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CONFLICTS OF JOINT SOVEREIGNTY ON THE BORDER OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF TRANSYLVANIA AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 17TH CENTURY

ABSTRACT
The confrontation of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires in the 16th Century resulted in the disintegration of the Kingdom of Hungary and the formation of the Principality of Transylvania in the eastern parts of the country. The constant state of war in the middle of the 17th century taking place in the border regions of the Ottoman Empire and that of the Habsburg dynasty came to an end for two decades owing to the Peace Treaty in Vasvár in 1664. Yet, the delineation of the border between the provinces (*vilayets*) in Hungary and the Principality of Transylvania was not defined.
The divergent interests resulted in a specific situation, that is the development of the joint sovereignty (*condominium*) in the border region.
The present study features the effects of the joint sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire and the Principality of Transylvania on the political, economic and cultural life of the area alongside its daily life. It put a great emphasis on the significant role of the Transylvanian fortress captain from Genoa, Francesco Biale.

KEYWORDS: Joint sovereignty; Ottoman Empire; Principality of Transylvania; Michael I Apafi; Ferenc Olasz.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant turning points in the history of the Kingdom of Hungary is the Battle of Mohács in 1526, as it was the starting point of a decades-long process that resulted in the break-up of a country that had previously had great power in the region. In the battle, the Ottoman Empire wreaked havoc on the Hungarian army, where King Louis II Jagiellon and most of the nobles also lost their lives. This created a confusing situation from the point of view of domestic politics as well, as two suitable persons formed the right to the royal title, which eventually led to the so-called double royal election and the separation of the former integer territory. The Western half of the country fell under the rule of Ferdinand I of the great European Habsburg dynasty, while the Eastern territories were controlled by John Szapolyai, who as a voivode of Transylvania (1510-1526) previously had significant governmental and military influence in the region. The Ottoman Empire, led by Sultan Süleyman I, also joined the civil war rivalry between the two legally elected rulers and his followers. As Süleyman considered the Habsburg dynasty the real enemy, he supported King John I by accepting him as his vassal. The expansionist policy of the Ottoman Empire towards Europe in the 16th century and the struggle of the Habsburg dynasty eventually led to the break-up of the medieval Kingdom

of Hungary. The Northern and Western territories of the former integer country were still known as the Kingdom of Hungary but continued to function as member of the Habsburg monarchy. The central part of the country, including the capital Buda, became a province of the Ottoman Empire. While in the Eastern region a state that did not exist until then, with internal autonomy but operating under a dual Ottoman-Habsburg dependency, resulted in the formation of the Principality of Transylvania[1].

The policy of the Transylvanian Prince George II Rákóczi (1648-1660) that he decided to join the North-eastern conflict by attacking Poland without the authorisation of the Porte, again created conditions for war. The Prince's action led to a retaliatory campaign against Transylvania by the Ottoman Empire, stabilized by Grand Vizier Köprülü Mehmed. However, the intervention was not viewed idly by the other major power in the region either, the Habsburg Monarchy. In the Ottoman-Habsburg border region, the recurrent warfare between the two great powers was settled by the peace of Vasvár in 1664 for two decades. However, the points of peace hardly touched on the problems of the Principality of Transylvania, which in some sense depended on both great powers. The peace treaty did not include the designation of the border between the province (*vilayet*) of Temesvár (Rom. Timişoara), which was established in the middle of the 16th century as a result of the conquest of the Ottoman Empire and was territorially enlarged as a result of the war, and the Ottoman province (*vilayet*) of Várad (Rom. Oradea), that was previously the most important border fortress of the Principality of Transylvania[2].

In the absence of a regulation by the great powers, the *Beglerbegis* (provincial governor-generals) of Várad and Temesvár, as well as the Transylvanian government, tried to determine the extent of the territories taxed by them in accordance with their own interests.

At the time of the abandonment of the castle of Várad (1660), the Prince of Transylvania, Michael I Apafi (1661-1690), and his government considered relevant the "promissory note" issued by Pasha Köse Ali when designating the affiliation of the taxed territories. According to the "promissory note", only the 258 villages that had previously belonged to the castle of Várad would have fallen into Ottoman hands[3].

The legal basis of the Ottomans in Várad can also be partly linked to the aforementioned Pasha Köse Ali: the pasha ordered the census of the territories taxing

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1 Gábor Ágoston, *The last Muslim conquest. The Ottoman Empire and Its Wars in Europa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021), 159-87, 204-5, 247.

2 Hajnalka Tóth, "The circumstances and documents of the Peace of Vasvár", *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 34/1 (2017): 243-56. For the earlier operation of the *vilayet* of Temesvár: Pál Fodor, "Das Wilayet von Temeschwar zur Zeit der Osmanischen Eroberung", *Südost-Vorschungen*, 55/1 (1996): 25-44.

