Yusuf Oğuzoğlu, “Dizdar”, *TDV.*, vol. 9, p. 481.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* s.9.



in Constantinople.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1492, Atmaca from the Morea, a middle-ranking Janissary officer, was appointed as *dizdār* to the castle of Jabjak.<sup>116</sup>

Sources provide us with enough information on the different practices regarding the appointments of the fortress commanders as well. In other words, being a member of the *Kapıkulu* Corps was not always a prerequisite for holding the *dizdār* position. In fact, making *dizdār* appointments from among the experienced castle personnel was particularly desired as these individuals already had the knowledge to manage a castle, and they were also used to working in border fortresses. Hızır, the captain of the flotilla forces (‘*azebān*) at the castle of Güğercinlik (Golubac), whose rank was under *dizdār*, was eventually assigned as the commander of the aforementioned castle.<sup>117</sup> Likewise, Karaca (*ser-bölük*), who was responsible for the command of 10 guards in the fortress of Burgaz Fenarlık (Kaštel) became a steward in 1491. Afterward, upon the conquest of a new castle (Vinac) near Burgaz Fenarlık by the local forces, the sanjak beğ of Bosnia promoted Karaca to the rank of fortress commander on October 22, 1491.<sup>118</sup> Since the castle of Vinac was located in a strategic and sensitive area, Karaca, who was obviously an experienced soldier and had knowledge of running a fort, was chosen for this position. Likewise, on September 2, 1491, Ali, the steward, became the commander of the Novi fortress upon the death of its former commander.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> In text: *ser-piyādegān-i yeniçeriyān-i dergāh-i ‘alī*, MAD 15334, p. 56.

<sup>116</sup> In text: *ser-bölükān-i yeniçeriyān-i dergāh-i ‘alī*, MAD 15334, p. 33. Also, we observe another example for the castle of Maglic. On August 16, in 1491, Mustafa, another high-ranking janissary officer, was appointed as the commander of the fortress.

<sup>117</sup> MAD 15334, p. 54.

<sup>118</sup> MAD 15334, p. 47.

<sup>119</sup> MAD 15334, p. 25.

Moreover, a commander of a castle could be appointed to a different castle, while maintaining the same position. On June 21, 1491, since the Hungarians captured the castle commander of Travnik, as well as, a few guards who had accompanied him to the Jajce region, his position was filled by Doğan from Niş, who had been the commander of the Hram (Ram) Fortress.<sup>120</sup> This appointment was also made by Yakup Pasha, *sancak* beg of Bosnia. Thus, although it was common practice to appoint a *dizdār* from the capital city, the experience of one, however, was one of the most important qualities to obtaining the position of *dizdār* in the border fortresses. The soldiers who knew the geography of the borderlands and became familiar with the nature of the borders, in this respect, were the favored candidates for *dizdār* positions.

The authority of the beglerbegs and sanjak begs on the appointments of the *dizdārs* in this manner, shows us a different practice from the usual Ottoman way. The center was normally the absolute authority for all appointments. However, when the actual practice of administration is taken into account, a relative flexibility can be observed. The ordinary administrative processes in the border regions were accepted by the center. Semi-independent appointments by pashas and begs, in the end, were approved by the Capital, whereas other administrative appointments, in contrast, were directly ordered from the center. The practices in the border zones, with regard to the appointment of fortress commanders, had always been, and remained quite flexible, particularly when compared to appointments made in the core areas of the empire.

Inspection missions were one of the routine duties of *dizdārs*. As it can be supposed, the inspections were divided and completed in four pay periods. Absent or

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<sup>120</sup> MAD 15334, p. 18.

missing guards, without any excuses, were designated by the *dizdār* and were fired in accordance with a letter produced by him. In 1491, 5 guards in Güğercinlik (Golubac), 5 in Koçlat (Kuşlat), 11 in Smederevo and 8 others in Akçahisar (Kruje), were fired due to their absence without leave during the inspection. Immediately after their expulsion, their vacant positions were replaced by new guards.<sup>121</sup> Apart from the time of payment, *dizdārs* also carried out random inspections among the guards and reported those who did not fulfill their duties and who failed to comply with the rules.<sup>122</sup> The reports written by the *dizdārs* were sent to the capital. Afterwards, inspectors from the capital were sent out to the respective fortresses in order to verify whether the information given in the report was accurate or not. Such practices can be observed in the following example, in a letter written by the *dizdār* of the castle Serfiçe (Servia). As the letter reveals, the commander of the castle reported that some of the guards in the castle did not carry out their duties and responsibilities. Upon receiving this information, the sultan (Bayezid II) demanded that the inspectors visit the fortress and report back.<sup>123</sup> Despite the fact that the reports of the

<sup>121</sup> MAD 15334, pp 33-50. On May 19, 1491, Hızır, the brother of İsmail, was expelled due to his absence during an inspection. His vacant position was filled immediately by Musa, one of the guards of the fortresses of the West: “*Hızır birader-i İsmail, 5 akçe, merîd şüd ve becayış Musa Bosna ’an merdân-i kılâ’-yi Garb ’an aşere Receb sene 896 fî yevm 5*”, MAD 15334, p. 58. Also, other groups of guards who received payments by *timâr* were subjected to inspections. According to the document, Saruca from Karaferye went insane and as a result of this, he was absent. Then his share of the *timâr* was given to someone else: “*bu mezkûr Saruca mecnûn olub nâ-bedîd olduğu sebebdan sancak beği mektubı mücebince hissesi imâm Muhi’d-dîn’e verildi mezkûr kal’aya imâmlık ider fî Evâ’il-i Cemâziyü’l-âhir sene 877 (November 3-12, 1472)*”, MC. 76, fol.130b.

<sup>122</sup> To illustrate, Kasım, Nasuh and Yusuf, the guards in the castle of Jelec, were dismissed since the commander reported that they did not serve the castle: “*bunun için dizdār hudmet itmez didigi sebebdan hissesi alınub... fî 10 Şevval sene 878 (February 28, 1474)*”, MC. 76, fol. 141. Another example comes from the castle of Semendire. Hızır son of Hasan was dismissed since he did not serve the castle, as Süleyman Pasha and the *dizdār* reported: “*... hudmet itmezmiş ber müceb-i mektub-i Süleyman Pasha and dizdar... fî 7 Zilka’ade sene 896 (September 11, 1491)*”, MAD 15334, fol. 59.

<sup>123</sup> *Serfiçe kadısına hüküm yazıla ki*

*El-hâletü hâzihî Serfiçe dizdârı Sofu Dergâh-i mu’allâma gelüp: ‘Serfiçe Kal’ası’nda ba’zı hisâr erenleri vardır ki, kal’a hizmetinde olmayup ihmâl ü müsâhele iderler, kendü kolaylarında yürürler, temerrüd iderler’*” diyü bildürdi. Eyle olsa buyurdum ki, onat vechile tefîş ü tefahhus idesiz göresiz, mezbûr hisâr erenlerinden şunlar ki, hizmetlerinde olmayup kendi maslahatlarında olup kal’aya hizmet etmezlerse, esâmileriyle yazup bildüresiz, bir dürlü dahı itmeyesiz, şöyle bilesiz, alâmet-i şerîfe i’timâd idesiz. Tahrîren

*dizdār* were enough to dismiss the guards, the guards, too, had the right to complain about their discharge. They could directly send letters of complaint to the capital and they had the right to seek justice in the *divān*. Such an example can also be seen in the following case: Hüseyin, the former guard at the castle of Korinthos (Ott. Górdos) was dismissed from his duty on the grounds of misconduct. As Hüseyin claimed, two other guards were also dismissed by the commander for no reason. Hüseyin went to the capital to seek justice in the *divān*. Upon receiving this information, Bayezid II demanded that inspectors go to the aforementioned fortress, and consult the commander and other notables, in order to confirm whether Hüseyin's claims were true or not.<sup>124</sup>

The salaries of the *dizdārs* and their personnel were paid in cash seemed to be standardized. The size and the importance of the castle, along with the experience of the *dizdār*, were indicative factors for the amounts of their salaries. Such a claim can be observed by reviewing the register, which includes all the personnel within all of the fortresses who were paid in cash.<sup>125</sup> The commanders of two of the largest fortresses in Rumelia received the same salary. Mustafa, the commander of Smederevo fortress, and Hamza, the commander of Akkerman fortress, earned 50 *akçe* per day.<sup>126</sup> The third largest

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*fî evāhir-i Zilka'de sene sitte ve tis'a-mie* (June 2-17, 1501), taken from: İlhan Şahin – Feridun Emecen, *Osmanlılarda Divān- Bürokrasi- Ahkam II. Bāyezid Dönemine Ait 906/1501 Tarihli Ahkām Defteri*, (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 1994), p. 25.

<sup>124</sup> Ali Paşa'ya hüküm yazıla ki

*El-hāletü hāzihî dārende-i hükm-i humāyūn Górdöz'de hisār eri olup: "Şena'at ehlidür" diyü Hüseyin nām hisār eri mektüb getirüp bunun hisār erliğin almış, bundan gayri telbisle iki hisār erinin ulūfesin kat' itdürmüş. Eyle olsa buyurdum ki, mezbūr varduğı gibi mezbūr kal'anun dizdārından ve a'yānlarından onat vechile tefiṣ ü tefahhus idesiz göresiz, vākī'a bunun ve hisār erlerinin bir günāhları var mıdır sebeb-i azl olmağa müstahakk olalar, nev'an hod telbisle mi i'lām idesiz ki, telbisle alınduğı zāhi olursa, cihetleri girü mukarrer oluna, şöyle bilesiz, alāmet-i şerīfe i'timād idesiz. Tahrīren fî evāhir-i Zilka'de sene sitte ve tis'a-mie* (June 2-17, 1501). 16-17.

<sup>125</sup> MAD 15334.

<sup>126</sup> MAD 15334, p. 58 and 56 (M.).

castle was Kili whose commander received 40 *akçe* per day<sup>127</sup>, and the commander of İzvornik, the fourth largest castle of Rumelia, was İlyas who received 25 *akçe* per day. Also, the commanders of middle scale fortresses received between 10 – 15 *akçe* per day.<sup>128</sup>

The *tahrîr* registers also provide enough information regarding the *timâr* incomes of the *dizdâr*s. In the years 1466-67, the *timâr* revenues of sixteen fortress commanders varied between 3500 – 8500 *akçe*<sup>129</sup>. For instance, Timurtaş, the commander of Samabor fortress, held a *timâr* whose annual revenue was equal to 8881 *akçe*<sup>130</sup>. This revenue was the highest *timâr* revenue for a fortress commander in those years, especially in Bosnia. Conversely, Şirmerd, the commander of the castle Yeleç, received 2175 *akçe*<sup>131</sup> which was the smallest *dizdâr* revenue in Bosnia for that year. Also, a comparison of the *timâr* revenues of the *dizdâr*s in the same castles of Bosnia between 1466/67 and 1486/87 signals a shift in their incomes:

MC. 76 1467/68	TT. 24 1486/87
Castle and <i>dizdâr</i> 's income	Castle and <i>dizdâr</i> 's income
Hodidede, 7162 <i>akçe</i> <sup>132</sup>	Hodidede, 6352 <i>akçe</i> <sup>133</sup>
Kreşeva, 7053 <i>akçe</i> <sup>134</sup>	Kreşeva, 6233 <i>akçe</i> <sup>135</sup>
Bobofçe, 7354 <i>akçe</i> <sup>136</sup>	Bobofçe, 3769 <i>akçe</i> <sup>137</sup>

<sup>127</sup> MAD 15334, p. 65.

<sup>128</sup> Except the commanders of Maglic, Akçahisar, Hram, Koyluca and Kefalonya, whose commanders received 20 – 25 *akçe* per day, 33 commanders of other fortresses received between 10 – 15 *akçe*s per day. Among these castles, only the commander of the castle Burgaz Fenarlık received 9 *akçe* per day.

<sup>129</sup> MC. 76, fol. 113a – 164a.

<sup>130</sup> MC. 76, fol. 156a.

<sup>131</sup> MC. 76, fol. 140a.

<sup>132</sup> MC. 76, fol. 133a.

<sup>133</sup> TT 24, p. 812.

<sup>134</sup> MC. 76, fol. 119a.

<sup>135</sup> TT 24, p. 834.

<sup>136</sup> MC. 76, fol. 131a.

<sup>137</sup> TT 24, p. 861.

Prozor, 8881 akçes <sup>138</sup>	Prozor, 5340 akçes <sup>139</sup>
Vişegrad, 7934 akçes <sup>140</sup>	Vişegrad, 7898 akçes <sup>141</sup>
Kluçevaç, 5449 akçes <sup>142</sup>	Kluçevaç, 6884 akçes <sup>143</sup>
Dobrun, 4827 akçes <sup>144</sup>	Dobrun, 7410 akçes <sup>145</sup>
Yeleç, 2175 akçes <sup>146</sup>	unwritten
İzvecan, 6797 akçes <sup>147</sup>	İzvecan, 5595 akçes <sup>148</sup>

**Table VIII: Comparison of the *timār* revenues of the *dizdār*s in the same castles of Bosnia between 1466/67 and 1486/87**

The most radical change can be observed in the castles of Bobofçe, Prozor, and Dobrun as listed in the table. The incomes of other *dizdār*s show an alteration of around 1000 *akçes*. One should bear in mind that this comparison covers a period of 20 years, therefore these fluctuations seem understandable. Meanwhile, there were most likely several factors that caused the change in *dizdār* revenues. Firstly, replacements of the castle commanders and changes in their ranks can be considered among such factors. The redistribution of the *timār* incomes, and, as a result of those, the fluctuations in the incomes of the castle commanders could have impacted these change, as well. One should keep in mind that the data of MC. 76 has the characteristic of being the first register of Bosnia after its conquest, and therefore the data within reflects initial distributions directly after the conquest, in order to secure the region quickly. Within twenty years, there could

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<sup>138</sup> MC. 76, fol. 156.

<sup>139</sup> TT 24, p. 878.

<sup>140</sup> MC 76, fol. 149a.

<sup>141</sup> TT 24, p. 892.

<sup>142</sup> MC. 76, fol. 113a.

<sup>143</sup> TT 24, p. 902.

<sup>144</sup> MC 76, 143a.

<sup>145</sup> TT 24, p. 912.

<sup>146</sup> MC. 76, fol. 140a.

<sup>147</sup> MC. 76, fol. 137a.

<sup>148</sup> TT 24, p. 935.

have been a set of changes in the allocation and redistribution of the *timār* revenues that affected the incomes of the commanders, and therefore is reflected in the next available register. Lastly and more importantly, the change of the borders towards the West could have influenced the amount of *timār* revenues. Finally, changes could have occurred as fortresses, which were once located in the border regions lost their importance in time due to fact that the Ottomans continued a slow, but perpetual conquest towards the West.

### 3.1.2 *Kethüdā*

Steward or *kethüdā* was ranked as the second commander in the fortresses after the *dizdār*. His main responsibilities were keeping the accounts of the castle treasury, paying the salaries to the guards and conducting inspections by order of the *dizdār*. Their appointments could be directly made by the pashas or *dizdārs*. Also, in the event of death or dismissal, other personnel of the castle could be appointed as *kethüdā*.<sup>149</sup> The salary that accompanied the position varied from the castle to castle. If one considers the personnel with *ulūfe*, their daily wages were between 6 - 15 *akçe*. In 1491, the *kethūda* of the Smederevo fortress received 7 *akçe* per day.<sup>150</sup> While, the *kethūda* of the castle Akkerman, received 14 *akçe* per day in the same year.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Upon the letter of Yakup Pasha and the commander of the castle in September, 1491, İlyas, a lower-ranking guard in the castle of Maglay, become *kethūda* of the same castle. See: MAD 15334, p. 9.

<sup>150</sup> MAD 15334, p. 58.

<sup>151</sup> MAD 15334, p. 56 (M.)

The salaries of other *kethūdas* who received *tımār* incomes also varied. A *kethūda* received a *tımār* share, which could range from 2000 to 3000 *akçe* in the 1460s. For instance, all the *tımār* incomes of the *kethūdas* in the castles of Bosnia were between 2000-2800 *akçe*.<sup>152</sup> In the year 1486/87, the annual *tımār* income of a *kethūda* varied between 1500 – 2000 *akçe*.<sup>153</sup>

### 3.1.3 *Ser-bölüks*

The rank of *kethūda* was followed by that of the *ser-bölüks*<sup>154</sup>, which constituted lower ranking guards. There were between 8 – 20 guards under their commands and their salaries varied between 6-8 *akçe* daily. In 1491, all the janissary *ser-bölüks* in the castle of Kefalonia earned 6 *akçe* per day.<sup>155</sup> Similarly, all the *ser-bölüks* in Smederevo earned 6 *akçe* per day.<sup>156</sup> Only the head officers of other groups of guards received higher salaries. Among them, the commanders of the gunners or arquebusiers (Ott. Sing. *ser-topçu* and *ser-tüfekçi*) could be included in this category. İbrahim, for instance, the commander of the Muslim gunners in the castle of Semendire earned 12 *akçe* per day.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> MC. 76, fol. 113a – 164a.

<sup>153</sup> TT 24, p. 903. Also, it is worth to note that some of the fortresses allocated to *tımār* did not have *kethūdā*.

<sup>154</sup> The word *ser* means ‘head’ in Persian language. ‘Bölük’ is an old Turkish word that means literally squad in English. However, nowadays ‘bölük’ constitutes 150 to 300 soldiers in the modern Turkish army. Previously, the term ‘bölük’ referred to the smallest military group in the early modern period.

<sup>155</sup> MAD 15334, p. 55.

<sup>156</sup> MAD 15334, p. 58 – 43 (M.).

<sup>157</sup> MAD 15334, p. 43 (M.). Other examples comes from the roll-call register of the Moton fortress. Ahmed, the commander of the gunners, received 12 *akçe* per day. Since the registers’ date is unwritten, we do not know when this register was prepared. Most likely it was the first roll-call register of the fortress. See: KK.d. 4725, fol 17a. Apart from this, there is another example from the same register, but, from another castle written on May 3, in 1498. The commander of the gunners in the castle of Novi received 7 *akçe* per day.



### 3.1.4 *Müstāhfizes*

The regular guards (*müstāhfizes*)<sup>158</sup> made up the lowest level in the hierarchical order of the fortresses. Also, they constituted the permanent soldier groups of the fortresses. It is possible to infer from the documents that the number of *müstāhfizs* was pre-determined by the location or the size of the castle.<sup>159</sup> New *müstāhfizes* were recruited in the event of death or discharge. Furthermore, the system had broad human resources in order to fill the vacant positions in the castles. These resources were fed via two channels. The sons of trustable guards<sup>160</sup> or newly established groups, such as *kul oğulları*<sup>161</sup>, constituted the first human resource in the fortresses. To illustrate, the *dizdār* of Smederevo sent a letter to the capital concerning the new appointment of a *kul oğlu* as

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See: KK.d. 25a. Thus, KK.d. 4725 should be composed by different roll-call registers, which belonged to different times and places.

<sup>158</sup> All the soldiers in the fortresses were called *müstāhfizes* (Ott. Pl. *müstahfizān*) or *merd* (Ott. Pl. *merdān*). However, the term *müstāhfiz* here indicates the group who are separated from the other military forces in the castles, such as *‘azebān* and *martaloses*.

<sup>159</sup> This situation resembles with *gedik* practice. Like the members of guilds, the castles also had pre-determined personnel cadre. See: Ahmet Akgündüz, “Gedik”, *TDV*, vol. 13, pp. 541-543.

