

Tusculum

2020
SOLIN-13

Tusculum

13

Solin, 2020.

Nakladnik

Javna ustanova u kulturi
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Solin

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Jafra Print Solin

Naklada

500 primjeraka

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Izdavanje časopisa novčano podupiru Grad Solin,
Ministarstvo znanosti i obrazovanja i Županija splitsko-dalmatinska.



UDK 908(497.5-37 Solin)

Tiskana inačica: ISSN 1846-9469

Mrežna inačica: ISSN 1849-0417

Tusculum

Časopis za solinske teme

13

Solin, 2020.

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Michael Ursinus

Ottoman *Çiftlik* / *Zemin* Holdings in the Grounds of Ancient Salona and the *Ager Salonitanus* before the Fall of Klis (1537)

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The survey register TD 157 (*tahrir defter*) is the earliest Ottoman survey register to throw some light on the gradual incorporation into the Sultan's realm of the territories situated in the immediate vicinity of Klis. As is well known, the fortress of Klis was finally taken by Ottoman forces only in March 1537 after a hard winter and a long siege, having been heroically defended by its commander, Petar Kružić, a native of Bihać. It is important to view Klis fortress and its hinterland separately, because when the fortress of Klis was threatened by Ottoman attacks, the *suburbium* of Klis situated below the fortification walls appears to have experienced a markedly different fate. The relevant *defter* entries demonstrate early cases of the gradual and at times tentative transition from Venetian to Ottoman rule in the hinterland of the Bay of Split up to two decades before the fall of Klis.

Key words: Klis, pre-Ottoman Klis, the *suburbium* of Klis, Salona, Kaštela, *çiftlik* possession, *zemin* possession

UDK: 94(497.583Klis)“14/15”
94(497.583Sućurac)“14/15”
94(497.583Salona)“14/15”
94(560)

Original scientific paper
Received: 4 October 2020

It appears that the immediate hinterland of pre-Ottoman strongholds such as Klis, Knin and (possibly) Sinj attracted early Ottoman forms of entrepreneurship and investment, such as turning abandoned landed property into what is known as *çiftlik* possessions.¹ Even if the land was not immediately ready for reaping regular harvests, such plots could be put to other uses, such as pasture, or was simply held in anticipation of safe and profitable forms of future exploitation. Ottoman raids and conquests and the subsequent large-scale recording of vacant land in the name of individual Ottoman beneficiaries must

have gone hand in hand – such at least is the evidence from the earliest survey registers that have survived for the area. For example, in the 1468/1469 *icmal defteri* for Bosnia executed only five years after the fall of Bosnia,² more than one hundred such holdings are accounted for under the heading of *çiftlik*.³ In TD 18, the next «summary» *tahrir defteri* for Bosnia dating from 1485 (but dismissed as «faulty» by the treasury), the *çiftliks* amount to a total of almost 400. Subsequent survey registers account for still more. In TD 157, there may be as many as twice that number (and this in spite of the fact that the

1 M. Ursinus 2020b.

2 Muallim Cevdet, No. O.76, Kütüphanesi İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Atatürk Kitaplığı; translated in full by A. S. Aličić 2008.

3 These more than one hundred *çiftliks* are recorded in O.76 in such a way that they form six distinct groups, of which three are defined geographically (or, to be more precise, territorially) according to the pre-Ottoman seigniorial divisions of the country into what belonged to the Bosnian king (*kral*), the Duke (*hersek*) Stjepan Vukčić Kosača, and the Pavlović family. A fourth group (with one apparent single exception) contains only *çiftliks* recorded as «empty» or «vacant» (*hal*) at the time of the survey. What the *çiftliks* in the three territorial groups (a total of 61) all have in common is that they are described as owing their tithes to the Bosnian *sancakbeği* (İsa Beğ Ishaković) as their landowner, whereas a fifth group, 34 in all, comprises *çiftliks* whose possessors owe their tithes to the sultan (Mehmed Fatih). All five groups have in common that they were bought from İsa Beğ (those with tithes for the sultan also from other *beğs*) by individual 'investors' before the time of the survey.