3 For the points of Pasha Ali's "promissory note" see: József Koncz, "Nagyvárad capitulatioja 1660-ban", *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 5/3 (1892): 390-94. About the 258 settlements of Bihar County see: ANR DJS, *Colecţia personală J. Benigni von Mindenberg*, vol. 40, f. 14. About the work of Pasha Köse Ali see: Balázs Sudár, "A hódoltsági pasák az oszmán belpolitika forgatagában (1657-1665)", *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 124/3 (2011): 899-901.

the newly created *vilayet* of Várad, entrusting the task to Pír Mehmed. However, Pír Mehmed not only recorded the villages of Bihar County, which was formerly part of the Principality of Transylvania and formed the base area of the *vilayet* of Várad, together with the castle of Várad. The register (*defter*), also referred to as the "defter of Píri Pasha" and accepted by the Porte, also included some villages in the counties of Kraszna, Közép-Szolnok, Belső-Szolnok, Kolozs, Doboka and Hunyad, thus covering almost a third of the Principality of Transylvania[4].

In the case of the *vilayet* of Temesvár, I must refer to the Transylvanian-Ottoman special trial of 1664. According to this, the Transylvanians considered only the 40 villages of Hunyad County in the immediate vicinity of the *vilayet* to be under Ottoman rule, which were taken from Transylvania during the occupation of Jenő (Rom. Ineu, in 1658). Jenő became the secondary seat of the *vilayet* of Temesvár during its expansion. However, the Ottomans of Temesvár sought to increase the number of their tax-paying villages in the County of Zaránd, north of the aforementioned territory, referring to the case of Jenő[5].

The different demands, like at the other confines of the Ottoman Empire[6], gave rise to a special situation that resulted in the formation of a so-called joint sovereignty (*condominium*) in the area. In other words, the Western border counties, or at least most of its villages, which were formerly an integral part of the Principality of Transylvania, were considered by the Transylvanian and Ottoman governments to be their own tax territories at the same time. The current situation has also naturally changed the daily lives of the population.

The aim of the study is to illustrate with a few examples, that fit the limites of this essay, the impact of the Transylvanian-Ottoman joint rule on the political, economic and everyday life of the region, the Transylvanian suburb. The highlighting of each case was basically justified by two factors. On the one hand, they are related to Somlyó (Rom. Șimleu Silvaniei), a key border fortress connected to the Transylvanian border region, which has been fortified to replace the castle of Várad. On the other hand, the special interest of the examples is that they also provide information on the activities of Captain Ferenc Olasz (Francesco Biale) of Genoa. The time frame of the study also needs some explanation, as the phenomenon of *condominium* has already been experienced by Transylvanian society in the decades preceding the period under review. However, with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the 17th century the difficulties of joint sovereignty intensified, clashes

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4 Sudár, "A hódoltsági pasák", 895-96.

5 Gábor Döbrentey, "Erdély hisztóriájához tartozó Emlékírások", in *Felső-Magyarországi Minerva*, t. I, ed. Gábor Döbrentey (Kassa: Ellinger István Könyvnyomtató, 1829), 26-7; MNL, OL, P659, *Teleki család marosvásárhelyi levéltára, Missiles,* vol. 33, no. 762, f. 165.

6 For an example see: Ferenc Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás a török hódoltságban* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1981); Gábor Ágoston, "A 'Flexible Empire': Authority and Its Limits on the Ottoman Frontiers", *International Journal of Turkish Studies,* 9/1-2 (2003): 15-31; Géza Dávid, "Administration in Ottoman Europe", in *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, eds. Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead (London: Longman, 1995), 71-90. For a more recent multi-faceted review of *condominium* and Ottoman-Hungarian relations: *Identity and Cultural in Ottoman Hungary*, eds. Ács Pál and Fodor Pál (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2017).

became more frequent, and far more written records of the subject remained. Thus, the issue of the *condominium* can be examined better also in terms of resources than in previous periods[7].

JOINT SOVEREIGNTY – SHARED TAXATION

As a result of the joint sovereignty, the inhabitants of the Western counties, which had previously been an integral part of the Principality of Transylvania and were taxed by the state and landlords under Transylvanian law, had to contend with the demands of the Ottomans at the same time. By implication, all of them, including the Ottoman *vilayet*s, the Transylvanian state, the "old" Transylvanian landlords, and the "new" Ottoman landowners, sought to collect their own taxes and enforce their interests, thereby imposing multiple burdens on those who remained in place. Thus, it is worth examining the issue from the perspective of all concerned, through the presentation of some examples.

As a result of the war conditions and the *condominium*, it was a matter of life and death for the Transylvanian state to collect taxes as efficiently as possible, thus ensuring the enforcement of Transylvanian interests in the confines. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the North-South Transylvanian border fortress system established in the 1660s and the role of its officials. Among them, the work of the Transylvanian officials in Somlyó mentioned in my introduction, and especially that of Captain Ferenc Olasz[8].

On the one hand, I must point out that the unclear power situation in the *condominium* and the presence of Ottoman soldiers have made it difficult to collect taxes on behalf of the state of Transylvania[9]. In the 1660s, the Transylvanian government entrusted Gergely Ugray as the tax collector (*perceptor*) of the Bihar counties most affected by the Ottoman conquest. As a Bihar-born, he undoubtedly had excellent local knowledge. The border fortress of Somlyó near the taxing areas was designated as his headquarters[10]. Under his instructions, the Transylvanian Treasury (*fiscus*) was required to collect both monetary (Hun. *kapuadó, "gate tax"*) and crop (*decima*) taxes on the joint sovereignty territories. However, due to the turbulent conditions in the region, it was difficult for him to carry out his tasks, and he had repeatedly asked the Transylvanian government to clarify the situation in the region already in the early years of his term[11]. The Transylvanian diet sought to regulate the taxation of dual-dominated territories independently of Ugray's

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7 See: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 350-60, 369-81.