<sup>160</sup> It is obvious that there are plenty of instances on the appointment of sons in the place of their fathers. One example comes from the *tahrir* register of Bosnia in 1466/67. Since his father Süleyman from Kalkandelen was dead, Yusuf took his vacant position: “*Kalkandelenlū Süleyman, mürde. Dizdār mektūbı mücebince hissesi oğlu Yusuf’a verildi. Tahrīren fī Muharremü’l-harām sene 874 der Konstantiniyye (July 11- 25, 1469), MC. 76, fol. 123a.* Also, an order sent from the capital mentioned that Hüseyin, son of İlyas who was one of the guards in the fortress of Limoçeki would receive a *tımār* income in the same castle if there was a vacant position or *tımār* revenue: “*Hersek-ili sancağı beyine ve ol kal’alarda olan dizdārlara hüküm yazıla ki, El-hāletü hāzihī Limoçeki hisāri erenlerinden İlyas’ın oğlu Hüseyin yarar yiğit olup elinde dirliğı olmaduğı ecilden buyurdum ki, ol yirde hisārda bir hisār erliğı mahlūl olup yāhūd kimesne elinde varsa buna tevcih idüp yazup bildirsesiz, ki berāt-i humāyūn virile, şöyle bilesiz, eğlenmelü itmeyesiz, alamet-i şerife i’ timād idesiz. Tahrīren fī evāhīr-i Zilhicce sene sitte ve tis’a-mie.*” (June 18 – July 2, 1501), Feridun Emecen and İlhan Şahin, p. 132.

<sup>161</sup> For the term *kul oğlu*, see: İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti Teşkilâtından Kapıkulu Ocakları I– Acemi Ocağı ve Yeniçeri Ocağı*, 3<sup>rd</sup> volume, (Ankara: TTK, 1988), pp. 31-34.

permanent staff in the castle. Afterward, the capital confirmed that he could be appointed when an open position was available.<sup>162</sup> The term *kul oğlu*, however, should not be confused with the sons of the members of the *Kapıkulu* army. That is why this group was also called “*yerli kulları*”, from the sixteenth century onwards. Or, over time they were also called “*beşli*” since their daily salaries were 5 *akçe*.<sup>163</sup> In fact, the *kul oğulları* of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century were the basis of a well-known military group, the so-called *yerli serhad kulu*<sup>164</sup>, which would become frequently active in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The other human resource was constituted by former guards called *maz’zül*. They were not on active duty due to injuries, short-term leaves, retirement or discharges. Based on this information, they may be considered as reserve groups in the fortresses. Also, the members of this group were still paid, even if they were not active in service, excluding those who were dismissed due to being undisciplined or having committed crimes. The castle of İzvornik had its own *ma’zül* group, whose numbers corresponded to 21. Also, the *ma’zül* group of the castle of Liş (42 men) was stationed in the castle of İzvornik. In total, 250 *akçe* were paid for these 42 *ma’zül* guards.<sup>165</sup> Also, 20 other *ma’zül* guards of the Leş fortress were stationed in the castle of Güğercinlik.<sup>166</sup> Furthermore, if a vacant

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<sup>162</sup> “*Semendire sancağı beyine ve Semendire kadısına ve Semendire dizdârına hüküm yazıla ki: Şimdiki hâlde sen ki sancak beyisin dârende-i ferman-i hümayûn Kuloğlu İbrahim eline mektûb virüp: ‘Kul oğludur’*” diyü bir gedik için hükm-i şerîf inâyet oluna deyü arz itmişsin. Eyle olsa mezkûrî anda size gönderdüm ve buyurdum ki, bir hisâr eri gediği düşicek mezkûra ta’yîn idüb mektûb virüp yazup ‘arz idesiz, şöyle bilersiz. Tahrîren fî evâhir-i Zilka’de sene sitte ve tis’a-mie” (June 2-17, 1501). Feridun Emecen and İlhan Şahin, p. 6.

<sup>163</sup> Ali son of *kul*, received 5 *akçe* per day, see: MAD 15334, p. 5. Another example is found in the castle of İskenderiye. Ali, the son of *kul*, also received 5 *akçe* per day: “*Hamza-i Bosna, 5 akçe, mürde fî 3 Zi’l-hicce sene 896 (October 7, 1491) becâyış Ali veled-i kul, ‘an ma’zül-i İskenderiye fî 4 Zi’l-hicce sene 896 (October 8, 1491) fî yevm 5 akçe’*”, MAD 15334, p. 56 (M.).

<sup>164</sup> Abdülkadir Özcan, “*Serhad Kulu*”, TDV, vol. 36 (2009), pp. 560-561.

<sup>165</sup> MAD 15334, p. 55 – 56.

<sup>166</sup> MAD 15334, p. 45. Apart from this, the fortress of Akçahisar also had 21 *ma’zül* guards. MAD 15334, p. 48.

position was opened in a different castle, a *ma'zül* soldier from another castle could be appointed there.<sup>167</sup>

The units of *müstāhfizes* were grouped into subdivisions with regard to their professions. These were either the divisions, which used firearms and classical launching weapons such as cannons, arquebuses, and crossbows or guards who constituted the technical personnel of the fortresses such as armorers, stone masons, carpenters, caulkers etc. (See Table I and II).

### 3.1.5 *Topçuyān* (Gunners)

The artillerymen (Ott. sing. *topçu*) constituted one of the most important components within Ottoman fortresses. Especially following the second half of the fifteenth century, firearms began to play a crucial role in battlefields and fortresses, both for offensive and defensive purposes. The Ottomans adopted these weapons and personnel in their military institutions. In that respect, they deployed artillery and gunners to the most important fortresses. During the Ottoman – Hungarian Wars (1443-44) and the Crusade of Varna (1444), it is known that the Ottomans used guns for defensive purposes,

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<sup>167</sup> Since İshak from Manastır was dead, Hamza from Ustrumca took his place: “İshak Manastır, mürde ber müceb-i defter-i kādı fî 28 Receb 896 (June 6, 1491) ve becāyiş Hamza Ustrumca ‘an ma’zül-i Akkerman fî 28 Receb sene 896 (same date).... tezkere virildi fî 11 Şa’bân sene 896 (June 19, 1491), MAD 15334 p. 41 (M.). Also one *ma'zül* guard from the castle of Resava began to serve in the castle of Güğercinlik (Golubac): “... becāyiş Eğnebegi veled-i Saruca ‘an ma’zül-i Resava fî 3 Zilka’de sene 896 (September 5, 1491).” A decree concerning the appointment of a *ma'zül* castle guard to the castle of Semendire was sent to the authorities: “Semennire sancağı beyine ve Semendire kadısına ve Semendire Kal’ası dizdârına hükiim yazıla ki: Şimdiki hâlde dârende-i fermân-ı hümayun Vidinlü İlyas Dergâh-ı mu’allâma gelüp şöyle ‘arz itdi ki, ma’zül hisâr eriymiş. Eyle olsa buyurdum ki, teftiş idüp göresiz, eğer nefis-i emrde ma’zül hisâr eri ise, bir gedik düşecek mezkûra ta’yin idüp viresiz, şöyle bilesiz. Tahrîren fî evâ’il-i Zilhicce sene sitte ve tis’a-mie (June 18 – July 2, 1501)”. Emecen and Şahin, p. 66.

while the Crusaders besieged the fortresses of Vidin, Nicepolis, Shumen, and Pravadı.<sup>168</sup> In 1455, Üsküp, one of the most important Ottoman cities in the Ottoman Balkans, before the conquests of Serbia and Bosnia, had 12 cannons with ammunitions in its storage.<sup>169</sup>

During the conquests, the Ottomans were eager to benefit from the local Christian population, who were knowledgeable in the use and making of firearms. In 1454-55, 29 gunners served in the fortresses of Nicepolis, Giurgiu, and Hulovnik (Turnu). The common feature among these gunners was the fact that they did not receive a salary for their services. Instead, they were exempted from certain taxes for their military services.<sup>170</sup> In 1466, the *tahrır* register of Braniçeva shows that there were 5 Christian gunners who served in the fortress of Resava.<sup>171</sup> The *tahrır* register of Bosnia for the years 1466/67 also indicates that 4 castles in the region had gunners, which therefore means that the aforementioned fortresses had cannons.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, in 1478 a *muqata'a* register also gives us the information that the fortresses of Sultaniyye and Kilidbahir, two strategic

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<sup>168</sup> Gábor Ágoston, “Firearms and Military Adaption: The Ottomans and the European Military Revolution, 1450-1800”, *Journal of World History* 25.01 (2014), p. 89.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 89; Feridun Emecen, *Osmanlı Klasik Çağında Savaş*, (İstanbul: TİMAŞ, 2010), pp. 35-36. Also compare with MAD 12, fol 196b. Here the list of firearms and their ammunitions in the castle: *Tüfek* (arquebuse): 148, *Tüfek findığı* (bullet): 4000, *Top* (Cannon): 12, *Kurşun top findığı* (Lead cannon balls): 120. Moreover the inventory includes some basic components for producing gunpowder and guns: *Bakır* (Copper): 4 *kantar* (225.6 kg), *Ham güherçile* (raw saltpeter): 7 *kantar* (394.8 kg), *Has güherçile* (Finished saltpeter): 8 *kantar* (451.5 kg), *Kükürt* (Sulphur): 3 *kantar* (169.32 kg). Therefore, there should be a cannon foundry inside of the castle in 1450s.

<sup>170</sup> Halil İnalçık, Evgeni Radushev, Uğur Altuğ, “*Fatih Sultan Mehmed Döneminde Tuna Boyunda Osmanlı Düzeni*”, vol I, fol. 69a-78b.

<sup>171</sup> Those were Rahoy, Nikola, İstapan, Marko and another İstapan. They received *tımār* incomes for their service. Most probably, those Christians were among the guards who bargained the castle with Ottomans. The Ottomans, in response, put those guards in service at the castle. This example reveals typical Ottoman practices in the Balkans. They always welcomed experts from the newly-acquired lands, not just as a goodwill gesture but also for the fact that they needed these experts urgently. See: İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ pp.262-264.

<sup>172</sup> For instance, Ali from the castle of Borovaç was the artilleryman, and his *tımār* income was 1,657 *akçe*. Also, İvlatko, who was a Christian guard in the castle, was using mangonel /*mancılık*, MC. 76, fol. 117b – 118a. The other castles, which had artillerymen, were Vranduk, Hodidede, İzvecan and Yeleç. Apart from these, the *tahrir* register of Hersek in 1477/78 shows that the castles of Limoçek, Poçitel and Klobuk had artillerymen, as well. See: TT 5, pp. 183- 235.

fortresses protecting the Dardanelles, had 49 artillerymen.<sup>173</sup> Similar to those fortresses, Anadolu and Rumeli Hisarı, located on opposite banks of the river to control Bosphorus, and the fortresses of Sultaniyye and Kilidbahir were built by Mehmed II to secure the Dardanelles. The new attachments to these new fortresses, which were polygonal artillery towers, show that the construction of artillery fortresses became a well-known and standard practice for the Ottomans in the second half of the fifteenth century. Thus, one can state that in the second half of the fifteenth century, the military developments in Ottoman military architecture were parallel with those, which were already widespread in the Western Europe.<sup>174</sup>

Over time, the gunners became the essential and widespread military personnel within the Ottoman border fortresses. The roll-call register of 1491 (see Table 2), which includes all of the salaried garrison troops in the fortresses, shows that at least 80% of the

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<sup>173</sup> MAD 176, p. 402b.

<sup>174</sup> Some historians instantly emphasize that in the fifteenth century, certain developments in gunnery revolutionized the course of warfare which, in the end, gave way to a series of military revolutions. Among those, Clifford Rogers argues that the centralization process in Europe came after the effective usage of artilleries by the monarchies. Since it was difficult to possess gunpowder weapons by the small kingdoms or small power elites, the bigger kingdoms used artilleries to destroy the strongholds, which were always difficult to take with classical techniques. This, at the end, gave way to the establishment of the strong monarchies in Europe. However, new revolutionary military architecture began to flourish in Northern Italy to balance the equilibrium between attackers and defenders: the artillery fortresses. As Rogers indicates, ‘artillery revolution’ gave way to ‘artillery-fortress revolution’ in sequence, Clifford Rogers, “The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years War”, in *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, Clifford J. Rogers (ed.), Colorado: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 64-76. Also, Geoffrey Parker goes further with the argument that the existence of *trace italienne* fortification systems caused the real military revolution in the 1520s. According to his deterministic view, the key indicator of the military revolution in a certain place was the existence or absence of the *trace italienne* fortresses. Geoffrey Parker, “The Military Revolution, 1560-1660’ – A Myth?”, in *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, Clifford J. Rogers (ed.), Colorado: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 41-43. Also see: Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Of course, both historians neglect to place the Ottomans within this so-called revolution. Their explanations solely consider the European case. However, the Ottomans, too, had similar indications, which were considered as so-called revolutionary for the European side. Thus, if one argues on the basis of Rogers’ arguments, he or she will find that the Ottomans already experienced both ‘artillery’ and ‘artillery fortress’ revolutions in the fifteenth century. The archival documents from the fifteenth century certainly prove these arguments.

related castles in Rumelia had artillerymen (46 castles of 57 castles).<sup>175</sup> Also, the total number of the artillerymen in these castles were 145 men (see Table 2), 98 of whom were Muslims and the rest (47 men) were Non-Muslims. Among them, 40 non-Muslim gunners were located in the fortress of Semendire. Except for the fortresses of Smederevo and Resava, Muslim artillerymen constituted the majority.

### 3.1.6 *Tüfekçiyān* (Harquebusers) and *Zenberekçiyān* (Crossbowmen)

The other subdivision with regard to using firearms and other classical launching weapons was constituted by *tüfekçiyān* (sing. *tüfekçi*)/harquebusiers<sup>176</sup> and *zenberekçiyān* (sing. *zenberekçi*)/crossbowmen. Most of the *tüfekçis* and *zenberekçis* were non-Muslims and located within the frontier castles.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> MAD 15334. However, we must also add that some of the castles in the list probably had artillerymen. Since only other military groups were paid in cash such as *'azebān*, the others which received *tımār* were registered. These castles were Avlonya and Gelibolu. Moreover, a weapons inventory register from the very beginning of the sixteenth century shows that there were 268 cannons of different calibers and 407 small fire-arms in the sanjak of Avlonya. See: D.BŞM.CBH.d.18581, p. 2. In fact, if we add the other fortresses whose had gunners with *tımār* income, the results will show that more than 90% of the fortresses had artillerymen.

<sup>176</sup> These small firearms were typical matchlock harquebusers. They were very similar to their European counterparts, see: Ágoston, "Firearms and Military Adaption ...", p. 89.

<sup>177</sup> For a detailed information on the numbers and the origins of gunners, hand gunners and crossbowmen, see: Ibid., p. 94.

### 3.1.7 Janissaries

In the late fifteenth century, the Janissaries located in the fortresses were few in number, contrary to the what is written by scholars.<sup>178</sup> There were very few Janissary troops in the fortresses at the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>179</sup> Deploying the Janissary troops to the newly conquered or built castles was a well-known Ottoman practice during the conquests. Afterward, when the Ottomans sent new guards to these castles, however, the Janissary troops returned to the capital.<sup>180</sup> In 1491, the roll-call register shows that there were only two Janissary units stationed at castles. The first Janissary company, which was composed of 32 men, was located in the castle of Kefalonia.<sup>181</sup> The other janissary company, on the other hand, served in the castle of Kuşlat. This janissary company was composed of 21 newly-recruited soldiers.<sup>182</sup> Moreover, there were also other janissary soldiers in the fortresses, but, their numbers were limited to one or two men.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Altuğ confused some military groups with Janissaries in the castles. He asserts that the Jannisaries started to constitute majority in the castles. However, he confused the ‘*azeb* and *müstahfiz* groups to Jannisaries. In fact, none of them were Jannisaries. Rather, they were separated professional guards. (See:table I and II). Altuğ, ‘XV. Yüzyılda Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Kaleleri ve Geçirdikleri Yapısal Değişimler’, pp. 84-89.

<sup>180</sup> Ibn Kemal mentions that following the end of the construction processes of two fortresses, Hram and Koyluca in 1483, several hundred janissary and ‘*azeb* soldiers were deployed to aforementioned fortresses: *Tevārīh-i Âl-i Osmān*, vol. VIII, Ahmet Uğur (ed.), (Ankara: TTK, 1997), pp. 48-49. However, when we examine the roll-call registers of Hram and Koyluca for the year 1491 (8 years after construction), no single jannisary is registered as among the troops of the aforementioned fortresses. (See table 2). Also, an imperial decree shows that 60 Janissaries were to be sent to the castle of Avgadi, which was newly constructed in 1501. S 32.

<sup>181</sup> MAD 15334, p. 55

<sup>182</sup> MAD 15334, p. 48.

<sup>183</sup> For instance, Hamza was the only janissary soldier in the castle of Maglaj. MAD 15334, p. 10.

### 3.1.a. Other Groups

Armorers, carpenters, stone masons, caulkers, bands and religious men etc. were also stationed at the castles for technical duties or religious routines.<sup>184</sup> The listed groups above were the main components of the castles. Along with these groups, there were also two main troops that were located in the frontier fortresses and received salaries: ‘*Azebs* and *Martoloses*. There was a respectable number of both groups located in the castles. Their divisional organizations were different from *müstāhfizes*, and they had a different chain of command. However, all the officers of these groups were under the direct command of the fortress *dizdār*.

#### 3.1.a.1 ‘*Azebs*

‘*Azebān* (Ott. Sing. ‘*azeb*)<sup>185</sup>, which were mostly deployed to the castles along with the rivers and seas, were one of the most important components of the Ottoman fortresses. They constituted the flotilla forces in the castles situated by rivers or seas.<sup>186</sup> The commanders, also known as *kapudān*/captain, were responsible for commanding

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<sup>184</sup> For the castle of Akkerman, for instance, the technical and the religious personnel as follows: 4 *cebeci* (armorers), 4 *bevvāb* (mason), 4 *mehter* (band), 5 *imam ve hatib* (religious personnel). MAD 15334, p. 62.

<sup>185</sup> İdris Bostan, “‘*Azeb*”, vol. 4, *TDV*, pp. 312-313.

<sup>186</sup> After the conquests of the Venetian fortresses in the Morea region as a result of the war (1499-1503), the Ottomans placed 4,135 guards into the newly conquered castles. ‘*Azebān* forces constituted more than half of the total paid guards in these castles (2,500). Since these fortresses were located by the sea, ‘*azebān* forces played an important role in defending the fortresses. See: KK.d. 4988, fol. 19b – 22b and also table 3.



these flotilla groups for various purposes. They also made up an important portion of the total number of garrison soldiers in the different castles (see: Table 1 and 2). The salaries of the commanders varied from the castle to castle, as well. Firuz who was the captain of the ‘*azebān*’ forces of Semendire received 25 *akçe* per day. Likewise, the captain of the ‘*azeb*s in İzvornik received the same amount of *akçe*<sup>187</sup>. Moreover, a castle with smaller ‘*azeb*’ troops, was commanded by a *re’is*, who was a middle-ranking officer under the command of the *kapūdān*. Mehmed, the *re’is* of the ‘*azeb*’ troops in the castle of Kefalonia, commanded merely 40 ‘*azebān*. He received only 6 *akçe* per day.<sup>188</sup> Additionally, there could be more than one *re’is* in a single castle without a captain. The castle of Güzelce, for instance, had two *re’is*, who commanded 100 ‘*azeb*’ troops.<sup>189</sup> The lower-rank officer groups of the ‘*azeb*’ forces were comprised of *ser-odas*, who were responsible for commanding 10 ‘*azeb*’ soldiers. Every *ser-oda* earned 5 *akçes* per day.

‘*Azeb*’ units were divided into three groups with regard to their sub-professions. The first division was made up of the ‘*azebān-i piyāde*, which served on foot. These soldiers made up the largest portion of all the ‘*azebān*’ forces in the fortresses. In the year 1491, while the total number of ‘*azeb*s in the fortress of Semendire reached 850, 733 of them were infantry. The second ‘*azeb*’ group consisted of soldiers who served as mounted cavalry. They were either called ‘*ulūfeciyan-i süvārī*’ or *fārisān*.<sup>190</sup> Lastly, the third

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<sup>187</sup> Firuz was the commander of the largest ‘*azebān*’ group in a single castle whose numbers were 850. See: MAD 15334, p.89. Although the captain of İzvornik commanded only 200 ‘*azebān*’ soldiers, he received the same amount of money as Firuz, the captain of Semendire.

<sup>188</sup> MAD 15334, p. 78.