survey register in question is not complete), including the figures for the newly «conquered» territories in Zagorje, Krka and Lika districts.⁴ It must have paid for Ottoman «investors» to put their money into such *çiftliks*, particularly as *çiftlik* holding proved a versatile form of transaction: Such *çiftliks* «of the first hour» were a piece of landed investment on *miri* land with far-reaching ownership rights, held, either individually or collectively, by a Muslim *askeri* (or sometimes a Christian) as if he (or indeed she) were a member of the *reaya* class, remitting the tithe (and other dues) to the landlord (*sahib-i arz*, which in the early period typically was the *sancakbeği* or the sultan, later generally a *sipahi*), yet without owing him any personal obligations (unless the *çiftlik* was a military one as in the case of the *çiftlikçiyan*), combined with the right to freely dispose of the investment against payment of the title fee (*resm-i tapu*). Such a *çiftlik* is typically established on grounds abandoned by the previous (infidel) occupier, or on previously uninhabited sites such as *mezraas*, after being ceded by the authorities (in Istanbul or those in the provinces) on condition that the possession in question is recorded as a *çiftlik* in the survey register (*tahrir defter*, abbreviated as TD).

The recording in TD 157 (which was begun between 13 and 22 November 1528) of landed property in the area between Šibenik, Skradin, Knin, Sinj, Klis and Trogir allows us to establish a *terminus ante quem* for the establishment of an Ottoman (military and, to some extent, organisational if not already administrative) presence near some of the principal strongholds of the area. What becomes clear from a detailed analysis of the available Ottoman sources, in particular TD 157, is this: Some degree of Ottoman armed regulatory presence must have been felt throughout the Zagorje district and in the area adjacent to Klis by the year 1516 at the latest.

The area in the immediate vicinity of Klis was among the first to witness such an Ottoman presence from early on. As is well known, the fortress of Klis was finally taken by Ottoman forces only in March 1537 after a hard winter and a long siege (which had to be temporarily lifted because of the bitter weather conditions), having been heroically defended by its commander, Petar Kružić, a native of Bihać on the Una river. These assaults on the Klis stronghold had

become more frequent and more systematic as early as 1530, with the construction of three walled towers at either side of, and at a certain distance from, the fortress hill (near Konjsko, Grlo and Rupotina), and finally a fourth fortification south of Klis was erected in the immediate vicinity of the ancient city of Salona, commanded by Malkoč-beg kapetan, in order to cut off Klis fortress from its hinterland.⁵ But assaults on the inhabitants of the surrounding districts had started much earlier.

It is important to view Klis fortress and its hinterland separately, because when the fortress of Klis was threatened by Ottoman attacks, the *suburbium* of Klis situated below the fortification walls appears to have experienced a markedly different fate:

On 21 March 1516, Matij Michel, *knez* and *kapetan* of Split, reported from that city that the people of Klis [*suburbium*]⁶ had submitted (*podložili*) to the «Turks» and were paying tribute (*plaćaju danak*), which resulted in the *terra ferma* of Split below Klis being left open to Ottoman raids. On the 20th of that month, so the report goes, on Good Friday 1516, about 50 «Turkish» raiders on horseback had taken 18 captives and driven away some livestock, 18 large and 200 small. Eventually they took the spoil to Klis [*suburbium*] in order to share their loot with the townspeople.⁷ When according to the same source on 9 December 1517 an Ottoman force of 100 horse and 300 foot appeared above the *castello* of the archbishop [Kaštel Sućurac], they were beaten back with one «Turk» dead, while the Christians suffered one dead and three wounded. The «Turks» would then have retreated towards Klis *suburbium* which paid tribute to the Ottomans.⁸ Reportedly, the Ottoman military (to be sure) did not enter the fortress of Klis, but camped in the surrounding area. Two months before these events (i.e. at the beginning of October 1516) some inhabitants of Trogir staying in Venice stated that the «Turks» had under their control the environs of Klis, while the fortress itself was still in the hands of the Hungarian king.⁹

An extensive *derkenar* or marginal note in the Ottoman survey register TD 440 (of c.1550) refers to various lands in the vicinity of Klis fortress that had come into the possession of individuals already «during the time of the accursed infidels» (*küffar-i haksar zamanında uhdelerine*

4 For these areas, recorded primarily towards the end of TD 157, I count as many as 225 *çiftliks* on 250 pages. TD 157 contains 1091 pages in all.