8 Ágnes Szalai, "'Nagyságotok és kegyelmetek lévén az haza oszlopi' A fejedelmi kormányzat szerepe a váradi török tartománnyal szembeni végvárrendszer megszervezésében az 1660-as évek derekán", *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, 134/3 (2021): 547-75; Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 392-94 and passim.

9 Example: MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 42, no. 845, f. 61.

10 Sándor Szilágyi, *Erdélyi országgyűlési emlékek*, vol. 14: *1664-1669* (Budapest: MTA Könyvkiadó Hivatal, 1889), 234.

11 MNL OL P658, *Teleki család marosvásárhelyi levéltára, Új rendezés*, vol. 7, f. 1783r.

request[12], however, it was typically the *perceptor*s and the army at the confines who assisted in their work that agreed with the taxing settlements and collected most of the taxes that were used to operate the border fortresses. However, it is also clear from the sources I have examined that, due to the burden of joint sovereignty, Transylvanian officials often only managed to achieve this by threatening the inhabitants of the given settlement and, in our examples, temporarily imprisoning them in the fortress of Somlyó[13].

In addition, the military and economic officers of the Somlyó border fortress played a prominent role in the efficient operation of the network of princely and treasury estates, which brought income to the Principality of Transylvania but was threatened by the presence of the Ottomans. This is well illustrated by their relationship with the Manor of Székelyhíd (Rom. Săcueni) in the northern part of Bihar County. According to the Peace of Vasvár (1664), the fortress of Székelyhíd, which was chosen to replace the occupied Várad castle and to protect the manor and the population of the countryside, had to be destroyed. Therefore, the protection of the manor was provided by the border forts of the newly established Transylvanian border fortress system, mostly Somlyó. The income of the Manor of Székelyhíd was also mostly allocated to maintain this fortress. During the indicated period, the supply of crop annuities, mainly wheat, to the castle guard (*praesidium*) from a total of nine settlements of the Manor of Székelyhíd[14], was supervised by the aforementioned Gergely Ugray *perceptor* – he notified the captains of the Transylvanian border fortresses (Hung. Kővár – Rom. Chioar, Hung. Szamosújvár – Rom. Gherla, Hung. Cseh – Rom. Cehu Silvaniei) on the necessity of forwarding and transporting the crop to Somlyó[15]. However, due to the presence of Ottoman soldiers and the collection of taxes, the transport of crops of Székelyhíd to Somlyó was by no means an easy task[16]. Thus, on several occasions, Captain Ferenc Olasz had to send his own soldiers to ensure the supply of wines from the manor[17].

In addition, Olasz was said to be the liaison between the members of the princely court in the interior of the Transylvanian Principality and the confines, including the Manor of Székelyhíd. In our words today, in addition to "intelligence" tasks, he

12 Szilágyi, *Erdélyi országgyűlési emlékek*, vol. 14, 140.

13 Áron Szilády and Sándor Szilágyi, *Török-Magyarkori Állam-okmánytár*, vol. IV (Budapest: Eggenberger, 1871), 359; ANR, DJC, *Fond Familial Béldi din Ozun*, vol. 146, f. 73.

14 About the settlements of the dominion see: Béla Szádeczky, *I. Apafi Mihály udvartartása*, t. I: *Bornemisza Anna gazdasági naplói. 1667-1690* (Budapest: MTA, 1911), 191. I have to note here that the settlements of North Bihar County were also taxed and afflicted by the army stationed in the fortresses in the hands of Habsburgs in Upper Hungary, especially in Szatmár. However, the presentation of this question is not the subject of the present study. It can be consulted here: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 360-69.

15 MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 21. no. 674. ff. 9, 78.

16 For an example of the oppression of the Manor of Székelyhíd by the Ottomans see: Szilády and Szilágyi, *Török-Magyarkori*, vol. IV, 270, 288, 431. ANR, DJC, *Fond Familial Béldi*, vol. 146. f. 74.

17 ANR, DJC, *Colecţia personală Kemény József*, fond: 594, no. 361/1-2.

also mostly administered the cash taxes from the manor to the treasury[18]. According to the princely order, he also provided for the distribution of income: in 1678, for example, he allocated 200 forints from the taxes of the manor to the preachers who had fled (*exul*) Várad[19]. In addition, in several cases he spent the monetary taxes in Székelyhíd on the salary of the *praesidium*, therefore the border residents themselves were also interested in collecting the taxes as efficiently as possible. Ferenc Olasz also learned about the development and change of incomes and the difficulties of the settlements of the manor and reported these to the Prince[20]. In 1667, he informed Michael I Apafi that the former Székelyhíd's customs duty of foreign trade called thirtieth (*tricesima*) of the Principality were already operated by the Ottomans, who collected the customs, thus causing a loss of revenue for the state[21]. Due to his position as captain of the fortress, he also detected the activities of counterfeit minters in the joint sovereignty territory, confiscated the counterfeit coins and sent them to the princely court, thus preventing further damage[22].