<sup>189</sup> MAD 15334, p. 90.

<sup>190</sup> ‘*Ulūfeciyan-i süvārī*’ means mounted soldiers who paid in cash and *fārisān* also means mounted soldier. These terms were used interchangeably in the documents. For instance, the roll-call list of the ‘*azebān*’ units in the Semendire Fortress from the year 1488 listed 100 mounted ‘*azebāns*’ as *fārisān*. See: KK.d. 4725, fol 109a. However, the same mounted ‘*azebāns*’ were written as ‘*ulūfeciyan-i süvārī*’ in the roll-call list which was registered in 1491. See: MAD 15334, p. 89.

category was ‘*azebān-i kāyık* or ‘*azebān-i kāyikhā-yi hassa* whose members were assigned to protect or operate the boats in the castles located by the sea or river.<sup>191</sup>

### 3.1.a.2 *Martoloses*

*Martoloses* who were one of the oldest military establishments in the Medieval Balkans were widely used by the Ottomans. They were professional frontier soldiers that were particularly located in Vidin, Serbia, along with the Adriatic and in the Peloponnese’s. The origin of this military establishment dates back to the Byzantine Empire.<sup>192</sup> Espionage, raiding, and scouting were among their routine duties. They were also intensively deployed to the fortresses, which were located along the border areas for various missions.<sup>193</sup> Since the members of this group knew well the geography of the border areas, they were used as guides when Ottoman raiding parties entered deep into enemy lands. Also, these peoples knew the local languages spoken in the border areas. Most probably, captured enemy soldiers were transported via the *Martoloses* and the Ottomans exacted information concerning the military situation within enemy lands. There were several types of *Martolos* groups in the main Ottoman frontier organization.

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<sup>191</sup> There were 60 ‘*azebān-i kāyikhā-yi hassa* in the Akkerman fort, on November 1497. See: KK.d. 4988, fol. 65.

<sup>192</sup> The word *Martolos* came from Greek word αρμάτωλός, means warrior, guard or armed; Milan Vasić “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Martoloslar”, Kemal Beydilli (trans.), *Tarih Dergisi* 31 (1977), p. 48.

<sup>193</sup> Some of the *martolos* groups were not paid, instead they were exempted from certain taxes in exchange for their services. Since these *martolos* groups will be mentioned in next pages, it is enough here to give one example to show their duties, which are designated in *tahrir* registers. The *martoloses* of Braniçova, who were subjected to no one, came from the other side of the border with tolerance and privileges, which were guaranteed by the Ottomans. Since they protected waterfronts and did other duties, all of them were exempted from taxes: “*Martolosān-i Braniçeva, kimesneye ra’iyyet olmayub ekseri öte taraftan istimāletle gelüb yalı muhāfazat-içün ve martolosluk hıdmetin itdikleriyle harāc ve ispenç ve ra’iyyet rūsūmu virmezler tımār eri yerine ekerlerse ‘öşrün virirler.*” See: TT 16, p. 695.

The first group, as it is mentioned here, were composed of professional soldiers who received a salary and were stationed in the fortresses, where military activity was at a high level. The second group, on the other hand, lived also in or around fortresses and served the castle, but did not receive any salary. In fact, those who were stationed at Nicepolis and Vidin once received salary before the 1460s, but later it was suspended.<sup>194</sup> Thus, the second group will be mentioned under the category of ‘tax exempted population’ in the next pages. Here, the salaried *Martolos* groups will be analyzed.

The commanders of the *Martolos* groups were designated *ser-martolosān*, which means the head of *Martoloses*. Also, there were low-ranking officers called *ser-oda*, each of whom commanded 10 *Martolos*. While *ser-martolos* received between 6-7 *akçe* per day, *ser-odas* received 5 *akçe*. An ordinary *Martolos*, on the other hand, earned only 2 *akçes* per day.<sup>195</sup> There were 52 *Martoloses* in the fortress of Golubac who were paid in cash in 1466/67.<sup>196</sup> The documents of payment for the garrison troops in 1478-79 show that there were *Martolos* groups which served in various fortresses. 100 *Martoloses*, for instance, served in the fortress of Zvornik<sup>197</sup>. 500 *Martoloses* served in the castle of Smederovo in 1491.<sup>198</sup>

It is possible to infer from the documents that *Martoloses*, too, were divided into two groups with respect to their professions. The first group served on foot (*piyāde*) and

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<sup>194</sup> At the beginning of 1450s, there were both salaried and tax exempted *Martolos* groups in the castle of Vidin. See: Olga Ziroyević, *tursko vojno Uredjenje u Srbiji 1459-1683* [Ottoman Military Organization in Serbia 1459-1683] (Institut D’historie Monographies. Vol. XVIII), (Belgrade, 1974), pp. 184-187; Rossitsa Gradeva, “Between Hinterland and Frontier: Ottoman Vidin, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries”, in *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World*, A. C. S. Peacock (ed.), (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 343- 344.

<sup>195</sup> For the salaries of the *Martoloses* see: MAD 15334, pp. 91 – 95.

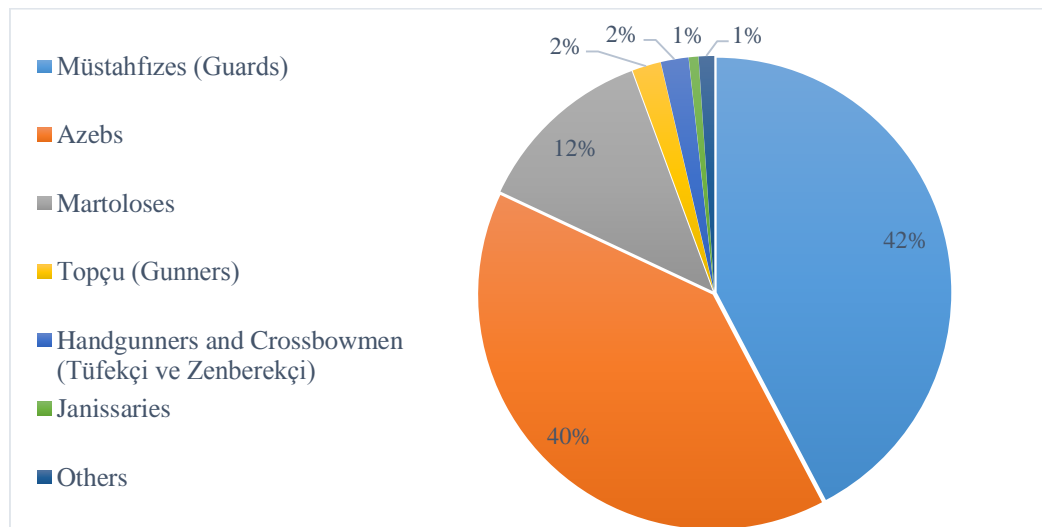
<sup>196</sup> İnalçık, *Fatih Devri Üzerine Tetkikler ve Vesikalar* I, V. edition, (Ankara: TTK, 2014), p. 158.

<sup>197</sup> MAD 176, p. 25a.

<sup>198</sup> MAD 15334, p. 91.

the second group did their duties on horse (*süvārī*). In the castle of Vidin, 25 *Martoloses* served on horse, and 52 other *Martolos* did their duties on foot, in 1491.<sup>199</sup>

As a result, the Ottoman network of fortresses in the frontier zones was protected by several professional military divisions in the late fifteenth century. Along with the regular guards (*müstahfizes*), the other components of the garrisons, *Martoloses* and ‘*Azebs*, constituted the common and largest divisions of the fortresses. Gunners (*topçu*) became essential military units in the fortresses, as the Ottomans realized the crucial importance of using firearms for defensive purposes from the mid fifteenth century. Based on the earliest-known complete roll-call register dated 1490-91, the composition of the salaried fortresses in Rumelia is as follows:



**Table IX: The Composition of the Salaried Garrison Troops in the Balkans, 1490-91<sup>200</sup>**

<sup>199</sup> MAD 15334, p. 92. This grouping, on the other hand, was only made among the *martoloses* in Vidin. We cannot see such groupings in other castles who had also *Martolos* troops.

<sup>200</sup> The data is taken from MAD 15334.

‘*Azeb*’ forces, as the table shows, constituted the second largest military group within the fortresses. This was due to the fact that the large majority of Ottoman frontier castles were located on the banks of the Danube River. *Martoloses* were the third largest group in the fortresses, and they were also stationed in the Serbian region between the castles of Smederevo and Vidin. Janissary troops, on the other hand, constituted only 1% of the total garrison troops. Even if they were located in the fortresses, that practice would have been for a temporary period, especially in the case of capture of a new fortress by the imperial troops.<sup>201</sup> The tradition of relocating Janissaries to the border fortresses, in this manner, had not yet become an applied practice in the fifteenth century. Only after 1541, would the Janissaries constitute the major military groups of the fortresses after the annexation of Hungary due to the great need for professional guards.

### **3. 2. Christian Auxiliary Troops, Tax-exempted Population, and Their Military Obligations in the Frontier Areas**

Compared to the core regions, the frontier zones in the Balkans had certain peculiarities in terms of military, administrative and socio-economic concepts. Since the frontier areas were mostly characterized by military aspects, the subjects who lived in and around the fortresses had a military pattern to their way of living. The way of life in border societies differed as a result of the *sui generis* nature of the *serhad* regions. The

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<sup>201</sup> Such case occurred after the capture of Belgrade in 1521. 485 Janissaries were sent to Belgrade as guards, MAD 23, fol. 12a.

relationship between frontier societies and the state was based on a collective bargaining where both sides made certain concessions: the subjects had to serve different duties at the fortresses, such as defending the fortress when it needed so, patrolling, scouting, performing the watchman's duty or providing military supplies. In return, they were fully or partially exempted from taxes. Thus, what made them different from the subjects in the interior regions was the fact that they actually had some military obligations and duties for the common defense of a border place. The state, on the other hand, gave tax exemptions and other privileges to those whom they considered as different and more important among other *re'aya*/tax payer subjects.<sup>202</sup> Of course, these bargains were always for the benefit of the Ottoman sultans. Over time, tax exemptions could be canceled by the central authority.<sup>203</sup>

The auxiliary military establishments, which can be seen in the border zones, were also integrated into the main Ottoman military institutes over time. These military establishments, whose origins dated back to before the Ottoman conquest, constituted the main bodies of Byzantine military establishments in the Balkans. Three semi-military groups, the *Voynuks*, *Vlachs*, and *Martaloses*, occupied an important place for both the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans and after that, the defense of it. Rather than demolishing these groups, which the Ottomans encountered during the conquest, they rearranged their military status, or most likely, they left these groups to perform in the same way as they previously had. Despite the fact that joining the military campaigns were among their

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<sup>202</sup> Halil İnalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, vol. I, translated by Halil Berktaş, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2000), s. 52.

<sup>203</sup> Halil İnalçık, "Ottoman Methods of Conquest", *Studia Islamica*, no. 2 (1954), pp. 107-108.

primary obligations, they were also used for the defense of the *serhad* regions in the Balkans.

### 3.2.1 *Voynuks*

The term *Voynuk* comes from the Slavic word ‘*voyn*’ meaning warrior or soldier. They can be described as members of small aristocratic families before the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans and were widely used by the emergent Slavic Balkan states after the Byzantine Empire lost its power in the region.

Most of the Ottoman conquests in the Balkans occurred through a conservative process where, during and after the conquests, the structure of the populace and military institutions remained dissolved. Rather, these structures and military institutions were absorbed or became attached to the Ottoman military and administrative establishments.<sup>204</sup> By analyzing the Ottoman policy of conquest in the Balkans, it can be observed that the essence of the conquest originated from two main bases. The first, the policy of *istimālet*, brought many local Christian military and non-military groups into the Ottoman fold. This process, in contrast to previous scholarly arguments, seems to have occurred willingly.<sup>205</sup> The first *Voynuk* register of Krusevac (Ott. Alacahisar) from 1455, shows that 1,850 *Voynuks*, in total, served

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<sup>204</sup> Halil İnalçık, *Fatih Devri Üzerine ...*, p. 143.

<sup>205</sup> Evgeni Radushev, “Ottoman Border Periphery (Serhad) in the Vilayet of Niğbolu, First Half of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century”, *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 34, pp. 155-156.

the Ottomans.<sup>206</sup> The conspicuous situation here is that Alacahisar region was recaptured by the Ottomans only two years earlier.<sup>207</sup> These Christian soldiers probably joined the Ottoman ranks during the conquest of the region. Also, these former soldiers, once they negotiated with the Ottoman state, helped them to capture cities and castles in a bloodless way. For example, the father of Manuş, who was a *Voynuk*, gave the fortress of Resava to the Ottomans. In return, he continued his military service under the Ottoman rule. Over time, his son Raduş took his father's place.<sup>208</sup>

From the chronicles, we learn that the *Voynuk* establishment dates back to the beginning of the Ottoman conquests. Moreover, one can argue that *Voynuk* organization was one of the main military establishments of the Slavic Balkan States in pre-Ottoman times (the *Martolos* organization, too, can be given here as an example). The *Voynuk* organization under the Ottoman administration, in this manner, is as old a military establishment as those such as the *yaya-müsellem*, *tımār* and lastly, *devşirme* systems. During the first stage of absorption into the Ottoman military establishment, they were active combatant groups, which always fought beside the timariot sipahis in campaigns. All of their military responsibilities were clearly indicated in the *kānūnnāmes*. Human resources for the *Voynuk* establishment was met by the local Christians who were suitable

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<sup>206</sup> MC. 36-03. Among the *Voynuks*, 821 of them were listed as *cebelü* (active warrior), 618 of them were as *voynuk*, 378 of them were as *kara* (another branch of *voynuk* institution) and lastly, 32 of them were listed as *doğancı* (falconer). Also, these examples can be found elsewhere. See: Halil İnalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerine...*, p. 169.

<sup>207</sup> Feridun Emecen, “Alacahisar”, *TDV*, vol. 2, p. 314.

<sup>208</sup> TT 21, p. 29: “*Manuş veled-i Radul atası Resava kalesi[n] vermiş*”.



for recruitment. The *Vlachs* also provided a large human resource for filling the ranks of the *Voynuk* organization.<sup>209</sup>

By analyzing the registers from the mid to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century we can infer that the total number of *Voynuks* (including reserves –*zevāids*–) in the Western flank of the Balkans exceeded several thousand men. The majority of these *Voynuk* groups were active warriors, who joined the Ottoman military campaigns.<sup>210</sup>

A large number of *Voynuk* groups, more specifically, attract our attention in the Smederevo region in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. According to the *tahrīr* register of Smederevo, dated the back to the 1470s, 70 *Voynuks* and their 234 *yamaks* (stewards), were under the service of the *sancak* beg in Smederevo.<sup>211</sup> Apart from those, there were also other *Voynuk* groups along the eastern bank of the Morava River. In total, 697 *Voynuks* were located in the Braničeva region in the same year.<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, 145 households were enlisted as *zevāid Voynuks*, which were considered as reserve troops in the *Voynuk* establishment.<sup>213</sup>

One of the crucial facts about the *Voynuks* in the Smederevo region is that their numbers increased over time. The register of Smederevo from 1516, shows that 409 *Voynuks* and their 1,683 *yamaks* were located in the region. Another 632 households were enlisted as *zevāid* / reserves.<sup>214</sup> The total number of these soldiers in the region in the 1470s were 1,001. On the other hand, the *Voynuk* numbers in the same region in 1516 had

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<sup>209</sup> Olga Ziroyević, *tursko vojno Uredjenje u Serbiyi 1459-1683*, pp. 162-165.

<sup>210</sup> Number of register which also include *Voynuks* give this number. See: MC 36-03, MC 76, MAD 5, MC.O090, TT 5, TT 16, TT 21. Also, for the estimated *Voynuk* numbers in the Eastern side of the Balkans, see: Radushev, “Ottoman Border Periphery...” pp. 162-165.

<sup>211</sup> “*Voynugān-i Livā-yi Semendire, tābi’-i Mirlivā-yi Semendire. Loçince? Voynukları dimekle ma’rūfdur. Sonra ‘İsa Beg zamanında yazılmıştır. Çeri-başlıların dahli yokdur. Hemān sancak begine hıdmet iderler.*” TT 16, pp 572- 581.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid, pp. 730-748. These groups were composed of 5 *lagator*, 210 *voynuk* and their 482 *yamaks*.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid, pp. 593-594.

<sup>214</sup> TT 1007, fol 126a- fol 197b.

doubled: 2,292 *Voynuks* were enlisted in the register. Over a period of 40 years, the importance and the usage of *Voynuks* in the Semendire region seems to have increased. Therefore, the *Voynuks* in this *serhad* region constituted one of the most important military institutions regarding Ottoman defense policies.

We do not have enough information concerning the number of *Voynuks* in other Western regions, particularly for the Bosnian region, in the late fifteenth century. However, the Imperial codes issued for the sanjaks in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, show us that certain *Voynuk* groups in the Bosnian region served as castle guards in the fortresses. According to *kānūnnāme* of Bosnia from 1516, 20 *Voynuks* from Senice and Yenipazar were obliged to serve as patrol guards on the roads. Furthermore, the *Voynuks* of Burud and Nartova served by rota in the frontier fortresses such as Akhisar and Sin. Also, the law implies that this practice had been implemented in earlier times.<sup>215</sup>

The *Voynuk* groups on the Western side of the Balkans, where the Ottomans continuously advanced, kept their original active military status over time. After the conquests of Serbia and Bosnia, new *Voynuk* groups joined the Ottoman ranks from the conquered places and integrated into the main *Voynuk* bodies. *Voynuks* in the Köstendil region, which lost its frontier feature after the conquests, not only kept their combatant

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<sup>215</sup> “Yenibazar ve Senice voynukları için İskender paşa ve Fıyruz Bey ve Yunus paşa emn-i Tarik için ihdas itdikleri varoşlarda ve Prinobi varoşında yiğirmişer nefer voynuk varub zikrolan varoşların her birinde evler yapub temekkün eyleyüb bekleyeler [...] Şöyle ki ol yollarda bir kimse helāk olsa veya mālī zāyi’ her hangi varoşa yakın olursa ol varoşı bekleyenlere tazmin etdireler deyü ümerā-i maziye ile bu veçhile mu’ahede etmişlerdir [...] Burud ve Nartova voynuklarından ellişer nefer voynuk uc yerlerinde olan kal’aları bekleyeler [...] Anaların nevbeti tamam olucak elli nefer voynuk dahi gelüb nevbeti tamam olan gidüb nevbete gelenler bekliyeler [...] Ve Sin kal’asın dahi elli voynuk bu üslub üzere bekleyeler [...] Varmayanlara siyaset ola akçaları alınmaya”, taken from: Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *XV ve XVI ıncı Asırlarda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ziraî Ekonominin Hukukî ve Malî Esasları*, (Istanbul, 1943), p.398. Also, the tahrir register of Hersek in 1477 shows that the fortress of Rog was guarded by Voynuk troops, TT 5, 183b. For the other *Voynuk* groups in Serbia, compare: Olga Zirojević, *tursko vojno Uredjenje u Serbiyu 1459-1683*, p. 165.

status but their numbers were also increased by the Ottomans.<sup>216</sup> On the other hand, the members of the same establishment lost their primary combatant status over time in the Eastern flank of the Ottoman Balkans. As military tensions decreased in the region, the Ottomans started to use them as auxiliary troops. However, continuous advances along the Western flank of the Balkans kept the *Voynuk* soldiers in these areas active and useful.<sup>217</sup>

### 3.2.2. Vlachs

*Vlachs* were one of the semi-military groups who lived in the frontier regions of the Western Balkans. Many Medieval states, including the Byzantine Empire, benefitted from their various military services. Their legal status, in this manner, was different from that of the other local populace.<sup>218</sup> They performed several services for the state, including those that were military in character, in exchange for certain tax exemptions or reductions.<sup>219</sup> Especially in the border zones, where continuous wars between the opponents emptied the area, the Ottomans encouraged these groups to settle and repopulate the region. Also, the Ottomans used these Vlach groups for various military purposes and integrated their actions into the main border defense policy:

In the 1470s, many areas in the border-*sancak* of Smederevo in Northern Serbia were deserted due to many battles with the Hungarians. In order to resettle desolate regions and secure the border, the Vlachs colonized the entire

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<sup>216</sup> In Kyustendil region, new combatant (*cebelü*) *Voynuk* units were established by the imperial decree sent by Bayezid II, in 1489-90. The number of these new *Voynuks* were 1,110, TT 21, pp. 145-210.