5 L. Katić 1962, p. 337.

6 The additions in square brackets are mine.

7 L. Katić 1962, p. 330, referring to Marino Sanudo's *Diarj* in Arkiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku VI, p. 461.

8 Ibid, referring to Sanudo, Arkiv VIII, p. 6.

9 Ibid, referring to Sanudo, Arkiv VIII, p. 28.

kayd olunan kimesneleri tasarrufları),¹⁰ among which the register lists the grounds of the Church (or Chapel) of the Three Kings (*İtrokral kilisesi*) right in front of Klis *suburbium*.¹¹ It would therefore appear that Ottoman de-facto control of the surroundings of Klis fortress had already been established by the spring of 1516, at the latest,¹² with an arrangement in force (probably some form of *aman* or truce covering the unprotected *suburbium* as well as the open country) which resulted in the payment of tribute (*haraç*) by the townspeople of Klis who were organized as a separate *communitas* (with its own *sigillo*), while the fortress of Klis (described as a *harbi kale* or «enemy stronghold» until 1537) continued to enjoy the suzerainty of the king of Hungary, barring Ottoman troops from entering.

TD 157 is the earliest Ottoman survey register to throw some light on the gradual incorporation into the Sultan's realm of the territories situated to the west of Salona which originally belonged to the (medieval) villages nestling above the Bay of Split away from the sea in the hinterland of the fortified Kaštela settlements where their inhabitants had been retreating to.¹³ These agrarian lands lining up along the foothills below Kozjak mountain had already become part of the Ottoman-held territory centred around the *suburbium* of Klis by 1528-1530 and were recorded in the survey register TD 157 as a large *çiftlik* whose obligation for paying the tithe was suspended for reasons of its being situated adjacent to the Abode of War (in Arabic: *dar al-harb*), for laying waste and for not yet being cultivated at the time of composition. But while the grounds of the (former) villages of Smoljevac, Sućurac,¹⁴ Kozice and Krušvar/Kruševik¹⁵ had evidently already come under Ottoman control, some territory further to the east had remained in Venetian hands, including, of course, the city of Split and its *terra ferma* which enclosed the territory of ancient Salona.

TD 157 also allows a rare insight into the immediate pre-Ottoman past of ancient Salona which, at the time,

was manifestly still in Venetian hands. In this survey register composed between 1528 and 1530, Salona was considered, by the Ottoman census officials who were responsible for recording the status of the lands in question, as «enemy» territory, being legally part of the «Abode of War», i.e. outside the realm of the Sultan at the time of recording. The territory inside the walls of ancient Salona, described as a ruined castle known as Solun situated near the sea below the fortress of Klis, was recognized by the Ottoman scribes as the site of ancient Salona (in Ottoman: *Solun-i atik*) and considered as forming a *zemin* holding (which describes agrarian land which is neither of *çiftlik* nor *baština* status)¹⁶ not explicitly subject to the tithe. Being still situated outside the realm of the Sultan, any tithe obligations would have been merely theoretical anyway.

Below is shown a facsimile of the relevant defter entries followed by a transcription into Modern Turkish (System Yeni Redhouse) and a translation. The first entry lists the large *çiftlik* which comprises the grounds (*mezraa*) of the villages of (from east to west) Smoljevac, Sućurac, Kozice and Krušvar/Kruševik situated «between the fortresses of Klis and Trogir», the second the *zemin* possession embracing the walled territory of ancient Salona further to the east of Smoljevac as of 1528-1530:

Top Entry

Transcription:

Çiftlik-i Derviş Hasan ve Küçük Evrenos ve Korkud kale-i Klis ile Trogir arasında Sućurac ve Kozice ve Krušvar ve Ismolovac nam mezraalar ile Yerolim Lukasik yerleri ve bağları ve değirmen ocaklarıdır mezkur çiftlik Daru'l-Harba muttasıl muhavvif yerde olmağın ziraat olunmayub hali üzere ibka olındı ki ziraat olındıkda öşrin vereler hasil 30