The "old" Transylvanian landowners of the dual-ruled counties sought to have the paragraph of the "promissory note" issued by Pasha Köse Ali referring to them, mentioned in the introduction, recognized by those living and serving in the Ottoman *vilayet*s – according to the Transylvanian laws the former landlords to be able to keep their lands and to freely tax their serfs. The Transylvanian landowners also applied to the Transylvanian government in the hope of asserting their own interests: in addition to allowing their monetary taxes to be levied, they demanded their share of the crop tribute (*nonae*) to be kept instead of being supplied to the state, in exchange of the *decima* that they were forced to spend on the maintenance of their border fortresses. With the death of Pasha Köse Ali (1664), there was less and less chance of enforcing the points of his "promissory note" to the Ottomans[23], but sources say that in many cases the Transylvanian landlords did receive the ninth (*nonae*) from their serfs[24].

Due to the presence of the Ottomans, the landlords of Transylvania were unable to maintain the former monetary taxation structure in the dual-dominated counties due to the increased tax burden. As a result, the monetary taxation of the local population was governed by separate agreements between the landlord and his serfs. An example of this was the Ugray family from Bihar County: several members of the family[25], including the aforementioned Gergely and György, moved from the

18 ANR, DJC, *Kemény József*, no. 361/30-31.; MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 14, no. 328, f. 83; Szádeczky, *I. Apafi Mihály*, 191-92, 222, 467.

19 ANR, DJC, *Kemény József*, no. 361/23-4.

20 MNL, OL, P1239, *Teleki család marosvásárhelyi levéltára, Apafi Mihály gyűjtemény*, 4. d. no. 1-1675-13.

21 MNL, OL, P1239, *Apafi Mihály*, 2. d. no. 1-1667-16.

22 MNL, OL, P1239, *Apafi Mihály*, 4. d. no. 1-1675-14.

23 József Koncz, "Szalárdi János kiadatlan levelei és reá vonatkozó apró adatok. Második közlemény", *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, 9/1 (1899): 221-22.

24 Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 397-99.

25 Petra Mátyás-Rausch and Ágnes Szalai, *Fejedelmi prefektusok Erdélyben. Források a*

Ottoman-taxed Bihar County, and took on military and economic positions at the Transylvanian border fortresses of Déva (Rom. Deva) and Somlyó in the 1660s, which meant greater security. György Ugray was later forced to make an agreement with the serfs of Telegd (Rom. Tileagd) who remained in the joint sovereignty territory so that, until they were liberated from the rule of the Ottomans of Várad, they owed him only 16 imperial thalers a year in cash and crimson leather as a "gift"[26]. The recalled treaty also clearly confirms that, similarly to the border region of the Kingdom of Hungary, both the landowners and the serfs considered the presence of Ottoman rule in the region to be temporary[27].

The issue of taxation of the Ottoman provinces adjoining the Principality of Transylvania and their armies from the counties of Transylvania can be illustrated by a case from 1671. In order to resolve the border conflict between the Ottomans of Várad and the Principality of Transylvania at that time, the parties concerned turned to the Porte. In order to substantiate its own claim, the Transylvanian government ordered a census of the amount of Transylvanian taxes payable to the Várad *vilayet* by type of tax[28]. According to the *defter* of Pír Mehmed Pasha, we know from the register of Doboka County, which also served the Ottomans of Várad, that the inhabitants of the Transylvanian villages were obliged to pay the taxes typical of other border regions of the Ottoman Empire[29]. On the one hand, the "emperor's tax" (*kharaj*) belonging to the line of state taxes[30]. In addition, the population also paid a cash and crop tribute to the local Ottoman landowners. According to the sources, the definition of this may have worked similarly to the relationship with the landlords of Transylvania: that is, the tax burden of each village was formed through agreements with Ottoman officials. Residents of the village of Drág (Rom. Dragu) in Doboka County, for example, have managed to reduce their financial tax burden to approximately one-fifth of their landlord. However, it was rather the case of the neighbouring town of Adalin (Rom. Adalinu) that could be considered common: their Ottoman leader, "Pasha Bulyok", imposed about four times the monetary tax on them. The crop burdens of the villages were similarly different and varied: food (butter, honey, beef) and expensive hides and fabrics. The burden on those who remained in place also included the service required to maintain the castle and forts, in most cases its monetary redemption and the so-called mosque money. Undoubtedly, the Ottomans demanded significant sums of money,

kora újkori Erdély igazgatástörténetéhez (Budapest: ELKH BTK TTI, 2021), 301.

26 ANR, DJB, *Fond Familial Ugray-Bölöni*, vol. 51, f. 13. Cf.: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 371, 395, 400.