<sup>217</sup> D. Bojanić- Lukać, *Vidin I Vidinskiyat Sndjak prez 15 16 v* [The Town and the Sanjak of Vidin in the 15<sup>th</sup>- 16<sup>th</sup> c.], (Sofia: 1975), p.12.

<sup>218</sup> Vjeran Kursar, “Being an Ottoman Vlach: On Vlach Identity(ies), Role and Status in Western Parts of the Ottoman Balkans (15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries), *OTAM*, no. 34 (2013), p. 118

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

territory of the *sancak* of Smederevo and big parts of *sancaks* of Kruševac (Alacahisar) and Vidin. In the 1460s, the Vlach colonization began in eastern Bosnia, that is, Podrinje, a strategically important mining region along the river Drina. After the conquest of Herzegovina and the establishment of the *sancak* of Herzegovina in 1470, a large groups of Vlachs began to penetrate further into northeastern Bosnia, especially towards strategically important towns of Maglaj (Maglay), Tešanj (Teşne), and Doboj (Doboy), as well as Zvornik, Teočak, and Tuzla. It seems that the Ottoman conquest of Maglaj, Tešanj and Doboj was achieved with the considerable assistance of the Vlachs.<sup>220</sup>

Simply stating the number of Vlach households in the *sancak* of Smederovo in the 1470s can demonstrate their crowded existence in the region. In total, 7,660 Vlach households were enlisted in the tahrir register with a specific law which was written for them.<sup>221</sup>

Having the obligations be indicated as active combatant warriors in several *kānūns*<sup>222</sup>, *Vlachs* also had duties which included securing passages and transporting provisions for the fortresses. Such aforementioned obligations were clearly indicated in the *tahrīr* register of Smederovo in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. 30 *Vlachs* were exempted from all taxes, which were generally levied upon the Vlach communities. In return, they served the fortresses of Zvornik, Srebrenica, and others, which were attached to them.<sup>223</sup> Therefore, in total, 102 Vlach households in the village of İzvidište were obliged to watch and defend the area from any possible enemy incursions.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid, p. 130.

<sup>221</sup> TT 16, pp. 10-305; Kursar, “Being an Ottoman Vlach ...”, p 13. Also, there were 4616 Vlach households only in the sancak of Hersek in 1469. See, İnalçık, *Fatih Devri Üzerine ...*, p. 155- 156.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>223</sup> “*Mu’āfān-i ez-kānūn-i Eflakiyye: Zikrolunan Eflaklara hükm-i sultānī virilüb İzvornik ve Srebreniçe ve havāle kal’alarına hıdmet itdikleriçün Eflak rüsūmundan mu’āf itdim deyü Eflaklerdir*”, TT 16, p. 146.

<sup>224</sup> “*Nāhiyet-i İzvidište, tābī’-i Braniçeva. Bu nāhiyetin Eflakleri ol taraf muhāfat idüb öte tarafdan gelen düşmenin gözedürler. Sancak begine gönder hıdmetin itmezler*”, Ibid, pp. 144a – 145b.

### 3.2.3 *Martoloses* as tax exempted population

The military positions and services of the *Martoloses* as professional soldiers were examined in the above sections. Therefore, here we are concerned with other *Martoloses* that were exempted from some taxes. These groups of *Martolos* also served in the castles, performing various roles and in return for this type of service, they too, were exempted from certain primary taxes. As far as the Ottoman documents from the late fifteenth century indicate, these groups came from the outside Ottoman lands (Ott. *haymāne*) and settled down in or around the border castles. A group of *Martolos*, which consisted of 40 households came from the Hungarian side of the border and settled in Branicevo. They were exempted from certain taxes in return for their *Martolos* duties.<sup>225</sup>

### 3.2.4 Tax-Exempted Populations

A notable amount of the local populace in the *serhad* region was also involved in the defense of the borders, as well. One of the well-known examples regarding negotiations, through the initiatives of the residents in the fortress, was the event of

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<sup>225</sup> “*Martolosān-i Braniceva, kimesneye ra’iyyet olmayub ekseri öte taraftan istimāletle gelüb yalı muhāfazatıyçün ve martolosluk hizmetin itdikleriyle harāc ve ispenç ve ra’iyyet rūsūmun virmezler. Timār erin yerine ne ekerlerse ‘öşrün virürler’*”, TT 16, p. 351. Also, another *Martolos* group, which came from outside the empire’s borders, to the fortress of Zvornik was also exempted from the certain taxes, Ibid, p. 550.

Golubac (Ott. Güğercinlik). As Ottoman troops besieged the fortress in 1459, negotiations for surrender with the residents came to a conclusion. According to the negotiations, the residents would open the main gates of the fortresses to the besiegers and in return, the Ottomans would give certain privileges to the residents. The fortress commander, on the other hand, was informed about the negotiations and refused to surrender. He and the soldiers accompanied him to hold the citadel. The three lines of defense were taken quickly by the Ottoman troops with the help of the residents. The citadel, however, endured the siege for some time. At the end, the castle was captured by the Ottomans and the residents received their rewards, as promised: they continued to live in the fortress and they also were exempted from all taxes.<sup>226</sup> The *ahidnāme*/pact, which was given to the residents of Golubac by the Sultan Mehmed II constituted a basis for other future *ahidnāmes*.<sup>227</sup>

Secondly, along with the policy of *istimālet* the Ottomans, indeed, were in need of these peoples as the conquests proceeded in different ways and the state, territorially, grew enormously. Notwithstanding the fact that the Ottomans stationed limited numbers of garrison troops in the most important castles and demolished others after their conquest,

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<sup>226</sup> Ibn Kemal describes this event in detail: “*Pāşāy-i sa’īd, .... Güğercinlik didikleri hisārı şikār etmek havasına düşdi, ...Sābika hisār içindeki küffara el altından istimālet haberlerin gönderüp va’d-i kerīmle hisār içindeki le’imlerin kalblerin dönderüb celb etmişdi; kuleden taşra olan üç kat kal’ayı varulduğu gibi virecek olmuşlardı, onlarınla ‘akd-i ‘ahdi muhkem ve mübrem etmiş, andan üzerlerine gitmişdi. Leşker-i cerrār hisār karşısına konucak, kuleden taşra olan küffār itā’at etdiler, kal’anun üç katını yarāğ u yātiyle teslim idüb sağ esen, bī-havf u bīm çıkdılar gittiler.*”, *Tevārīh-i Āl-i Osmān*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>227</sup> The detailed information on this *ahidnāme* was given in the tahrir register of Semendire, in 1477/78: “*Nefs-i Güğercinlik, ellerinde berāt-i sultānī var. Elllerinde olan bāğlar ve bāğçelerine ve tarlalarına mutasarrıf olub harācdan ve ispenç ve ‘öşür virmekden ve cerāhörden ve salgūndan fi’l-cümle cemī’ ‘avārız ve tekālīf-i dīvānīyyeden mu’āf ve müsellemler olub emīn olalar. Oğullarına ve kızlarına ve tavarlarına dahl itmeyeler ve güçle nesnelerin almyalar ve martalosların esirlerin bekletmeyeler. Bunlar dahī idegeldikleri gibi kal’a-I mezkūrenin ve gemilerün meremmetine dürlü kulluğu olursa doğruluk ve dürüslük-birle yerine getüreler ve gece-gündüz on nefer kişi çıkarub bekleyeler ve anun gibi [...] oluncak mecmū’-i hisārın ve gemilerün meremmetine kulluğu olursa yerine getüreler. Dahi öte yakadan ve berü yakadan ne kadar harāc yazılmadık kâfir getirülürse anlar dahi bunlar gibi olalar. Bir dürlü dahi itmeyeler deyü.*”, TT 16, p. 382.

they found it necessary to employ local Christians in those castles. If not, “a large portion of the Ottoman army would have had to remain inactive in hundreds of fortresses throughout the Empire”.<sup>228</sup> *Martoloses*, for instance, were one of the typical military groups of that the Ottomans benefitted from in regards to populating and defending the castles. From the conquests of the Danubian region onwards, these groups accompanied the main garrison troops to the castles. Moreover, the Ottomans also found it necessary that the local populace and the residents in the fortresses should be involved in castle defense, in return for the exemption of certain taxes. Thus, the Ottomans ensured that they deployed enough defensive forces to the fortresses without separating their essential troops for their defense. This experience reveals one of the best examples of Ottoman policy in the border region and the nature of Ottoman *serhad* practices. In order to better understand this practice, an in-depth discussion of the status of the local populace and their change of status over time is given below. Thus, one may see the flexibility and pragmatism of *serhad* policy on the local populace, implemented by the Ottomans.

Ottoman *serhad* practices were already a functioning system in the reign of Mehmed II. This era was also characterized by a certain centralization policy of Mehmed II, which was clearly seen in the frontier regions of the empire, as well.<sup>229</sup> The practice and the term of *uc*, in this manner, started to fade from the scene. Border areas, which were always considered as separated regions from the center, were now tightly integrated into central administrative networks. Salaried garrison troops were replaced with *tımār* holding soldiers and their numbers were also increased. Over time, the main changes in

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<sup>228</sup> İnalcık, “Ottoman Methods of Conquest”, p. 107.

<sup>229</sup> Radushev, ‘Ottoman Border Periphery...’, p. 15.

terms of both the financial and military system for the defense of the border regions changed in favor of *'ulūfe* versus *tīmār*. When Mehmed II died, this change was already obvious, and then matured under the reign of Bayezid II.

The policy of integration, or the inclusion of the local populace within the duty of defense, also seemed to be *de jure* standardized in the mid-1450s. Every individual subject in the border area had a duty in accordance to their profession. Of course, this situation remained unchanged until there was considerable military tension along both sides of the Danube River,<sup>230</sup> and along the other frontier regions in Bosnia.

The series of *tahrīr* registers of the border sanjaks, such as Niğbolu, Vidin, Braniçeva, Semendire, and Bosnia, include detailed information concerning the active participation of the local populace in military services. In 1459, the fortress of Niğbolu was protected by 72 guards who received incomes from *tīmārs* for their permanent services.<sup>231</sup> Along with the *tīmār* holder guards, 269 residents in and around the fortress of Niğbolu participated in active military service, as well as with others who served in other fortresses:

The community of the servants in the fortresses of Niğbolu, Hulovnik, and Yergöği. In the beginning, they received a salary but later, that was suspended. They do not give the tribute and poll-tax but pay tithe and tax for their vineyards. They were exempted from all the levies. But, the *Martoloses*, on the other hand, do not pay tithe and other taxes.

The division of caulkers, 26 men.

The division of sailors, 36 men.

The division *Martoloses*, which watch the riverside, 12 men.

The division of carpenters and masons, 25 men.

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>231</sup> Halil İnalçık, Evgeni Radushev, Uğur Altuğ, “*Fatih Sultan Mehmed Döneminde Tuna Boyunda Osmanlı Düzeni*”, vol. I, fol 61b – 67b.



The division of carpenters, which serve for the ships, 7 men.

The division of crossbowmen, 28 men.

The division of gunners, 11 men.

The division of blacksmiths and gypsy blacksmiths, 17 men.

The division of ropemakers, 6 men.

The division of *Martoloses*, who serve for the fortress and sanjak beg send them for every duty, 54 men.

The division of crossbowmen in the castle of Hulovnik, 33 men.

The division of gunners in the castle of Hulovnik, 8 men.

The division of crossbowmen in the castle of Yergögi, 55 men.

The division of bow-makers, they are settled in the village called Gostina, around Lofça. They are exempted from of old, by the imperial decree [from the taxes], do not pay tribute and poll-tax. Annually they give 6.000 hand-arrows and 6.000 crossbow arrows to the fortress of Niğbolu, 6 men.<sup>232</sup>

As it can be seen from the list, the Ottomans used a large variety of groups to maintain the daily activity of the border fortresses. Although the permanent garrison number in the castle of Niğbolu seems limited, the real defense force in the castle exceeded 300. Also, most of the tax-exempted subjects in the castle served in technical duties that required specialties. The gunners, for instance, were one of the most requested sub-divisions in the Ottoman castles during this period.

The *tahrir* register of Braniçeva in 1466/67, includes detailed information about the participation of the local populace in the fortress defense. The castle of Gügercinlik, in this case, takes attention. Apart from the permanent garrison troops, there were 102 people in the castle that served it in different fields and were also paid by the Ottomans.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., fol 69a – 70a; Uğur Altuğ, “XV. Yüzyılda Balkanlar’da Osmanlı Kaleleri...” pp. 94-95.

<sup>233</sup> Among these 102 men: 43 of them were *Martaloses*, 40 of them were crossbowmen, 10 of them were arquebusers, 5 of them were carpenter and lastly, 3 of them were blacksmiths. See: Ibid., 272-273.

Furthermore, the residents of the castle, whose numbers were 70, were obligated to defend the fortress. In return, they were exempted from certain taxes.<sup>234</sup>

The register of Semendire, too, shows that İzvornik, the sanjak center and the main fortress in the province, had a tax-exempted and salaried population who were mainly constituted by *Martoloses*. 31 houses inside of the fortress were exempted from all taxes. In return, they served as *Martolos*. Also, their sons and brothers were exempted from the taxes, as well. In the castle, the other *Martolos* group, however, whose numbers was 86 received a salary.<sup>235</sup>

After the conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ottomans implemented a broad tax exemption policy<sup>236</sup>. The populace who lived around the castles was encouraged to

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<sup>234</sup>“*Sûret-i şehirlüyan-i kefer-i Gügercinlik kim ellerinde hükm-i şerifleri var haraç ve ispence ve ‘öşr vermeyüb ve avarıza karışmayub şehrin ve gemilerin hıfzında olalar.*” Ibid, p. 271. Also, the *tahrir* defter of the same castle in 1477 even gives more details. According to the register, here the list that shows all the salaried and tax-exempted populace of the Gügercinlik fortress:

*Martaloses*; receive a salary, each receive 2 akçes per day, 42 men.

The sons and brothers of *Martaloses*; 25 households.

Crossbowmen of the fortress, receive a salary; 40 men and a captain.

The sons and brothers of crossbowmen; 22 households.

Arquebusers of the fortress; each receive 2 akçes, 10 men.

The sons and brothers of arquebusers; 5 households.

Carpenters; each receive 2 akçes, 3 men.

Blacksmiths; each receive 2 akçes, 3 men.

Stonecutters for cannons; each receive 2 akçes.

Bowmakers; each receive 2 akçes, they give 5 bow in a year, 2 men.

The sons of carpenters and stonecutters; 7 men.

Masons; they are exempted [from taxes]. They do not give tribute and poll-tax, serve for the fortress, 15 men.

Crossbowmen and arquebusers whose salaries were suspended, there were taken as prisoners, but later they escaped; 6 households.

Tax-exempted population of the fortress; 85 households.

The Monastery quarter in the suburb of the fortress, they are exempted; 15 households.

In total: 102 salaried men, 180 tax-exempted households.” TT 16, pp. 750-754. Different from the register of 1467, the register of the year 1477 includes tax exempted sons and brothers of the residents. Also, the register mentions the salaries of the local populace in military service. Lastly, above the section, there is an imperial decree that ensured the privileges of the aforementioned groups, see: footnote 193.

<sup>235</sup> TT. 16, pp. 548-550.

<sup>236</sup> The edict which concerns their duties and exemptions:

“*Kral İli’nde ve Saray Ovası’nda ve Yeleç ve Hersek İli’nde ve Pavli İli’nde ve Kovaç İli’nde olan müsellemlerdir ki Bosna kalā’ları maslatiyyün konulmuşlardı. Cem’i ‘avārız-i dīvānīyyeden ve ispenç ve*

serve and perform various duties in the fortresses. The first detailed *tahrir* register of Bosnia (1467/68) shows that people served in the castles.<sup>237</sup>

Apart from the common defense of the fortresses, the local populace, who were located in the strategic passages and places outside of the castles, were also involved in some type of military services. The defense of the area, in this manner, was not limited to only one place, the fortress, but rather included whole areas near or around it. An effective operation radius of a border castle should be around 30 km. For instance, there was 50 km between the castle of Smederevo and the castle of Kulič (Ott. Koyluca) and 70 km with the castle of Golobac. The military personnel of the fortresses could not be located too far away from their bases and thus could observe a limited area in the border. A wide scope in the area, however, was out of the patrolling range that the fortress personnel could reach. Thus, the Ottomans employed the local Christians in those strategic passages. This implementation soon became an establishment called *derbend*, which spread empire wide, especially during the reign of Murad II. During the reign of Mehmed II, this system seems to have been well established.<sup>238</sup>

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*harācdan müsellemlerdir ammā oturdıkları yerde 'öşürlerin virürler anların esāmileri beyanındadır.'* MC 76, fol. 168a; Halil İnalcık, "Stefan Dušan'dan Osanlı İmparatorluğu'na XV. Asırda Rumeli'de hristiyan sipahiler ve menşeleri", in *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I*, V. edit. (Ankara: TTK, 2014), pp. 156-157.

Also, here the subdivisions of the local Christians who served in the Bosnian fortresses:

Masons: 88 men.

Blacksmiths: 24 men.

Carpenters: 12 men.

Crossbowmen: 2 men.

Gunpowder makers: 4 men.

Gunners: 3 men.

Others: 6 men.

Total: 137 house. See: MC 76, fol. 165a – fol 170a.

<sup>238</sup> Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Derbend Teşkilâtı*, revised II. Edition, (İstanbul: Eren, 1990), p. 21.

During the Winter War (1443-44) which was launched by Hunyadi Yanos, the *derbends* were used to help slow down the march of the Hungarian army. Therefore, Murad II sent edicts to those *derbends* who were located along the path of the approaching enemy. Received the orders, the military personnel closed the passages by constructing obstacles.<sup>239</sup> In the case of an emergency, as this example demonstrates, they were used to slowdown the movements of the enemy through the interior lands. On the other hand, their routine missions in the land were to secure the passages, keep the way always open and to accompany passengers.<sup>240</sup> Since the bazaar of Priboy<sup>241</sup> located in a strategic passage, its residents were exempted from certain taxes for their *derbend* duties.<sup>242</sup> Also, the village of Rabne, near the fortress of Blagay, was given a *derbend* statute, so that the residents of the aforesaid village were exempted from certain taxes for their watchman duties.<sup>243</sup>

Apart from the protected posts in the inner Ottoman territories, various locations along the banks of the Danubian river were surrounded by a network of tax exempted villages, whose duties were to serve ships, defend riverbanks and observe any hostile passages. Before the Ottomans built two new fortresses (Hram and Koyluca) between Semendire and Gügercinlik in 1483, an important section at the bank of the Danube river,

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<sup>239</sup>“...[K]üffār-i hākisārın geleceği yollar üzerinde her ne kadar derbendler var ise varub ulu ulu ağaçlar kesdürüb derbendleri bağlyasız. Gayri dürlü itmeyesiz deyü her yana fermānlar gönderüb ve fermān-i pādīshāhī üzere kudāt emr edüb küffār-i hākisārın yolu üzerinde her ne kadar derbend var ise ulu ulu ağaçlar kesüb derbendleri bağlamada.”, *Gazavāt-i Sultān Murād b. Mehemmed Hān...*, p. 44.

<sup>240</sup> Op. cit. 22.

<sup>241</sup> Today Priboj, Serbia.

<sup>242</sup> “Nefs-i Pazar-i Priboy, tābi’i-i Dobrun, Hane 101, mücerred 8, müsellemler 3... Zikrolan nefsi-i Priboy varoşı yol üzerine olub derbend münasebetinde oldukları sebebden tā evvelen cem’i ‘avārız ve tekālīf-i dīvāniyyeden mu’āf ve müsellemlerdir” . TT 18, (1486) p. 30.