27 Klára Hegyi, *Török berendezkedés Magyarországon* (Budapest: História Könyvtár, 1995), 41-2.

28 Ágnes Szalai, "A fejedelmi tanács és az erdélyi deputáció törekvései az Erdélyi Fejedelemség és a váradi török tartomány közötti 1671-1672. évi konfliktus rendezésére", *Studia Agriensia*, ed. Ingrid Fejér, 34 (2022) (Under release).

29 Klára Hegyi, "A magyar tartomány helye és helyzete az Oszmán Birodalomban", *Világtörténet*, 16/1 (1994): 20-1.

30 Sándor Szilágyi, *Vértanúk a magyar történetből: történeti tanulmányok* (Pest: Kiadja Heckenast Gusztáv, 1867), 478-85.

crops, and services from the counties considered subjugated under the "defter of Píri Pasha" for the operation of their own *vilayet* and the supply of their army. More than 3,000 forints a year were collected from Doboka County alone, and a total of about 40,000 forints a year was collected from the five counties claimed based on Píri's *defter*. By way of comparison, this amount was of the same order of magnitude as the amount of the annual tax paid by the Principality of Transylvania to the Porte during this period due to its vassal status[31].

Thus, the Ottomans, similarly to the border region with the Kingdom of Hungary, developed and shaped their tax system in the border region of the Principality of Transylvania in order to ensure their own livelihood. In addition, the administrative and tax structure of the Transylvanian state and the network of officials continued to operate in the region. It goes without saying that, in their own interests, both parties have sought to prevent each other from supplying the tax to the other side of the population. The repeatedly mentioned Captain Ferenc Olasz in Somlyó reported to the Prince in the 1670s that the Ottomans of Várad were scheming to prevent «the supply of taxes by the people of Bihar County to Transylvania»[32]. But sources also report similar complaints from the Ottomans of Várad: on the one hand, it was common for judges in charge of collecting taxes from individual villages and bringing them in to their Ottoman superiors to sabotage the delivery of taxes[33]. On the other hand, it has regularly happened that the Transylvanian border residents did not allow the inhabitants of the joint sovereignty areas to pay their taxes either, although in principle the Ottoman tax collectors (should have) had to be helped by Transylvanian soldiers to collect their taxes, and vice versa[34]. However, mutual efforts to prevent taxation have almost without exception culminated in failure, often in smaller or larger armed clashes[35].

JOINT SOVEREIGNTY IN ECONOMIC LIFE

Dual domination has, of course, also brought about changes in economic life. To increase their own revenues, the Ottomans tried to make the most of the economic opportunities offered by the region. Thus, the control and operation of the mills, one-thirtieth customs duties and mines that previously benefited the Principality of Transylvania fell into the hands of the Ottomans in several cases. The first example is the occupation of the watermill of Szőlős by Pasha Hussein in the immediate vicinity of the Ottoman provincial centre, Várad[36]. The village judges also informed Transylvanian landlord Domokos Bethlen of the loss of revenue due to the "confiscation" of the mill, saying they could do nothing, «the mill is of no use as

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31 Szilágyi, *Erdélyi országgyűlési emlékek*, vol. 13, 58.

32 «a Bihar vármegyebeliek Erdélyhez semmit ne adózzanak»: MNL, OL, P1239, *Apafi Mihály*, 2. d. no. 1-1676-15. Cf.: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 394.

33 MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 55. no. 1125. f. 114.

34 ANR, DJS, *Benigni*, vol. 40. ff. 14, 40, 43. Cf.: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 375-76.

35 ANR DJS, *Benigni*, vol. 40. f. 53.

36 MNL, Hajdú-Bihar Megyei Levéltára, *Debrecen város magisztrátusi jegyzőkönyvei*, b. 17, f. 101.

the stone grinds to the benefit of the pasha»[37]. In connection with the customs, the thirties of Székelyhíd were controlled by the Ottomans: from 1667 it was operated by the Ottomans of Szentjobb (Rom. Sâniob)[38]. To the south, one of the customs offices in the vicinity of the *vilayet* of Temesvár, it is worth referring to the case of the thirtieth customs office in Körösbánya (Rom. Baia de Criș). The customs in Transylvania became difficult to control in Transylvania in the 1660s due to the presence of the soldiers in Temesvár and Jenő, and from 1671 onwards, due to frequent Ottoman looting and the conquest along the Körös (Rom. Criș) rivers, the princely government was unable to operate[39]. With regard to the occupation of the mines by the Ottomans, I must also mention an example from Bihar County, the case of Rézbánya (Rom. Băița) and the opposition between the Ottomans of Várad and the Transylvanians. The ore-mining mine, which had previously brought significant benefits to the Principality of Transylvania[40], had been cultivated by the Ottomans since the 1660s and was referred to as the «copper mine of our great emperor»[41]. However, the operation of the mines was not easy for the Ottomans either: the Ottomans of Várad once accused the Transylvanians, one of the key figures of the border guard, the chief captain of Kolozsvár (Rom. Cluj-Napoca) Dénes Bánffy, of attacking the mine with the border military, capturing the mining master, killing other miners and robbing all their goods. The Ottomans of Várad, and later the mining master of Rézbánya, turned to the Porte to complain about the case. Although this caused great alarm in the Principality of Transylvania, the issue was finally settled: it was proved that it was not the Transylvanian border soldiers who had acted, but «the evildoers and thieves lurking in the forest»[42].

This difficulty, that is the large number of thieves living in insecurity due to the war and the increased burdens, but taking advantage of the confusing conditions, had to be dealt with in the area by both Transylvanians and Ottoman provinces and the traders who traded with them[43]. The following excerpts point to the difficulties of the water trade in the Maros (Rom. Mureș) due to looters:

> they attacked the other day the vessels going upstream, now [...] they raided the packed vessels going downstream and took their goods [...] and sent word that if fifty-fifty thalers are not given from each packed vessels, they shall be sunk [...][44].

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37 «a malomnak semmi haszna sincsen, mivel köve a pasának őröl», ANR, DJC, *Colecția personală Mike Sándor*, fond: 246. no. 1128.

38 See note no. 23. Moreover: MNL, OL, P658 Új rendezés, vol. 7, f. 1783.

39 MNL, OL, P659 *Missiles*, vol. 21. no. 675. ff. 40-1.

40 Petra Mátyás-Rausch, "Kupfergewinnung im Komitat Bihar im 16-17. Jahrhundert", *Vorschungen zur Volks und Landeskunde*, 63/1 (2020): 9-12.

41 «hatalmas császárunk réz bányájaként», MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 14. no. 331. f. 11.

42 Szilágyi, *Vértanúk*, 467; Sámuel Gergely, *Teleki Mihály levelezése*, vol. IV (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1908), 526; Ibid., vol. V, 131; Szilády and Szilágyi, *Török-magyarkori*, vol. 5, 28, 37-8.

43 ANR, DJC, *Mike Sándor*, no. 1057. See also: Szakály, *Magyar adóztatás*, 380, 392.

44 Mátyás-Rausch and Szalai, *Fejedelmi prefektusok*, 259.

Transylvanian traders have been forced to change their north-western trade route due to thieves raiding the *condominium* area[45], or traders have been murdered[46]. In addition, the "Greek" traders of the Balkans[47], who traded in commodities in Transylvania at the time, were confiscated or lost their money by residents of Saxon cities, such as Brassó (Rom. Braşov), which also had a strong interest in the Transylvanian trade[48]. In addition to occasional traders from the Balkans turning to dignitaries in the Ottoman provinces to remedy their grievances, the sources also report damage they have done to Ottoman soldiers in joint sovereignty areas[49]. Although the situation in the confines made it difficult to export and import goods from Transylvania, it is interesting to note that many Eastern products entered the Principality of Transylvania through traders in the Balkans. For example, it is well known that smoking became widespread in Transylvania during the time of Michael I Apafi[50], but the sherbet, a delicacy flavoured with honey and various herbs also became a popular drink thanks to the Ottoman-"Greek" mediation, especially for the upscale population[51].

Regarding "Greek" traders, it is also important to cover their business relations with the Transylvanian government. Their presence and assets were in part a solution for Transylvania's revenue loss due to *condominium*. As can be seen from the above, some of the customs and mines were either under the control of the Ottomans or destroyed. In addition, there was a continuing risk of losing other customs and mining sites along the border, as well as ports (*portus*) reserved for the transport of Transylvanian salt, which also made significant profits. The operation of customs, mines and salt ports which remained under their control despite the Ottoman presence were also cumbersome and often unprofitable for the Transylvanian government. Therefore, and due to the almost permanent shortage of cash, the Transylvanian government has decided to lease most of the customs and salt ports for an immediate, secure and lump-sum annual income (*arenda*). There was a "Greek" interest in almost all of the leases, the name of János Páter should be emphasized. As a result, the Transylvanian government earned a secure income of tens of thousands of forints a year from the 1670s onwards, and they did not have to deal with the day-to-day problems of operating customs and salt ports[52].

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45 ANR, DJS, *Benigni*, vol. 40, f. 19.

46 ANR, DJS, *Benigni,* vol. 40, f. 44.

47 Mária Pakucs, "This is their profession: Greek merchants in Transilvania and their Networks at the End of the 17th century", *Cromhos: Cyber review of modern historiography*, 21/1 (2018): 39-40.

48 ANR, DJS, *Benigni*, vol. 40, f. 13.

49 ANR, DJS, *Benigni*, vol. 40, f. 42.

50 Kinga S. Tüdős, "A dohányzással kapcsolatos erdélyi országgyűlési végzések", in *Országgyűlések–ország gyűlések*, ed. Dániel Ballabás (Eger: Líceum Kiadó, 2011), 34-54.

51 Ágnes Szalai, "Honey: the hidden treasure of the Principality of Transylvania", *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Historia*, 67/2 (2022): (Under release.)