<sup>243</sup> “Karye-i Rabne, tābi’i-i Blagay, hashā-yi hazret-i hüdāvendigār maktū’ filori virirler harācdan ve ispenden ve koyun ‘ādetinden ve sā’yir ‘avārızātdan mu’āf ve müsellemlerdir ammā oturdukları yerlerin ‘öşrin virürler ve Blagay derbendin sā’yir derbend köyleri gibi ‘ādet üzere beklerler, 78 hane 20 mücerred” TT 5 (1477), pp. 11-12.

which was 70 km in length, was not protected by any castle. Thus, this area was very vulnerable to enemy incursions. Also, as there were no watchmen in place, it was not difficult for the Hungarians to navigate the Danube river. As a result of this danger, the Ottomans assigned some villages located along the river bank to perform a watchman's duty. At the end of the 1460s, four villages located on the river bank were assigned to protect the river passages. The approximate distance between these villages was 10 to 15 km. The total number of household, which was obliged to serve in this mission was 217.<sup>244</sup> Over time, the defense section between the fortresses of Semendire and Gügercinlik was further strengthened by adding two new fortresses in 1483. Still, the number of villages, which were responsible for patrolling duty, did not change.<sup>245</sup>

One can infer, however, from the *tahrîr* register of the same region, which was written at a later period, that the tax exempted population responsible for patrolling duty, enlarged. In 1516, the *tahrîr* register of Semendire shows that the total number of tax-exempted villages between the fortresses of Semendire and Golubac was 15. Stationed a maximum 15 km away from each other, the members of 414 households served as watchmen along the bank of Danubian River, for a distance of 80 km in length.<sup>246</sup> As can be determined from the Smederevo *tahrîr* register of 1516, new comers were settled

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<sup>244</sup> The names of these villages as follows: Usije (Ott. Ustiye), Kisiļjevo (Ott. Kisaleva), Ram (Ott. Ram), Požeženo (Ott. Bojezen). Also, here is the imperial edict that concerns their duties and tax exemptions:

“*Karye-i Ustiye, hāssa-i mezkūr (padişah), tâbi’i-i Lucice. İpek’de kenar-i Tuna ispençe virmezler, öşür virürler Tuna kenar[ın] bekler*”.

“*Karye-i Kisaleva, hāssa-i mezkūr (padişah), tâbi’i-i Lucice. Harāc ve ispençe virmezler, kaçan öşür virüb, gemilere hüdmet iderler*”.

“*Karye-i Hram, hāssa-i mezkūr (padişah), tâbi’i-i Lucice. Harāc ve ispençe ve öşrün versün, raiyyet virmezler, gündüz gice yirmi nefer karaul bekler Tuna kenarında*”.

“*Karye-i Bojezen, hāssa-i mezkūr (padişah), tâbi’i-i İpek. Der kenar-i Tuna. Harāc ve ispençe virmezler, eveden eve bir kile buğday vireler ve balık öşrün vireler*”. İnalçık, Radushev, Altuğ, pp. 146-148.

<sup>245</sup> TT 16, pp. 358-360

<sup>246</sup> TT 1007, fol 171a.

and stationed in those areas. Settling new comers into the border zones, mostly *Vlachs*, was one of the primary Ottoman strategies that aimed to integrate aforementioned peoples with the border defense system. Thus, this local populace, further strengthened the defense in the border area, alongside the main network of fortresses within the zone.

According to the documents from the period, tax exemption from certain taxes was also given in return for providing various logistical products for the fortresses. Most of these included the provisions of ammunitions for the launching of weapons at the fortresses, such as bows, crossbows, and cannons. We can infer from the early *tahrīr* registers of the *serhad* regions in the Eastern Danubian *sancaks*, that plenty of villages near the castles were obligated to produce such ammunitions. The villagers in Gostina, for instance, annually gave 6,000 hand-arrows and 6,000 crossbow arrows to the fortress of Niğbolu.<sup>247</sup> In 1469, the residents of the village Bukovnik, near to the fortress of Golubac, also gave 10,000 arrows to the aforesaid castle.<sup>248</sup> Apart from the tax-exempted local populace, which provided arrows and bows for the certain castles, there were also other villages that produced stone balls for the artilleries in the fortresses. The *tahrīr* register of Semendire, which is dated to the year 1516, shows that 128 households in the village of Varvarin produced stone cannon balls for the all of the castles in the sanjak of Semendire.<sup>249</sup> In the late fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries, stone cannon balls were one type of ammunition that the Ottomans used widely for the defense of fortresses.<sup>250</sup> Those 128

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<sup>247</sup> İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, p. 60.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid, 274.

<sup>249</sup> “*Karye-i Varvarin, harācdan ve ‘ādet-i aġnāmdan ve ‘avārızdan mu’āf olmaġla Semendire sancaġında olan kal’alara top taşın virirler ve sāyir hükümī rūsūmī virirler, 128 hane*”, TT 1007, fol 30b- 31a.

<sup>250</sup> Salim Aydüz, *Tophāne-i Āmire ve Top Döküm Teknolojisi*, (Ankara: TTK, 2006), pp. 295- 297. Even in 1530s the stone cannon balls constituted the primary ammunition type for artilleries. The *tahrir* register of Semendire shows that there were 28.000 stone cannon balls in middle and large scale in the fortress

households, in this manner, kept an important place in the provision of stone cannon balls in the Smederevo region.

The data, which is taken from the archival documents leads us to the following results: first, the Ottomans aimed to incorporate the local populace along the Danube river border, since they needed the local residents desperately due to the fact that they captured vast areas and the defense duty of these conquered areas had to be implemented immediately. In this manner, the Ottomans encouraged the local populace to serve in the fortresses as technical personnel or, more broadly as guards. The local populace was not only exempted from certain taxes, they even received salaries from the Ottomans for such duties. This practice can be clearly observed along the Eastern side of the Danube River in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>251</sup> On the other hand, these groups were eventually pushed aside and over time, lost their initial privileges. This was due to the fact that the Ottomans formed a well-established *serhad* defense system in the border zones. Salaried troops, sent by the center, and new fortifications, which were filled with other Ottoman troops caused the loss of importance in terms of using the local populace in military terms. As the roles of the local populace on the eastern side of the Danubian *serhad* zone were faced with such a transformation, the western side of the Balkans (West of Morava River, Serbia, and Bosnia) experienced a similar transformation, as well. Sliding the borders towards the West or strengthening the already established network of fortresses in the border zone,

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inventory of Semendire. See: *MAD 506 Numaralı Semendire Livāsı Tahrīr Defteri (937/1530)*, (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009), p. 4.

<sup>251</sup> Radushev, “Ottoman Border Periphery...”, pp. 156-157.

were two important factors behind the elimination of privileges that were once given to the local populace.<sup>252</sup>

The privileges, which were granted to some groups in the *sancak* of Bosnia in 1466<sup>253</sup>, for example, were taken from them within ten years. Another register, that belonged to the *sancak* of Hersek<sup>254</sup> in 1477, shows that the local populace who once served in the fortresses of the *sancak* of Bosnia in return for tax exemptions, now became regular tax payers, by the imperial decree.<sup>255</sup> It seems that the Ottomans, in a way, replaces the status and importance of local populations with other military personnel. Also, since these tax-exempted populations served fortresses, such as Samabor and Visegrad, which were no longer considered as primary frontier castles in the 1470s due to new acquisitions toward the west, the Ottomans did not have a need for the duties of these peoples any longer. These areas, on the other hand, started to share the common characteristics with those located in the core regions of the empires. In this manner, the number of tax exempted population in Hersek (as in other former frontier regions) gradually decreased.

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<sup>252</sup> The Ottomans took the privileges from many of the villages in the *sancak* of Semendire. This can be clearly observed from the tahrir register of the *sancak* in 1477. For instance, 28 households in the village of Bogonik once gave 10,000 arrows and 18 arrow heads to the castle of Golubac before 1477. In return they were exempted from certain taxes. After that year, on the other hand, they became tax paying *re'aya*: “*Bunların yigirmi altı nefer okçuları yılda on bin ok Gügercinlik kal'asına virürlerdi. Ve iki neferi demürçiydi. On sekiz demrenin virürlerdi. Harâc ve İspenc ve 'öşür virmezlerdi. Defter 'arz olunduğı vakit timâra emr olundu.*”, TT 16, pp. 691.

<sup>253</sup> MC. 76.

<sup>254</sup> A separate *tahrir* register was written for the *sancak* of Hersek in 1477, since it was separated from the *sancak* of Bosnia. This new *sancak* was established in 1470.

<sup>255</sup> “*Cemâ'at-i bennâyân ve zenberekçiyân ve ahengerân ki şimdilik mu'âf ve müsellemler olup kal'alar mesâlihi için konulmuşlar imiş. Şimdiki halde ra'yyete emr olundular*”, TT 5, p. 551.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE COST OF THE OTTOMAN DEFENSE SYSTEM

The salary payments for thousands of guards stationed in the border fortresses in Rumelia was one of the crucial concern for the Ottomans. For centuries, the Ottomans could manage this burden because of their successful control over revenue sources in the whole of Rumelia, and also their ability to transfer funds to the soldiers in the frontier fortresses. The trend, which was characterized by the monopolization over potential revenue sources, seems to have begun during the reign of Mehmed II. In order to finance an effective fighting force and other types of salaried troops, Mehmed II implemented this policy.<sup>256</sup> In this era, along with the centrally paid *Kapıkulu* army, the Ottomans had to pay millions of *akçe* to those who were stationed in the frontier fortresses. However, although both *Kapıkulu* soldiers and frontier guards were paid in cash, the methods of payments for these two groups differed from each other. The salaries of the *Kapıkulu* soldiers were paid by the central treasury, the *hizāne-i ‘āmire*. On the other hand, since

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<sup>256</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, vol. I, pp. 53-54.

the salaried fortress guards were too far from the center, making it difficult to transfer the collected taxes to the frontier zones, the Ottomans used an empire wide known payment practice for those soldiers in the frontier zones known as *havāle*.<sup>257</sup> According to this system, the salaries of the guards or other military units were sent through other means of collecting money sources, mostly *muqata'as*, within the empire, located near the places where the payments needed to be made. After the payments were made, a report was issued and sent to the capital, documenting how much money was paid to the soldiers from these alternate revenue sources, so that the treasurers would know what amounts of income from these sources were left after the payment. The remainder of the taxes from these alternate sources, calculated by removing that which had been used to pay the soldiers, then had to be sent to the center.<sup>258</sup> Thus, any payments of salaries could easily be made without actually sending any *de facto* money from the central treasury. Rather, it was payment sheets, and not physical cash, which was shuttled between the *muqata'a* source and the capital. In fact, the allocation of the central treasury revenues to a particular field was the basis of the Ottoman policy of expenses. The allocation of *muqata'a* revenues for the expenses of the salaried fortresses in the Balkans was the most common example of this policy.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> The specific name which defined the expenses made via *havāle* was *masūbāt* in the Ottoman annual balances (bütçe). It must be indicated that these expenses, the *havāle*, did not appear in the yearly balances. Thus, the revenues which were written in the balances were always far from showing the actual revenues of the state. Baki Çakır, “Geleneksel Dönem (Tanzimat Öncesi) Osmanlı Bütçe Gelirleri”, in *Omanlı Maliyesi Kurumlar ve Bütçeler*, Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar (eds.) vol. I, (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2006), pp. 192-194. Also see: Ömer Lütü Barkan, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Bütçelerine Dair Notlar”, *İÜİFM*, no. 1-4 (1953), pp. 238-250.

<sup>258</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İdare ve Ekonomi Tarihi*, (İstanbul: İSAM, 2011), pp. 142-143; Baki Çakır, *Osmanlı Mukataa Sistemi (XVI-XVIII. Yüzyıl)*, (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), pp. 92-94.

<sup>259</sup> Erol Özvar, “Osmanlı Devletinin Bütçe Harcamaları (1509- 1788)”, in *Omanlı Maliyesi Kurumlar ve Bütçeler*, Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar (eds.) vol. I, (İstanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2006), pp. 197-198.

Although we have information that some of the fortress guards were already paid in cash by the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, the source of the payments is not indicated in the archival documents.<sup>260</sup> The documents belonging to the 1460s and 70s, on the other hand, provide enough information regarding money sources used for the payment of castle personnel. According to a *muqata'a* revenue register from the early 1470s, all payments for the frontier castles were made from local tax-sources in the Balkans. Mostly the revenues of mints, mines, salt-pans, and customs constituted the main source of payments. The Ottoman state gained a considerable amount of revenue especially from the revenues of mines in the Serbian region.<sup>261</sup> The payments for the soldiers in the frontier castles, therefore, could also be deducted from the revenues of mines located close to the fortresses in the 1470s.

<i>Muqata'a</i> Source <sup>262</sup>	Transferred to
Mines of Bala and Zir (p.7)	Zabljak, Smederevo, Livno, Istanbul
Rice Plants of Siroz and Karaferye (p.17)	Smederevo, Žrnov (Avala), Zvornik, Mistra, Lezhës
Salt pans of Hrošna, Gümülcine ve Karasu (p. 24)	Zvornik, Podgorice, Negroponte
<i>Muqata'a</i> of [...] (p. 42)	Erzen
Salt pan of Tuna (s.56)	Smederevo, Žrnov, Giurgiu, Turnu
Mine of Srebreniçe (s.68)	Zvornik, Zabljak, Soko Grad
Mine of Novabrda (p.69)	Kušlat, Zvornik, Smederevo, Žrnov

<sup>260</sup> In 1455, some groups in the fortress of Giurgiu were paid in cash. 52 guards received 225 *akçe* in total per day. See: İnalçık, Radushev and Altuğ, p.65. Also, another tahrir record from Skopje in 1455 shows that the crossbowmen received salaries, MAD 12, fol 164a.

<sup>261</sup> Halil İnalçık, *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 96-103. Also see: Halil Sahillioğlu, ‘‘Bir Mültezim Zimem Defterine göre XV. Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı Darphane Mukataaları’’, *İÜİFM*, XXIII, no. 1-4 (1962-1963), pp. 145-218.

<sup>262</sup> Ottoman Turkish names of these sources as follow: *Mukāta'a-i Ma'aden-i Bālā ve Zir*, *Mukāta'a-i Çeltük-i Siroz ve Karaferye*, *Memleha-i Hrošne ve Gümülcine ve Karasu*, *Mukāta'a-i Memleha-i Tuna*, *Ma'den-i Srebreniçe*, *Ma'den-i Novabrda*, *Ma'den-i Sidre Kapısı*, *Mukāta'a-i Rudnik*, *Memleha-i Selanik*, *Çeltük-i Filibe*, *Hashā-i Kastorya*, *Ma'den-i Belasiçe ve [?]*, *Ma'aden-i Yanova*, *Gümrük-i Gelibolu*, *İskele-i Gelibolu*, *Memleha-i İstanbul*, *Kavak*, *İnöz*, *Ahyolu*, *Silivri ve [?]*.

Mine of Sidre Kapısı (s.80)	Zvornik, Arkadia
<i>Muqata'a</i> of Rudnik (p. 140)	Ostrovce
Saltpan of Selanik (p.154)	Istanbul, Negroponte, Mistra, Korint, Petril, Smederevo, Žrnov, Arhos, Khlomoutsi, Karytania, Patras, Kalavryta, مقلو, كلير
Rice Plant of Filibe (p. 166)	Zvornik, Užice
<i>Hasses</i> of Kastorya (p. 176)	Lezhës, Kruje
Mine of Belasiçe (p.203)	Golubac, Perin Grad, Smederevo
Mine of Yanova (p.212)	Golubac
<i>Muqata'a</i> of [...] (p.228)	Doboj
Customs of Gelibolu (p.242)	Kilidbahir, Gelibolu, Sultaniyye, Mistra, Istanbul,
Port of Gelibolu (p.259)	Kilidbahir, Gelibolu, Sultaniyye, Istanbul, Galata
Salt pans of İstanbul, Kavak, İnöz, Ahyolu, Silivri and [...] (p. 289)	Harşova

**Table X: *Muqata'a* Sources and Money Transfers to the Salaried Fortresses in the Balkans (1477-78), According to MAD 176 (See: Map VI)**

The entire amount of payments for the frontier fortresses were made through the revenue collected from 18 *muqata'a* in Rumelia. The yearly salaries of the personnel residing within those castles were also made by different sources. The military personnel in the fortress of Smederevo, for instance, were paid by six *muqata'a* sources in 1477-78.

Since it is difficult to precisely determine the quarterly payments made to the castles *by muqata'a*, calculating the total amount of payments for the personnel of those castles in 1477 can provide a general overview of the costs required to finance the salaried fortresses in the Balkans. The total number of soldiers in all salaried fortresses in Rumelia was 5,539 (See: Table 1). We have information concerning the daily salaries of all of the guards located within these castles, as was indicated in the *muqata'a* register. In light of

this information, the total amount of money collected in order to pay the salaries of the guards was 7,622,288 *akçe* in 1477.

We do not have a series of continuous information recording the payments of military personnel residing in the castles after 1477. Nevertheless, it would not be presumptuous to argue that the same method of collecting and distributing payments continued during the following years. However, the source from which payment of salaries were made from did change over time. Moreover, as explained in the first chapter, the Ottomans followed a different network policy of fortresses after the 1480s, in terms of the types of payments made. Most of the fortresses in the frontier zone began to receive a regular salary rather than income allocated from the assignment of a *tımār*. The fortresses located in the inner zones or in relatively safe regions did continue to receive *tımār* revenues, however, as cash salaries came to be implemented for those serving within castles along the ‘front lines’, such as, for example, in many of fortresses in Bosnia, they began to receive ‘*ulūfe*’ instead. The new fortresses conquered in this era, especially along the Eastern side of Danubian section, Akkerman and Kilia, too, received regular cash salaries rather than incomes collected in the form of *tımār* revenues. Although we do not have sufficient archival sources that indicate the total payment for the fortresses in all of Rumelia, a roll-call from 1491 presents us with an indirect, but accurate total number of payments to those serving within the fortresses. This register includes information regarding semiannual payments to the related fortresses, the source of these payments and also the holders of the sources.

Source <sup>263</sup>	Castle and Soldiers	Holder of Source
Mint of Novobrdo	Prusac Toričan, Kamengrad, Zvornik, Žrnov (Avala), Smederevo, Ram, Počitelj	Radko veled-i Brayan
Mint of Kratova	Maglaj, Doboj, Harşova, Kulič , Kilia, Zvornik, Istanbul	Radko veled-i Proyan
Mine of Srebrenica	Srebrenica, <i>Teočak</i> , Soko Grad	Nikola veled-i Lika
Mine of Trepça	Imotska, Travnik, Prolosice, Kaštel	Mihail veled-i Andreya
Mines of Planina and Zaplanina	Vrh-Belice, Vranduk Susid (Gračanica region), Livno Beograd (Nevesinje), Herceg Novi, Klobuk, Sokol Grad (Dunave), Mavrik, Resava Monastery, Golubac, Rog	İstaye veled-i Branko
Customs, Tributes and and Saltpan of Novi	Risan	Knez Firtko
Saltpan of Selanik	Scutari, Zabljak, Podgorice, Medun, Užice, Krujë, Vinac <sup>264</sup>	Kirgor: merdum-i Mesih Paşa ve bākī şürekā
The Mine of Yanovo	Perin Grad, Maglič	Göre veled-i Yovan
Mine of Rudnik	Ostrovica	Nikola veled-i Marko
Saltpan and Port of Vidin	Vidin	Ahmed bin Hamza
1) Saltpan of Hroşne and Gümülcine 2) Saltpan of Hroşne and Gümülcine	1)Giurgiu 2) Turnu	1)Ahmed ve Kirgor 2) Todor
<i>Hasses</i> of Avlonya	Tepelenë, Vlorë	Dimo Milko
1) Fishery of Yanya city 2) Market taxes of Narda 3) The Saltpan of Narda	Kefalonia	1) Dimitri ve İsmail 2) Nikola Kakozi 3) Süleyman bin Abdullah
Salt pans of Ahyolu, İnöz and Kavak	Akkerman	Musa veled-i Eliya

<sup>263</sup> Ottoman-Turkish names of the *mukata'a* sources: *Dārü'l-darb-i Novabrda* (written as Nobri in the text), *Dārü'l-darb-i Kratova*, *Ma'den-i Srebreniçe*, *Ma'den-i Trepça*, *Ma'den-i Planina ve Zaplanina*, *memleha ve gümrük ve bāc-i kal'a-i Novi*, *Memleha-i Selanik*, *Ma'den-i Yanova*, *Ma'den-i Rudnik*, *Memleha ve İskele-i Vidin*, *Memleha-i Hroşne ve Gümülcine*, *Hashā-i Avlonya*, *Dālyān-i livā-i Yanya*, *niyābet ve ihtisāb-i Narda*, *Memleha-i Narda*, *Memleha-i Ahyolu*, *İnöz ve Kavak*, *Mahsūlāt-i cezāre-i Kefalonya*, *Memleha-i Avlonya*, *Memleha-i Tuna*, *İskele-i Gelibolu*, *Gümrük-i Galata*, *Mahsūlāt-i cezāre-i Marmara*.

<sup>264</sup> Information concerning the payments for the fortress of Vinac is recorded in another *muqata'a* register, however, the money source is same, KKd 4988, p.48.

1) Yields of Kefalonya Island 2) The Saltpan of Avlonya	1) Kefalonia 2) Vlorë	1) Kovaç ve bākī şürekāsı 2) Miħal ve Nikola
Saltpan of Tuna	Akkerman	Aħmed veled-i Ĥamza
Port of Gelibolu	Gelibolu	Ya'kub, Davud veled-i İshak
Customs of Galata	Galata	Ali
Yields of Marmara Island	İstanbul	Yusuf veled-i Ĥacı Ali

**Table XI: *Muqata'a Sources and Money Transfers to the Salaried Fortresses in the Balkans (1491), According to MAD 15334 (See: Map VII)***

The fortresses were grouped in connection the source of their payment and the distance or proximity between the fortresses and the *muqata'a*. Most of the fortresses in Albania and Zeta, for example, were financed by the *muqata'a* of the Saltpan in Selanik. On the other hand, fortresses located in Bosnia and Serbia were financed by the mints and the mines located in the same regions. Moreover, the castles situated along the eastern edge of the Ottoman Balkans were financed by both the salt pans and other *muqata'as* positioned close to the region. In this manner, the distance was one of the primary factors, which determined the financing of a castle with a *muqata'a*.<sup>265</sup> Secondly, if the revenue of a *muqata'a* was substantial enough to finance the payment of fortresses whose garrison troops were quite sizable, that *muqata'a* would be chosen for this practice. For instance, the financing of the largest fortresses in Rumelia, particularly in Serbia and Bosnia, was made *via* the *muqata'as* of Mint in Novabrdo and Kratova and mine in Zaplania. The *muqata'a* of Mint in Novabrdo maintained a special place for the financing of large

<sup>265</sup> This kind of payment pattern seems to continue after 1491. Most of the fortresses in Albania and the newly conquered ones in the Morea were financed by the saltpan of Selanik. See: KK. 4988, fol 11b- 25b. On the other hand, since the register does not include information about the revenues of the mint and mine *muqata'as* in Serbia, most of the salaried fortresses do not appear in the register. Thus, the financing of the castles in Serbia and Bosnia was provided from the aforementioned *muqata'as* in the region.

fortresses in the Serbian region due to its relative closeness to the fortresses and its huge revenue.<sup>266</sup> Therefore, we can calculate that in 1491, the total amount of money paid for all the salaried fortress troops in Rumelia was 13,293,762 *akçe*.<sup>267</sup> Over a 12-13 year time span, the total payment to castles in Rumelia had nearly doubled. This was, of course, primarily due to the addition of newly conquered regions and the incorporation of new castles into the '*ulūfeli*' status.

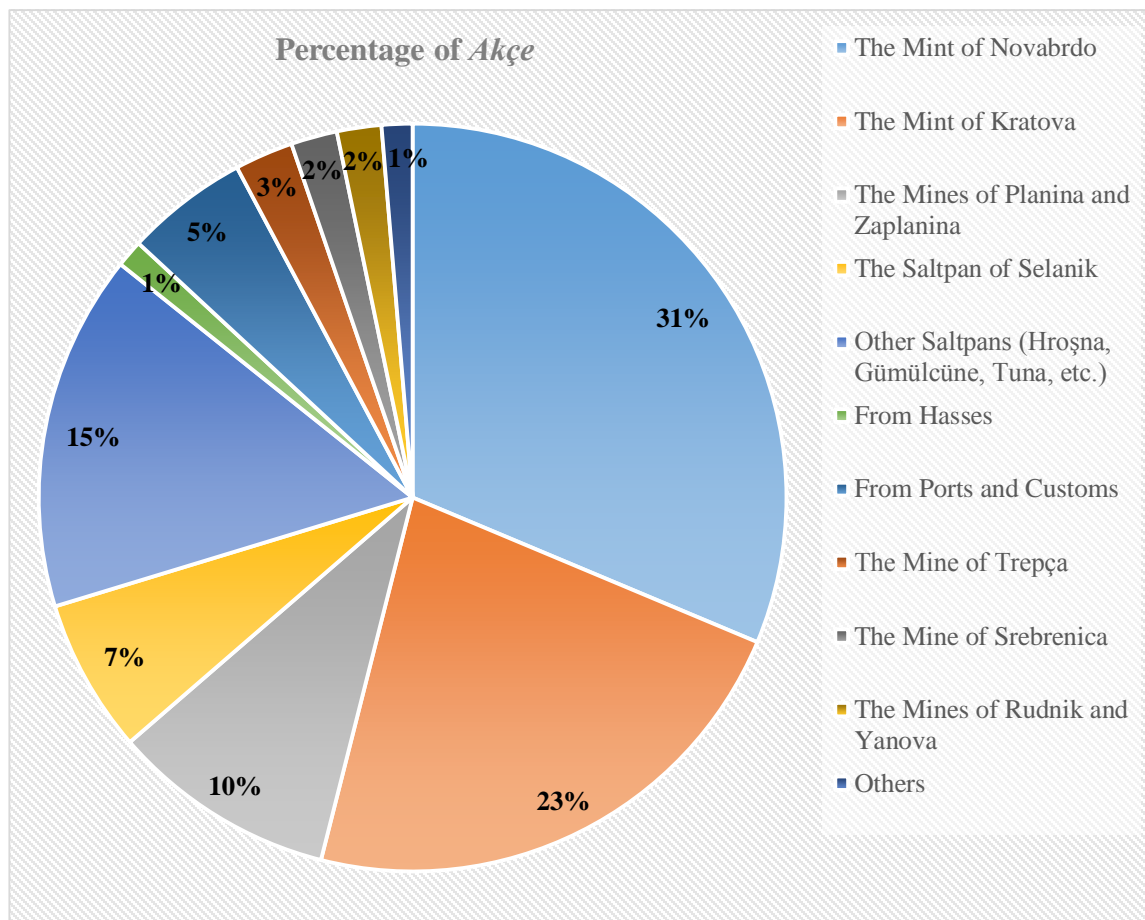
By using the information provided by the roll-call of 1491, it is possible to calculate the percentage of money sent from different *muqata'a* sources. As the register includes payments made for six month periods, the data is available only for those made payments in a half year. If we accept that the money sources did not change during the remaining 6 months of the year, we can determine the yearly payments, as well.

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<sup>266</sup> Even in 1468, expected revenues of the mines in Novabrdo for three years was about 8,000,000 *akçe*. See: Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, p. 98. Also, three years' revenue from the mint *muqata'a*s in Novabrdo, Skopje and Serres reached 23,400,000 *akçe* in 1481, Halil Sahillioğlu, "Bir Mültezim Zimem Defterine göre XV. Yüzyıl Sonunda Osmanlı Darphane Mukataaları" p. 167.

<sup>267</sup> The register shows the payments for a half year. Since we know the daily wages of the soldiers in the fortresses, the calculation was made by me. Of course, there might be some, but not radical, fluctuations which are not reflected in these calculations.





**Table XII: *Muqata'a* Sources and the Amount of *Akçe* Sent to the Fortresses in 1491<sup>268</sup>**

68-69% of the total salaries paid were financed by the income from the *muqata'a*s of mints and mines, located in the Serbia and Bosnia. Also, the majority of the money was sent to the fortresses that were located along the Hungarian border. For instance, the total amount of money, which had to be paid to the guards in the fortress of Smederevo, in one year, reached 2,302,416 *akçe*.<sup>269</sup> Thus, the Mint of Novabrdo itself had enough revenue to undertake the expenses of most important network of fortresses in the Hungarian border.

<sup>268</sup> MAD 15334.

<sup>269</sup> MAD 15334, fol 29 – 34, 56 – 57.

Over the years, the Ottomans captured new fortresses in the Morea region. The Ottoman – Venetian War (1499-1503) resulted in a major Ottoman victory. As a result of this victory, the Ottomans captured most of the Venetian fortresses in the region and added seven new castles under their control. More than 4,000 new guards were stationed at these castles and all of the guards were paid in cash. In addition, there were also other castles in the region whose guards' salaries were paid in cash during the war (See table 3). The financing issue of these fortresses was resolved with funds transferred from the Saltpan of Selanik. Since the revenues of the Saltpan of Selanik were enough to cover the expenses of these castles, and it was also considered near enough to the delivery points, the Ottomans choose this *muqata'a* as the main financial supplier for the newly conquered fortresses.<sup>270</sup> According to the *muqata'a* register of the Saltpan of Selanik, below is the list that illustrates the newly conquered or built castles, along with the already extant ones, and the total projected money sent to the castles between 1500-1502<sup>271</sup>:

Castle	Date of Conquest	Beginning of the Payment	Annual Payment	Type of Conquest or other details
İnebahtı	28. 08.1499	02.1500	1.038.990	By force
Moton	09.08. 1500	10.1500	1.245.372	By force
Koron	04.09.1500	05.1501	1.009.608	Surrender
Anavarin	28.05.1501	01.1502	613.836	By force
Draç	03.09.1502	12.1502	616.485	By force
Ayamavra <sup>272</sup>	Before 1502	01.1502 <sup>273</sup>	115.150	By force

<sup>270</sup> In 1499, the total sum of the *mukata'a* price for three years which was sold to two contractors equaled to 12.910.000 *akçe*, KK 4988, fol. 18.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid, fol 18a – 22b. The results of these calculations is based on the daily salaries of the soldiers in the aforesaid castles. Any other factors that might have affected the calculations were not included.

<sup>272</sup> There is only the information of *'azab* troops in the register. Other groups of soldiers could not be found.

<sup>273</sup> The castle of Aya Mavra would be given to the Ottomans after the peace negotiations on 25. 12. 1502. However, the Ottomans already held the castle in 1502. For the final peace agreement, see: Hans Theunissen, *Ottoman-Venetian Diplomats: the 'Ahd-names. The Historical Background and the Development of a*

Voniçe	-	01.1502	71.862	Already taken
Balya Badra	-	Beginning of 1500	189.388	Already taken
Burgaz-i Cedid <sup>274</sup>	18.10.1499	05.1500	447.156	Newly built
Gördos	-	02.1500	328.464	
<b>Total</b>			<b>5.430.223 akçe</b>	

**Table XIII: List of Fortresses in Morea which Were Paid by the Muqata'a of Selanik Saltpan, 1500-1502<sup>275</sup>**

After the war of 1499-1503 against Venice, the Ottomans had to finance both the new and extant fortresses in the Morea region. Of course, the most important aspect of this war for the Ottomans was the acquisition of a reputation as the current supreme power in the region, which held most of the strategic fortresses in the area. On the other hand, the annual upkeep cost of the military personnel in those castles exceeded 5,000,000 *akçe*. Nevertheless, the *muqata'a* of the salt pan in Selanik seemed financially profitable enough to afford this sum. Furthermore, the Ottomans had to pay a sum, which in total, exceeded 18,000,000 *akçe* to feed the personnel in the fortresses by the beginning of the sixteenth century. This figure emerges when the total nominal sum of expenses for the fortresses in the Morea region as well as the other salaried fortresses in the Balkans, are combined.<sup>276</sup>

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*Category of Political-Commercial Instruments together with an Annotated Edition of a Corpus of Relevant Documents*, (Utrecht: Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht 1991), pp. 377-399.

<sup>274</sup> 200 more 'azeḅ troops were stationed in the castle by the imperial decree in December 1502: “*Cemā'at-i rü'esān ve 'azeḅān ki berā-yi muḥāfazat... Burgaz-i Cedid der nāhiye-i Balya Badra 'an gurre-i Receb sene 908 ila temām-i Ramazan sene-i mezbure fi 24 Ramazan sene-i mezbure, 200 neḡeren, 60.874 akçe.*”, KK 4988, fol 22a.

<sup>275</sup> KK. 4988.

<sup>276</sup> Some of the fortresses, which can be found in the roll-call of 1491, were still being paid in the end of the 1490s and at the very beginning of the sixteenth century. Thus, the total sum of 1491 should be more or less same for the years ahead. For instance, the register shows that most of the fortresses in Albania and in other

The expenses for castles made through the *hāvāle* system did not appear in the Ottoman annual budgets, especially in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Only the budget of the years 1527-1528 for the first time records the expenses for these salaried fortresses.<sup>277</sup> In fact, these budgets were far from stating the actual revenues of the Ottoman State. The revenues in the budget of 1527-28 constituted only 46% of the general revenues of the whole empire. The revenues can be considered as *de facto* cash income to the *hizāne-i ‘āmire* in a certain year.<sup>278</sup>

The salary payments in the budgets only covered the salaries of the imperial troops, the *Kapıkulu*, who were mostly stationed in the capital. Although there are some arguments that the salaries (*mevācibāt*) also cover the expenses (*mesārif*) of the personnel in the fortresses<sup>279</sup>, one should be aware of the fact that this argument can only be valid for budgets prepared after 1527. To prove this claim, we will compare the budget expenses of 1495-96 and 1509-10 through the cash payments for the salaried garrison troops in the Balkans between 1491 and 1502.

A recent study of Çakır, which was based on the oldest known budget produced in the Ottoman Empire (1495-1496), gives us the earliest example of the revenue and expense structure of the Ottoman central treasury.<sup>280</sup> According to this budget, in 1495-96, the total money gathered in the central treasury was 64,088,386 *akçe*. On the other

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regions were paid from 1491 to 1505; Ibid, fol 1a – 18b, 46b – 49a, 70b – 71b, 73a – 75b. Moreover, the payment practices seemed to continued for years. Our projected sum for the beginning of the sixteenth century, in this manner, is very close to the real figures. Most probably the Ottomans had to pay at least 18,000,000 *akçe* per year for the salaried garrison troops in the whole of Rumelia.

<sup>277</sup> Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “H. 933-934 (M. 1527-1528) Mali Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe Örneği”, *İÜİFM*, XV, 1-4 (1953-1954), pp. 251-329.

<sup>278</sup> Baki Çakır, “Geleneksel Dönem (Tanzimat Öncesi) Osmanlı Bütçeleri”, p. 167.

<sup>279</sup> Erol Özvar, “Osmanlı Devletinin Bütçe Harcamaları (1509- 1788)”, p. 213.

<sup>280</sup> Baki Çakır, “Osmanlı Devleti’nin Bilinen En eski (1495-1496) Bütçesi ve 1494-1495 Yılı İcmali”, *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. XLVII (2016), pp. 113-145.

hand, the total expense of the central treasury was 53,443,321.<sup>281</sup> Although we do not have information concerning the expenses for the salary payments of the *Kapıkulu* army in that year, it is obvious that the payments for the salaried garrison troops were not included in this budget. First of all, the central treasury received 10,991,876 *akçe* in revenue from *muqata'as* in Rumelia.<sup>282</sup> Our findings show that the total amount of money, paid to the salaried garrison troops *via* the *muqata'as* in Rumelia, exceeded 13,000,000 *akçe* in 1491.<sup>283</sup> Thus, one should notice that the *muqata'a* income in the budget did not represent the total revenue within the Empire. Most probably, around 13-14,000,000 *akçe* were paid to the garrison troops *via* *muqata'a* revenues in 1495-96, as well. The rest of the money, which remained after payments made to the garrison troops (*bakiyye*), was sent to the central treasury. When considered from this point of view, the optimal revenues of the *muqata'as* in the province of Rumelia should have been around 23-24,000,000 *akçe* in 1495-96. Therefore, this suggests that the Ottomans allocated more than half of the total *muqata'a* revenues towards financing salaried garrison troops in the Balkans. Also, it can also be stated that the money, which was paid to the aforesaid guards, equaled 1/5 of the total revenue coming from Rumelia.<sup>284</sup> Of course, this revenue loss was not reflected in the *de facto* income to the treasury. Nevertheless, this percentage is important in terms of showing the position of the salaries of the fortress personnel compared to the general state incomes from Rumelia.

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid, p. 129.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid, p. 129.

<sup>283</sup> Thesis page 76.

<sup>284</sup> The total amount of revenue, which came from Rumelia was 55,532,933. The income that came from Rumelia in 1493 was lower. It was 47,163,113 *akçe*, such that the budget in that year had a deficit, which equaled to 2,511,466 *akçe*, Ibid, 124-129.

The budget of 1509-1510, also does not include the salaries of the guards in the frontier zones. However, it mentions the total salaries paid to the *Kapıkulu* army and to other servants in the capital. For instance, the total expenses for these salaries totaled 35,274,340 *akçe* in the budget. This sum should have been paid to the *Kapıkulu* army in the capital. The earliest roll-call register of the *Kapıkulu* army in 1512 supports this argument,<sup>285</sup> where the total salary paid to the *Kapıkulu* army was 30,619,146 *akçe*.<sup>286</sup>

In the budget of the years 1509-1510, the total expenses for the salary payments were 35,274,340 *akçe*. Two numbers (1512 payment and 1509 salary expenses) seem to mesh together. Also, as it has been already mentioned, the total sum, which had to be paid for the garrison guards, could not have been less than 18,000,000 *akçe*, even in the beginning of the sixteenth century.<sup>287</sup> Thus, the expenses for the salaried troops in the fortresses were not included in the 1509-10 budget. Moreover, the total *muqata'a* revenues do not appear in the budget, either. According to the budget, the total *muqata'a* revenues that came from Rumelia were 17,242,664 *akçe*.<sup>288</sup> As we know, however, payments had been continuing in the Morea and other regions, even in 1509.<sup>289</sup> Thus, besides the *de facto muqata'a* revenues sent to the central treasury, there should also be at least a further 18,000,000 *akçe* that did not enter into the *hizāne-i 'āmire*. Rather, this sum was allocated as a salary to the guards in the fortresses.<sup>290</sup> Therefore, in the first decade of the sixteenth

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<sup>285</sup> MAD 23. Agoston used this register to calculate the total number of Janissaries. He omitted the total number of *Kapıkulu* troops in the register. The actual number of the whole *Kapıkulu* army was 20,232. MAD 23, fol. 1b. Also for the article, see: Gabor Agoston, "Information, Ideology and Limits of Imperial Policy: Ottoman Grand Strategy in the Context of Ottoman Habsburg Rivalry", Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman (ed.), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 75 – 103.

<sup>286</sup> MAD 23, fol 1a – 1b.