52 Árpád Kulcsár, "Sóbányászat és sókereskedelem Erdélyben I. Apafi Mihály uralkodása idején", *Századok*, 125/5-6 (1991): 432-35. More examples here: MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*,

JOINT SOVEREIGNTY AND THE WEEKDAYS

The *condominium* and the resulting difficulties have also naturally changed the daily lives of the local population. Meeting the tax liability in several directions was in itself a serious burden on the population, and food shortages could also be a problem. As Ferenc Olasz, the captain of Somlyó put it: «here [...] poverty has risen so much that in some places, [people] live by drying and grinding the acorns and the bark of the tree»[53]. The presence of (taxing) soldiers and a large number of looters also made the everyday life of the population more difficult. According to sources, the abduction of the civilian population was daily, and in many cases locals, including women and children, were captured or killed[54]. Those passing through the *condominium* were not in an easier position either. Prince Michael I Apafi told the other members of the Transylvanian government about the horrors of everyday life:

> […] Ottomans of Várad are attacking, raiding and killing [them] for no reason. A few days ago, we have sent our dapifer to Debrecen when nineteen Ottomans grabbed him, hang him [...] in some forest, since then he was presumably already cut down[55].

As a result of the existing conditions, most of the landowners left the joint sovereignty territories and sometimes moved to their estates in the inner part of Transylvania, in absence of such an estate, they joined the service of the Transylvanian state. At the same time, as a result of the current situation, lower-strata social strata, such as serfs, also tried to get rid of their growing burdens and in several cases fled their landlords[56]. It is worth examining the situation of the escaped serfs, the problems arising from the increased burden of the population and the presence of Ottoman soldiers from a legal point of view, as well. The Transylvanian government, while maintaining their own jurisdiction in the region, sought to resolve the contradictions and problems in the area of the occupation at the Transylvanian

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vol. 11. no. 290. ff. 4, 14-5.

53 «itt […] már annyira jutott a szegénység, hogy némely helyen a makkot és a fa héját megszárasztván és őrölvén, azzal él», ANR, DJC, *Kemény József*, no. 361/8-9.

54 For examples see: Szilády and Szilágyi, *Török-Magyarkori*, vol. IV, 469-71.; MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 19, no. 665, f. 5; ANR, DJS, *Benigni*, vol 40. f. 42.

55 «[…] a váradiak is igaz ok nélkül szolgáinkra és embereinkre rátámadván, rabolják és vágják [ti. őket]. Az elmúlt napokban is étekfogónkat expediáltuk Debrecenbe, tizenkilenc török megragadta, felkötözte […] valami erdőbe, feltehetően levágták már», MNL, OL, X 7314 19048. *Törzsgyűjtemény* [Core Archives], Letter from Michael I. Apafi to Dénes Bánffy, 19 January 1674, nn.

56 ANR, DJC, *Mike Sándor*, no. 1102, 1105, 1107, 1141; ANR, DJC, *Colecția socoteli princiare* [Princely court sources], vol. 60, f. 138. This was a pre-existing phenomenon due to the *condominium*, however, as the difficulties increased, the extent of this also increased. Cf.: Ferenc Szakály, *Magyar intézmények a török hódoltságban* (Budapest: MTA TTI, 1997), 216-23.

judicial forums. At the same time, we must add that the Ottomans, similarly to the border region of the Kingdom of Hungary, did not really seek to control society in addition to securing their taxes from the inhabitants of the Transylvanian joint sovereignty territories and exploiting the economic potential of the territory[57]. This is reinforced by the fact that while the Ottoman dignitaries tried to lure their fleeing taxpayers back through concessions, the Transylvanians, although they also made concessions, investigated the cases according to their own custom[58]. An example of this is the case of the serfs who escaped from Sajókeresztúr (Rom. Cristur-Șieu) in Doboka County: their case was investigated before elected judges[59]. The increased tax burdens and the arbitrariness of the Ottomans were investigated before the Transylvanian county courts and/or the Transylvanian diet. As a result, it is not surprising that the much-mentioned Ferenc Olasz, the captain of Somlyó who, by the end of the period became lord lieutenant (Hun. *főispán*) of Kraszna and Közép-Szolnok Counties, conducted an *inquisitio* on the burdens of the subjugated population due to the Ottomans.[60] Furthermore, the investigation of the complaint of the residents of Magyarvalkó (Rom. Văleni) about the destruction of their church was also connected to the county court sitting in Somlyó[61].

It can also be seen from the latter case that the religious frictions that fundamentally determined everyday life were also present in the era. Várad ceased to exist as a former cultural and ecclesiastical centre since the start of the Ottoman rule in 1660, but in the area of joint sovereignty the Reformed Church, even in the shadow of the Ottomans, was able to continue to operate. The ecclesiastical and cultural role of Várad was taken over by the city of Debrecen and the Reformed College, a city of special status (*hass*), which was previously of special importance in this respect, supplying the population of the *condominium* with pastors and the schools with rectors[62]. However, in turbulent times, the people of dual-dominated territories also received help from the Transylvanian government in order to preserve the continuity of their church life. For example, Michael I Apafi waived 50 forints from the annual tax of the settlement for the maintenance of the school in Diószeg (Rom. Diosig), located in the aforementioned Manor of Székelyhíd in Bihar County[63]. The Prince

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57 Hegyi, *A magyar tartomány*, 22; Pál Fodor, "A kincstár számára a hitetlen a leghasznosabb: Az oszmánok magyarországi valláspolitikája", in *Magyar évszázadok. Tanulmányok Kosáry Domokos 90. születésnapjára*, ed. Mária Ormos (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2003), 88–99.