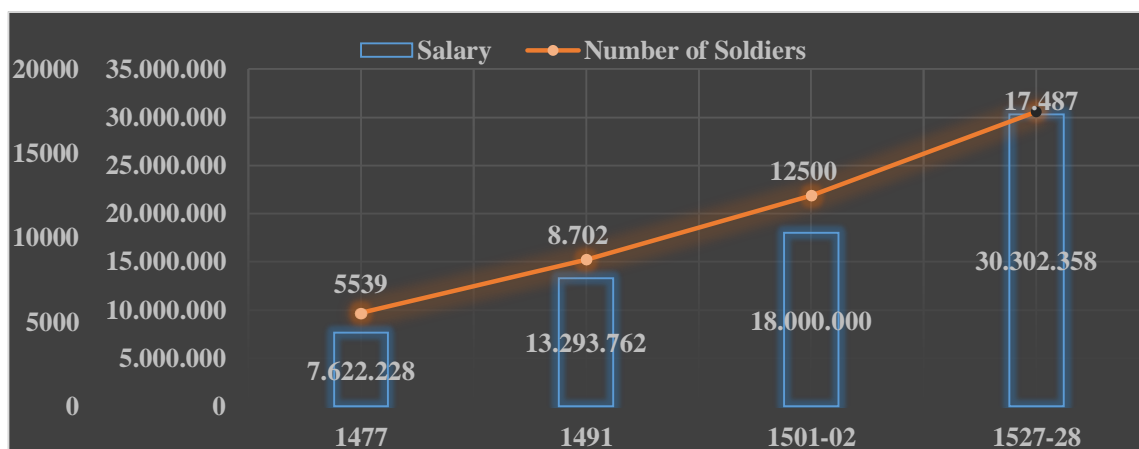
<sup>287</sup> Thesis, page 80.

<sup>288</sup> Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar (eds.), *Omanlı Maliyesi Kurumlar ve Bütçeler* vol. II, pp. 22-23.

<sup>289</sup> KK. 4988, fol 25.

<sup>290</sup> The total *mukata'a* revenue in Rumelia can be estimated around 35.000.000 *akçe* in 1509-1510.

century, at least 50% of the total *muqata'a* revenues of Rumelia were paid as salary to the frontier fortresses. Even if this was not recorded in the official state budget, the salary payments for the fortresses in Rumelia can be estimated as having consisted of 30% of the total revenue of Rumelia in 1509-1510.<sup>291</sup>



**Table XIV: Number of Garrison Troops and the Salary Payments (Nominal Value)<sup>292</sup>, 1477 – 1528<sup>293</sup>**

As the table above shows us, the number of salaried garrison troops reflects a general tendency to consistently rise. The increase in the number of salaried garrison troops over the years directly affected the amount of *akçe* that had to be paid. New conquests and the

<sup>291</sup> Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar, p. 22.

<sup>292</sup> The data for 1477 is taken from MAD 176; the data for 1491, MAD 15334; the data for 1501-1502, KK.d. 4988; the last data is given for the comparison and the change of the borders after the Battle of Mohac (1526), Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “H. 933-934 (M. 1527-1528) Mali Yılına Ait Bir Bütçe Örneği”, *İÜİFM*, XV, 1-4 (1953-1954), p. 282.

<sup>293</sup> The Tahrir surveys of Bosnia and Semendire *Sancaks* which were prepared in 1530 shows that most of the garrison troops were deployed in the newly conquered fortresses. The number of salaried garrison troops only in the *sancaks* of Semendire and Bosnia was 11.105. It means that % 60 of the garrison troops located in the Hungarian border. The Ottomans had to pay annually 18.947.296 *akçe* for these soldiers. MAD 506 Numaralı Semendire Livâsı İcmâl Tahrîr Defteri (937/1530), pp. 5 - 44 (transliteration part); 91, 164, MAD 540 ve 173 Numaralı Hersek, Bosna ve İzvornik Livâları İcmâl Tahrîr Defterleri (926 – 939 /1520 – 1533), vol II, pp 218 – 219.

expansions of the cash payment policy in the fortresses were the main reasons behind this trend in the increase in both the number of garrison troops and the amounts regarding their salaries. The number of garrison troops of the years 1527-28 was the peak of growth for the province of Rumelia. After the annexation of Central Hungary by the Ottomans in 1541, most of the garrison troops would be stationed in the castles along the Habsburg border.

The centralization tendencies of the state during the reign of Mehmed II have also reflected frontier zones. The standard practice, which can be defined as the proliferation of the cash payment system for the garrison troops in frontier fortresses, materialized due to of the successful initiatives of Mehmed II in controlling sources of revenue. The extension of the *muqata'a* system throughout the empire ensured enough financial support to Mehmed II's penchant for continuing his military campaigns and for feeding the garrison troops, whose numbers grew day by day.

The *havāle* system, which can be defined as the allocation of certain revenues to related areas without sending *akçe* from the central treasury, was the basis of the payment method for the salaries of the guards in the fortresses in the province of Rumelia. Before passing the practice of *ocaklık* in the seventeenth century, this system would remain functional. Long before the conquest of Hungary and the formation of a new network of defense systems e against the Habsburg Empire, the Ottomans already knew how to maintain a working and extensive defense system. Between the 1470s and 1502, the economic policy of financing border fortresses in Rumelia was a well working and self-sustained system. By allocating half of the *muqata'a* revenues for the salary payments of garrison troops, which equaled 1/5 of the total income from the province of Rumelia, the



Ottomans succeeded in building a network of fortresses whose system would be a model for those that emerged after the conquest of Hungary.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

The Ottoman state, during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, is characterized by both the aggressive offensive policies of Mehmed II, in particular towards the West, while also maintaining an impression of continuously following an offensive military strategy against their neighboring states. There is also a common argument among historians that the first frontier organization established by the Ottomans occurred after the fall of Hungarian kingdom into Ottoman hands after 1541. The argument here rests on the idea that it was at this time that a network of fortresses with thousands of salaried garrison troops was instituted by the Ottomans. In contrast, as has been argued, this thesis asserts that the Ottomans already had a well-established frontier organization by the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century.

The first chapter of this thesis argued that the Ottoman Balkan frontier was protected by tens of fortresses, with thousands of salaried garrison troops, that stretched from the Peloponnes region to the Adriatic Coast, as well as from Bosnia to Moldavia by

the 1470s and 1480s. A frontier stretched across thousands of miles and constituted a defensive area that was organized by several overlapping defense elements. The first layer of the defense system was constituted by a network of fortresses, which were interdependent on each other. This network of fortresses was divided into two groups, in accordance with Ottoman payment practices. The garrison troops of the fortresses located along the first line of defense, physically closest to the border, received a salary. Their salaries were paid by those *muqata'as*, which were close to the frontier castles. These fortresses were located in the most strategic places along the frontier area. On the other hand, the second network of the fortress line was located behind that of the first. Compared to the castles in the first line, these fortresses were located in the inner zones of the frontier regions. Thus, their payment practices were different, as well. All of the garrison soldiers in this category received their payments from *timār* revenues. The categorization of the network of fortresses, as explained above, became the principal means of standard Ottoman frontier organization in the late fifteenth century. The primary sources provide a substantial amount of evidence that conclude that this system started to become a standard practice in the 1470s. On the other hand, we are quite sure that the Ottomans were more experienced in the 1490s compared to 1470s.

The first chapter revealed that there were similarities between the Hungarian and the Ottoman network of fortresses in terms of the organization. It is not possible to answer whether the Hungarians affected the Ottomans in establishing such a network of fortresses or *vice versa*. The proper answer would be both! It is a known fact that the Hungarians began to organize their southern defenses against the Ottomans in the 1430s. However, the Hungarian frontier defense system emerged in its final form by the 1470s, during the

reign of Mathias Corvinus (1458-1490). Moreover, the Ottomans were busy organizing their own network of fortresses in Serbia and Bosnia, at the same time (the 1470s). The simultaneous developments by both sides, in the context of defense organization, was the signal of a 'relative' peace time between the Hungarians and the Ottomans, which last until 1521.

The second chapter tried to analyze the administration and the hierarchy within the fortresses. The composition of the castle guards and the subdivision of the service groups was well clarified in the context of the fifteenth century. Also, auxiliary troops, local populace and their participation in the defense organization were dealt with. There were three significant aspects of this chapter. Firstly, as the archival documents show, the usage rate of firearms in the fortresses was extremely high. 80% of the salaried castles in the Balkans contained firearms and the technical personnel who used them. Secondly, although both some historians and chronicles assert that there was a considerable number of janissaries stationed at the castles in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, this argument does not reflect the facts. Based on archival documents, the total number of Janissaries in the fortresses only totaled 2% of the overall salaried garrison troops in 1490-91. Thus, stationing the members of *Kapıkulu* troops in the frontier fortresses was not a frequent practice in the context of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The third aspect addressed in this chapter was the active participation of the local populace and some auxiliary troops in the Ottoman frontier organization. Along with the professional garrison troops, the population served the castles in certain capacities in exchange for the reduction or exemption from specific taxes. New findings and analyses in this thesis concerning Ottoman flexibility and

*istimālet* policies along the frontier zone and the use of auxiliary troops (*Martoloses*, *Voynuks*, and *Vlachs*) can be regarded as a new contribution to the field.

Examining and analyzing the mechanisms and practices of the Ottoman financing policy for the salaried troops in the fortresses is a small contribution to the field in the context of military financing of the Ottoman fortresses in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

There were also problematics that this thesis could not address. First all, the absence of primary sources regarding the roll-calls and *muqata'as* in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, hinder us from making a complete series of tables concerning changes in the number of garrison troops and their salaries over years. Furthermore, there is a lack of 15<sup>th</sup>-century archival documents concerning the provision and ammunition of the fortresses. Feeding thousands of garrison soldiers in distant areas and providing ammunition for the defense of the fortresses should have been one of the most crucial concerns of the Ottomans. Unfortunately, we will not be able to conduct research regarding this issue until further evidence is found.

In conclusion, studies analyzing Ottoman frontier organization, in terms of a network of fortresses, generally focus on the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. This comprehensive study, instead, will provide a comparative analysis concerning the Ottoman network of fortresses in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, to those in 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the general developments and transformations in a comprehensive way.

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## **APPENDICES**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني  
 في مدينة دمشق بين رجلين من أهلها هما...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم  
 هذه هي القصة التي حدثت في سنة ١٢٨٤ هـ في شهر ربيع الثاني...

وہم و ہما

منشی کو اندازہ دے کر پیشہ جو دیکر کہ وہ خوارق لایا ہے ڈنڈہ دیا ۸۸۴

مجلس

زیر کتب خانہ مالو لوٹو زمرہ ۱۱۳/۱

WALL  
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 او دنه ولسه مال الله او هوزر  
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امیر و بیگم کی خدمت میں اپنی اچانک آمد کا خبر دیا۔

م. الي. ر. م. ر.

سید محمد علی  
دستیار  
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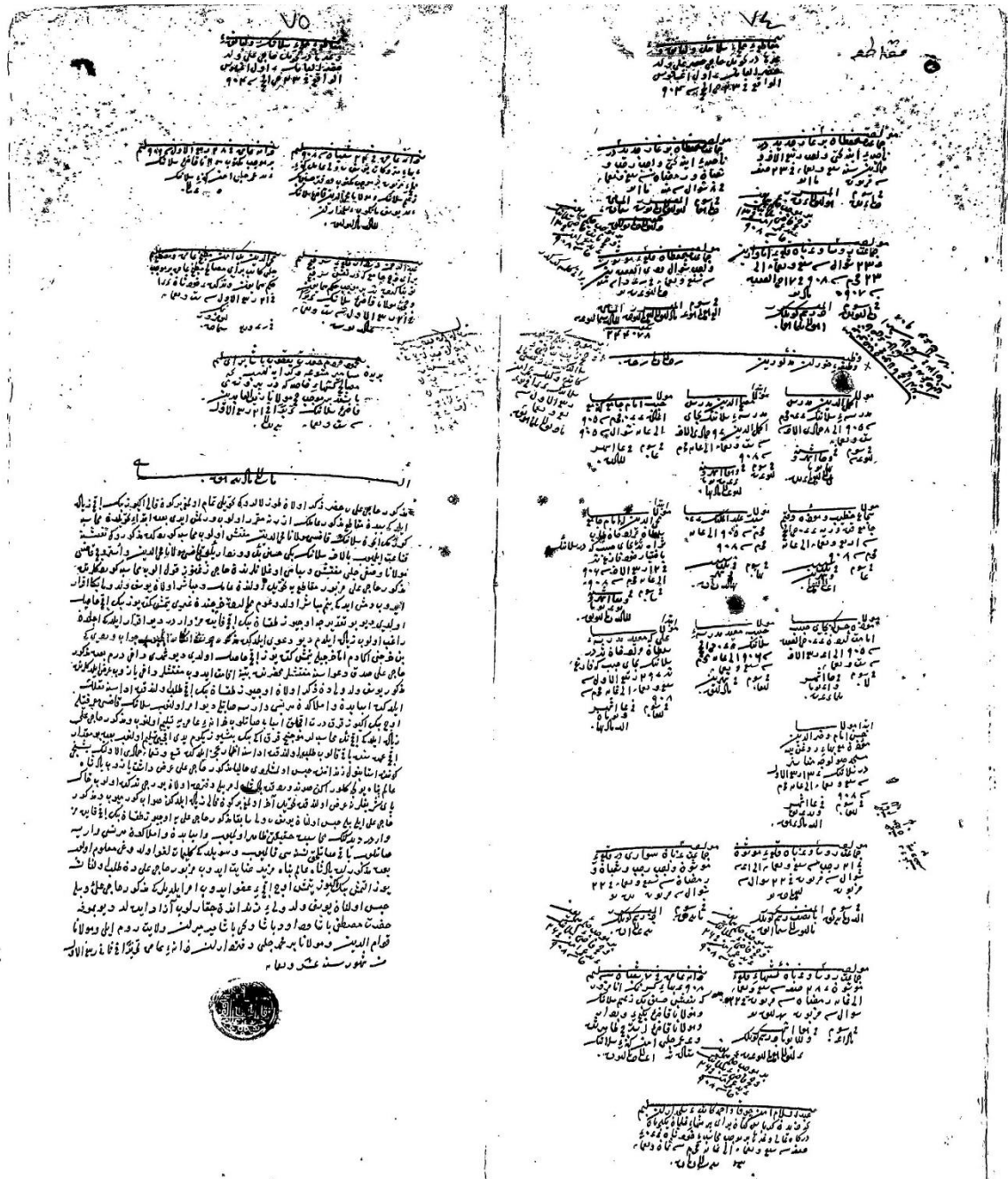
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 ٨٥ ربيع الاول ١٢١٠ هـ  
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 ٩٦ ربيع الاول ١٢٢١ هـ  
 ٩٧ ربيع الاول ١٢٢٢ هـ  
 ٩٨ ربيع الاول ١٢٢٣ هـ  
 ٩٩ ربيع الاول ١٢٢٤ هـ  
 ١٠٠ ربيع الاول ١٢٢٥ هـ

کمال  
باجه پاشا مولود ارماندو ای مصطفی  
دور از نوبت دنیا کعبه  
پناه عطار

Handwritten manuscript in Arabic script, featuring dense text and numerous marginalia. The main text is organized into columns, with some sections appearing to be lists or tables. The script is highly cursive and characteristic of the Ottoman era. There are many small annotations and corrections in the margins, often written in a different ink or color. The overall layout is complex and typical of historical legal or administrative documents.

Appendix 2.a: Muqata'a Register KK. 4988, fol. 20





Appendix 3.a: Roll-call Register MAD 15334, pp. 89-90.

<p>۹۰</p> <p>مجلس شورای ملی در روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی در سال ۱۳۳۴</p>	<p>۸۹</p> <p>مجلس شورای ملی در روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی در سال ۱۳۳۴</p>
<p>روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی</p> <p>ساعت ۱۰ صبح</p> <p>حاضرین: آقایان: ...</p> <p>غایبین: ...</p>	<p>روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی</p> <p>ساعت ۱۰ صبح</p> <p>حاضرین: آقایان: ...</p> <p>غایبین: ...</p>
<p>مجلس شورای ملی در روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی</p> <p>ساعت ۱۰ صبح</p> <p>حاضرین: آقایان: ...</p> <p>غایبین: ...</p>	<p>مجلس شورای ملی در روز دوشنبه ۱۳۳۴ خورشیدی</p> <p>ساعت ۱۰ صبح</p> <p>حاضرین: آقایان: ...</p> <p>غایبین: ...</p>
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مصلح فای		میرزا	
مدر لور	ایزات	نورعلی	مصلح
بها	فا	طهانا	دولت
		با	با
فصح	لید دست	بابا	مصلح
قدام	قوی یوج	شیرعلی	لید
با	با	با	با

مذکور ہوا۔ مضوم قہ لوز فلفلس نامت زمرہ  
ہا۔ کا۔ کا۔ کا۔

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~~اورانیہ~~ ~~تاجیہ~~

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وہو قاتول رفر برکات

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قوت خود را با اینها

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وہو ی برہو ولہ یقولو

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مورقور	مورقور	مورقور
اناسرور	اناسرور	اناسرور

**Appendix 6.a: ‘*ahd-nāme*’ for the Residents of Golubac (Gügercinlik) and the list of salaried and tax exempted population (1477), TT 16, p. 750.**

[illegible]

~~مارمولسا که عوفه میخورد اکثر این بیلد و فی الکفوف~~

مرا					
مذکور	ماوراء	سنان	پکوانتر	فانر	بلونیک
	دلو	سمول		دلایلین	قوت
لسان	نور	دهوی	رایه	۸	
ویدوک	رایه	بندر	رایج		

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برایع

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بالمنه  
سوقه  
بالمنه  
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بالمنه

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علاء خاں بہار التاج عودہ سیر  
علاء خاں بہار التاج عودہ سیر

*(Handwritten notes at the bottom of the page)*

لرسخ نجرار و عازر زاشه

میدوی	دلهوس	کراس	لازوله	لوپ	دهوس	ساوله	ویداله
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[illegible]

~~و نیز که عمو و برادران او را با خود به پیش ما میفرستادند~~

[illegible]

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 سمبل    حاجان    زو    اولاد    رله سویت  
 برکس    بر    بر    بر    بر

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## FIGURES



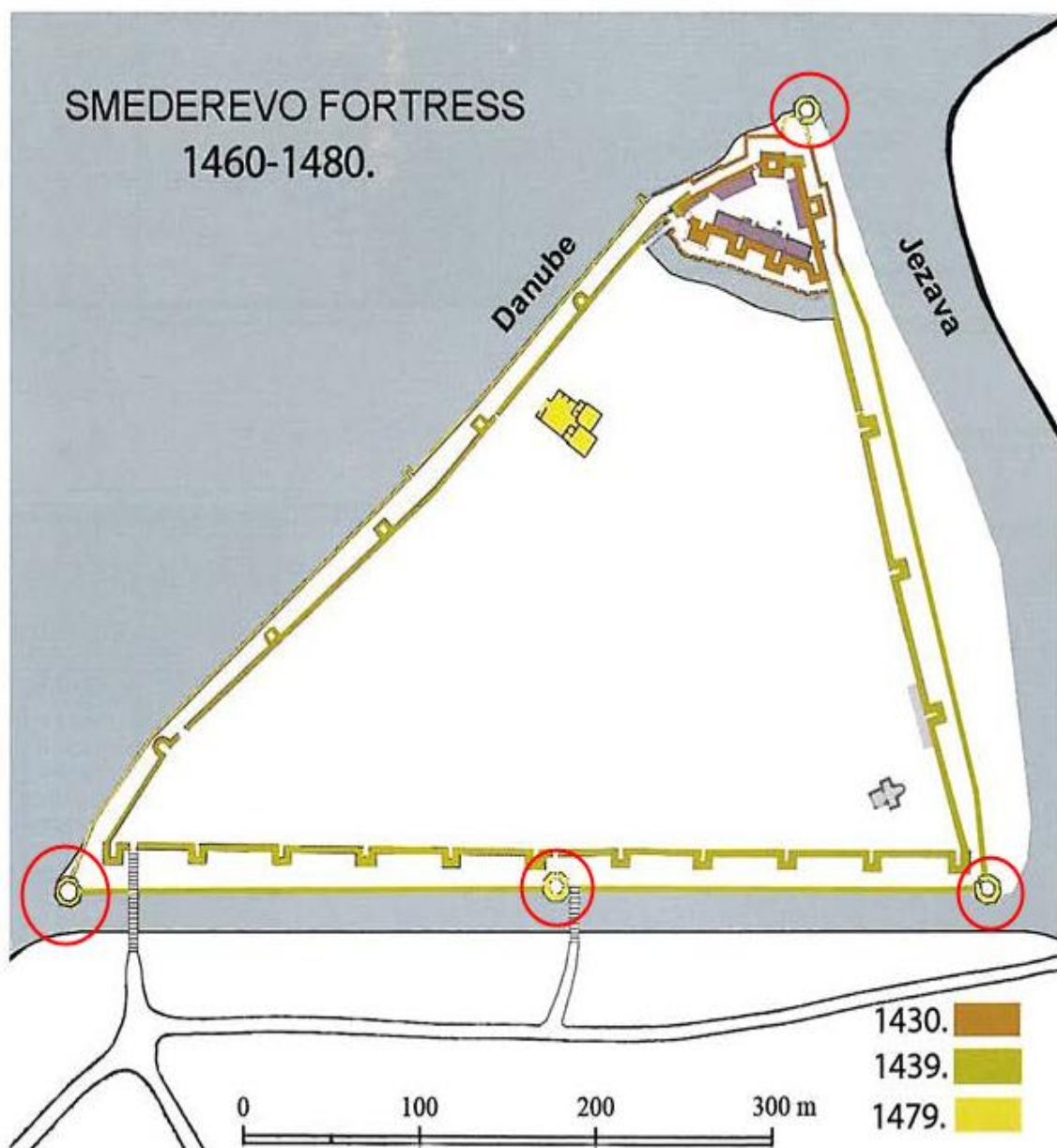
**Figure 1: The Fortress of Smederevo<sup>294</sup>**



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<sup>294</sup> Note the polygonal artillery tower in the picture. Retrieved from: <http://virtuelnimuzejdunava.rs/serbia/cultural-heritage/fortresses/smederevo-fortress.485.html>

Figure 1.b: Plan of Smederevo Fortress and New Addings in Time<sup>295</sup>



<sup>295</sup> Note that red circles show the cannon towers added by the Ottoman in 1479. Retrieved from: Marko Popović, *Smederevo Fortress*, (Belgrade: Institute For the Protection of Cultural monuments, 2013), p. 35.

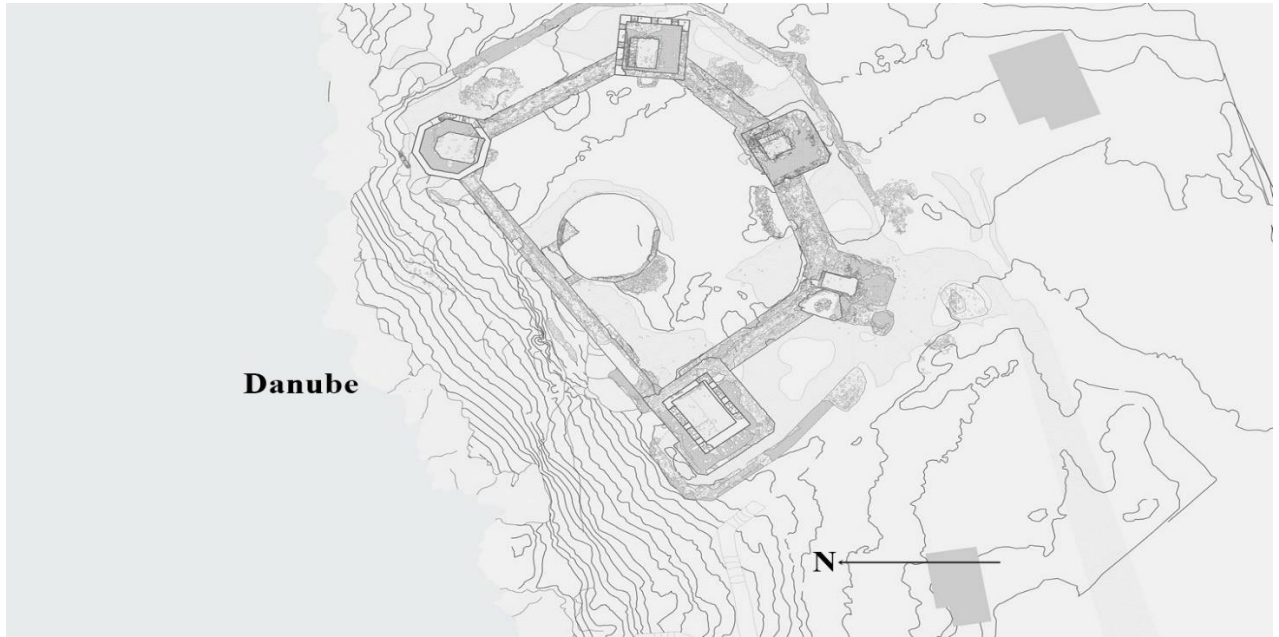
**Figure 2.a: Aerial Photo of Ram (Hram) Fortress<sup>296</sup>**



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<sup>296</sup> Retrieved from: <http://anbmimarlik.com/?id=51>.

**Figure 2.b: Site Plan of Ram Fortress<sup>297</sup>**



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<sup>297</sup> Retrieved from: <http://anbmimarlik.com/?id=51>.



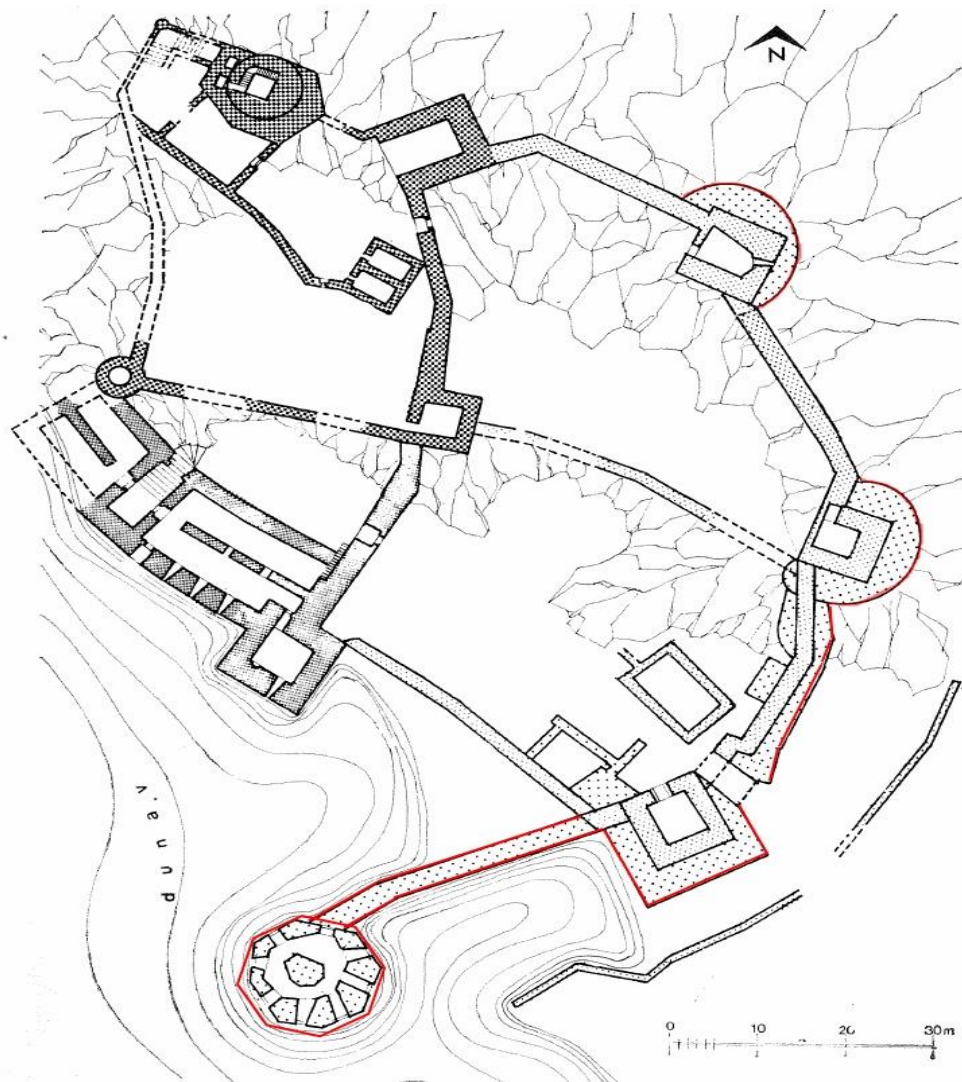
**Figure 3.a: Golubac Fortress<sup>298</sup>**



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<sup>298</sup> Retrieved from: <http://virtuelnimuzejdunava.rs/serbia/cultural-heritage/fortresses/golubac-fortress.479.html>.

**Figure 3.b: Plan of Golubac Fortress<sup>299</sup>**



<sup>299</sup> Red colored fortified areas were added by the Ottomans after 1470s. Retrieved from: Marko Popović, “Defensive Systems in the Eastern Part of the Yugoslavia in the Middle Ages”, *Balcans Slavica*, no. 11-12 (1984-1985), p. 27.

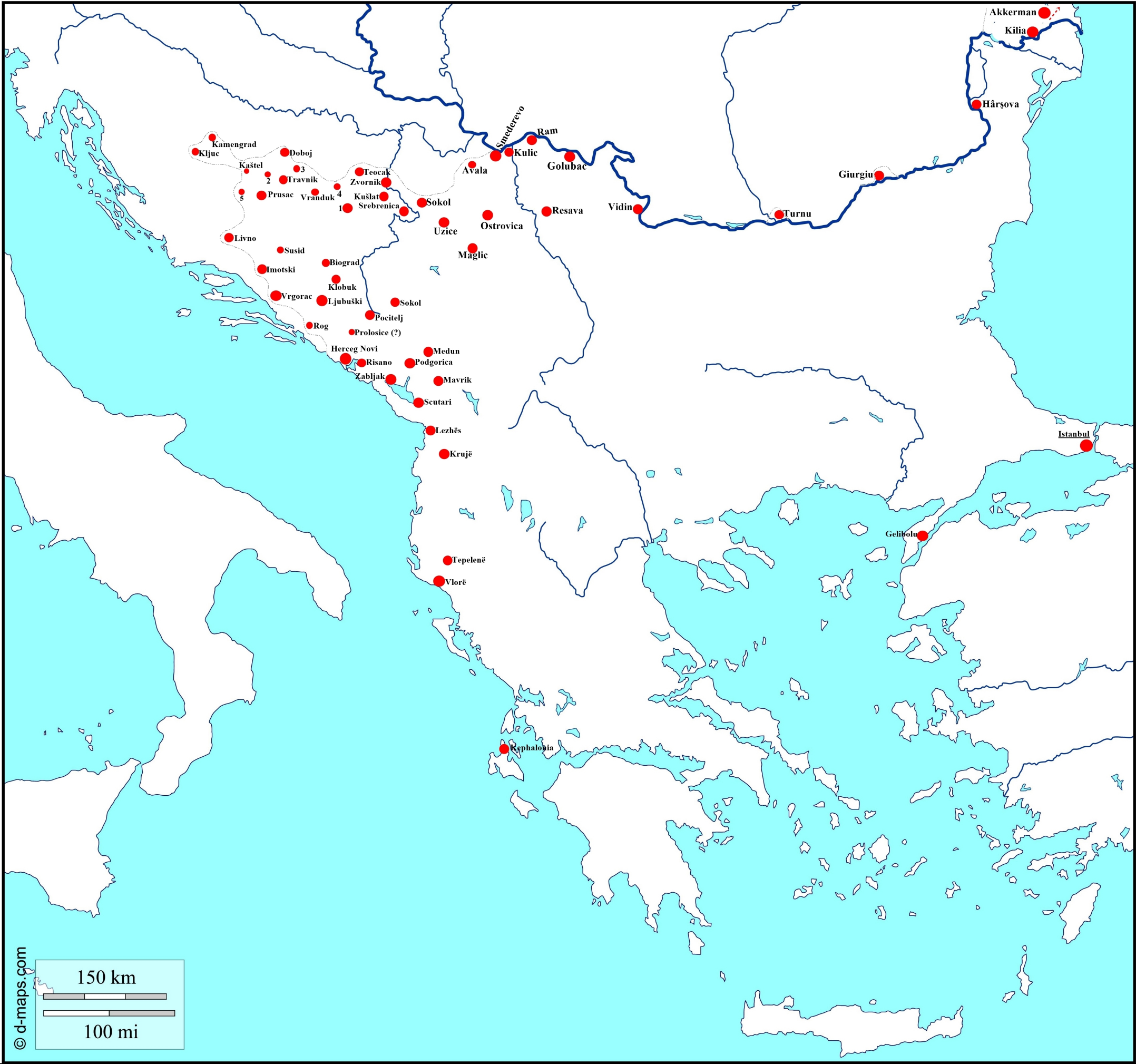
## **MAPS**





Map I) Ottoman salaried Fortresses in the Balkans, 1477-78  
(According to MAD 176)





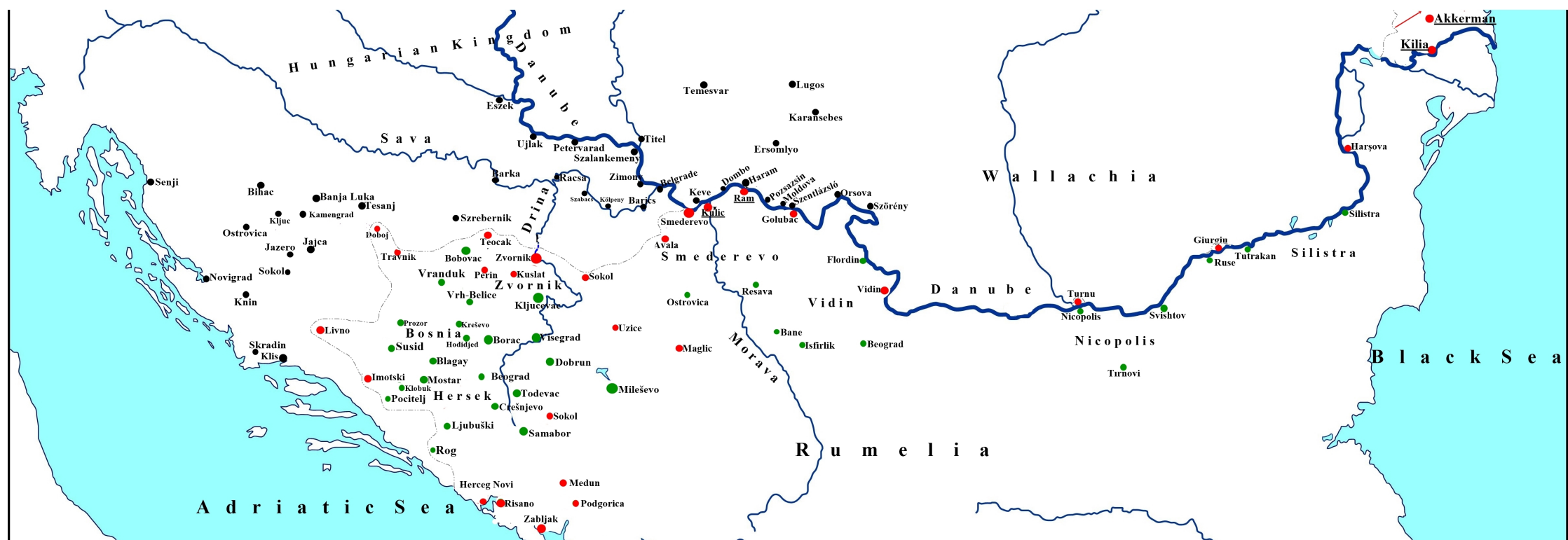
**Map II) Ottoman salaried fortresses in the Balkans, 1490-91,  
(According to MAD 15334)**

- 1) Vrh-Belice
- 2) Torican
- 3) Maglaj
- 4) Perin
- 5) Vinac



**Map III) Ottoman salaried fortresses in the Southern Balkans,  
1499-1503 Ottoman Venetian War  
(According to KK 4988)**

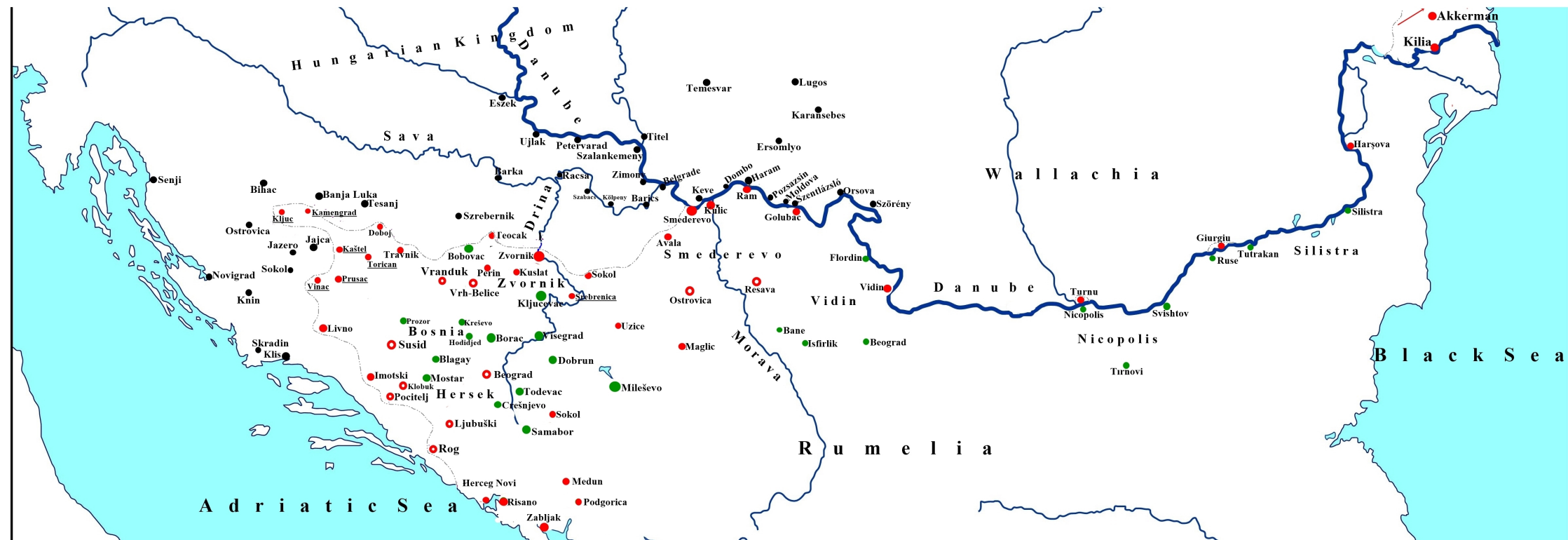
★ Underlined fortresses were captured by the Ottomans  
during the war (1499-1503)



Map IV) Ottoman Network of Fortresses along the Danube Region and Bosnia (1477-1484)

- Ottoman fortresses received salary
- Ottoman fortresses received timar
- Hungarian fortresses

☆ Underlined Fortresses captured or built after 1482



Map V) Ottoman Network of Fortresses along the Danube Region and Bosnia: Transformation of the Payment System (According to MAD 15334)

- Ottoman fortresses already received salary
- Ottoman fortresses before received timar, then started to receive salary
- Ottoman fortresses: New fortresses appeared in the document (MAD 15334)
- Ottoman fortresses received timar
- Hungarian fortresses





Map VI)Ottoman salaried fortresses and muqata'a sources, 1477-78  
(According to MAD 176)

Muqata'a Sources

- 1) Mines of Bala and Zir
- 2) Rice Plants of Siroz and Karaferye
- 3) Saltpans of Gümülcine, Hroşne and Karasu
- 4) Muqata'a of [...]?
- 5) Saltpan of Tuna
- 6) Mine of Srebrenica
- 7) Mine of Novobrd
- 8) Mine of Sidre Kapısı
- 9) Muqata'a of Rudnik
- 10) Saltpan of Selanik
- 11) Rice Plants of Filibe
- 12) Hasses of Kastorya
- 13) Mine of Belasice
- 14) Mine of Yanovo
- 15) Muqata'a of [...] ?
- 16) Customs of Gelibolu
- 17) Port of Gelibolu