58 As an example see: ANR, DJC, *Mike Sándor*, no. 1241. Cf.: Szakály, *Magyar intézmények,* 55.

59 ANR, DJC, *Mike Sándor*, no. 1102, 1105, 1107.

60 MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 14. no. 328. ff. 84r-86v. Cf.: Mór Petri, *Szilágy vármegye monographiája*, I/XIII (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1901), 337.

61 Szilády and Szilágyi, *Török-magyarkori*, vol. V, 31.

62 István Szabadi, "A református egyház a hódolt Biharban", in *"Őrizzük Váradot…" Nagyvárad és Bihar vármegye története a kora újkorban,* ed. Teréz Oborni (Nagyvárad: Varadinum Kulturális Alapítvány, 2017), 55-68.

63 MNL, OL, P1239, *Apafi Mihály*, 2. d. no. 2-1675-13.

similarly supported the request of the residents of Magyarvalkó to restore their church. Indeed, the inhabitants argued that because of their exposure to Ottoman power, they could not do so on their own, as «we have to serve these strangers and pay taxes beyond our means»[64]. But, as in previous periods, the Transylvanian government also gave special support to the operation of the Debrecen College with a cash grant and salt, one of Transylvania's important natural resources. The latter, after its sale, also made a significant financial contribution to the operation of the school[65].

SUMMARY

The government of the Transylvanian Principality was seriously challenged by the Ottoman takeover of the castle of Várad in 1660. After the fall of this key destination, another Ottoman province with the centre of Várad was established in the Western neighbourhood of the state, in addition to the previously established *vilayet* of Temesvár (1552). However, as in other confines of the Ottoman Empire, no border line was drawn between the two Ottoman provinces and the state of the Principality of Transylvanian, which resulted in the existence of joint sovereignty (*condominium*) in the region.

With the expansion of the Ottomans, almost a third of the territory of the Principality of Transylvania, a significant part of the so-called Parts (Lat. *Partium*), was subject to shared taxation. The remaining population owed not only to the former Transylvanian landlords and the state of Transylvania, but also to the neighbouring Ottoman *vilayet*s and dignitaries by paying taxes on money and crops. Although a significant proportion of the population that survived the severe devastation of the mid-17th century war emigrated from the region due to increased tax burdens, the local population sought to agree to reduce their multi-directional tax liabilities through separate agreements with their Ottoman and Transylvanian leaders. However, the delivery of taxes has been hampered in many cases due to the declining population and the turbulent conditions. In addition, the two sides were also working to prevent the supply of taxes by serfs to another. This endeavour, in addition to the fact that the presence of soldiers sparked frictions and minor armed conflicts, was largely unsuccessful.

Joint sovereignty also had economic consequences: the Ottomans repeatedly succeeded in bringing the opportunities for economic gain, such as trade duties and mines, under their own control to maintain and supply their own provinces and officials. Although the Transylvanian government tried to preserve its economic influence over the area, it solved the problem by renting customs and salt ports in the area by the 1670s due to uncertain conditions, the presence of Ottomans and a large number of thieves and destruction. Leasing with the interest of usually "Greek" traders meant a lump sum and a certain amount of revenue for the Transylvanian government every year.

Of course, the *condominium* also had an impact on the daily lives of the civilian

64 «z idegeneknek erőnk felett kell szolgálnunk, s értékünk felett adóznunk», ANR, DJC, *Colecţia socoteli,* vol. 60, f. 87.

65 Tiszántúli Református Egyházkerület Levéltára, *Sinai Miklós-féle hagyaték*, I. 24. a. 5. no. 1060–1070.; MNL, OL, P659, *Missiles*, vol. 11, no. 290, f. 44.

population. In addition to the occasional food shortages, robberies and abuses by soldiers were commonplace. With the Ottoman rule of Várad, the ecclesiastical and cultural centre of the region was also lost, and the market town of Debrecen, which was already significant in the field of religion and culture, took its place. Although the presence of the Ottomans limited the opportunities for Christian churches to function, the local diocese and the Transylvanian government sought to maintain and support the continuity of church life, more often than not with success. Since the Ottomans' goal was basically to collect the taxes needed to run their own *vilayet*, the grievances of the *condominium* population were discussed in Transylvanian legal forums. At the same time, it is a fact that the leaders of the Transylvanian state and the Transylvanian society considered the presence of the Ottomans in the region to be temporary, so the Transylvanian government itself sought to preserve its own powers in all areas of public administration.

In addition, it is worth referring to the outstanding role of Captain Ferenc Olasz in Somlyó in the issue under review. The cases presented for illustrative purposes also suggest that the military officer of Genoa origin can be considered one of the key figures of Transylvanian advocacy in the Apafi period.

ABREVIATIONS

ANR: Arhivele Naţionale ale României
DJS: Direcţia Judeţeană Sibiu
DJB: Direcţia Judeţeană Bihor-Orodea
DJC: Direcţia Judeţeană Cluj-Cluj-Napoca
MNL: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár-Budapest
OL: Országos Levéltára

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FIGURES



Fig. 1 - Map by Béla Nagy cartographer (Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, Budapest, Hungary).