10 TD 440, p. 208; cf. F. Hafizović 2014 p. 409-413.

11 *İtrokral kilisesi*. Part of the *timar* held by Küçük, son of Hasan Beğ. This location is described in the survey registers as «in the vicinity of Klis» (*der kurb-i Klis*) and «belonging to the fortress of Klis» (*tabi-i kale-i Klis*: TD 164, p. 323), also as «situated in front of the suburb of the Fortress of the Abode of War called Klis» (*Klis nam harbi kale varoşı önünde olan*: TD 157, p. 962). Because it is close to the Abode of War it is not yet worked, and therefore confirmed empty (*hali üzere ibka*). The church of *İtrokral* is identified here with the Chapel of the Three Kings (Trokral) in Klis-Varoš of which only a fountain remains today, known by that name.

12 Perhaps already by about mid-September 1515; Feridun M. Emecen 2016, p. 185.

13 V. Omašić 2001, vol. 1, p. 146 (map *Kaštelansko polje od XI do XV stoljeća*); I. Babić 1984, p. 70 (map *Srednji vijek*), 78-82, 107-173.

14 For Smoljevac and Sućurac in the pre-Ottoman period see V. Omašić 2001, vol. 1, p. 55-62.

15 The medieval villages of Kozice and Kruševik or Kruševo are discussed in V. Omašić 2001, vol. 1, p. 46-55. Since the survey register clearly states that the recorded *mezraas* are situated between Klis and Trogir, it is not possible to identify the *mezraa* given in the defter as «Krušvar» with a location of that name forming part of Dicmo near Sinj. «Krušvar» is therefore considered here as another variant of the place name in question.

16 For the category of *zemin* in Ottoman agrarian law see H. Šabanović 1964, p. 145.

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درویش حسن و کوردی و نور قو قلع و طبع ایام و زمین
 در اسنک کوردی و نورج و نور شور و اسول و طبع نام خرم ز لایم و ولیم
 یو قاسم بلور و باغلی و و کورس - او با قارر نه کور قنکر و از لایم
 منصف کوفی ایام و طبعین ز دلاعت - او لایم یوب عالی از ابقا و لایم
 ز دلاعت اولنه قن عسبر و یور

قاصد

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 در اسنک کوردی و نورج و نور شور و اسول و طبع نام خرم ز لایم و ولیم
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 ز دلاعت اولنه قن عسبر و یور

کوردی	کوردی	کوردی	کوردی
۱۵	۲	۲۰	۲

درویش حسن و کوردی و نور قو قلع و طبع ایام و زمین
 در اسنک کوردی و نورج و نور شور و اسول و طبع نام خرم ز لایم و ولیم
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 ز دلاعت اولنه قن عسبر و یور

قاصد

TD 157, p. 963

Translation:

Çiftlik of Derviş Hasan, Küçük Evrenos and Korkud: It consists of the tith fields (*mezraa*) of Suçurac, Kozice, Krušvar and Smolevac [situated] between the fortress of Klis and Trogir together with the plots, vineyards and water mills of Jerolim Lukašić. Because the said çiftlik is adjacent to the Abode of War and in a fear-inspiring place, it has not been cultivated but is confirmed as unproductive (*hali*), with the tithe to be remitted [only] as and when cultivated. Income: 30

Bottom Entry

Transcription:

Zemin ki kale-i Klis altında derya kurbında Solun demekle maruf harabe kale içinde olan yerlerdir deruhde-i İsmail Ağa ve Pir Ahmed haliya teftiş olındıkda sahibleri mukayyed olmayub tapu ile İbri oğlu Kasım Beğe verilüb üzerine kayd olunub defter-i cedide sebt olındı - der Darü'l-Harb hasil 30

Translation:

Grounds of *zemin* status which consist of the plots inside the ruined castle near the sea below Klis fortress known as Solin. In the care of İsmail Ağa and Pir Ahmed. Their possessors were not [found] recorded when lately inspected, and [consequently the lands] were awarded with title (*tapu ile*) to Kasım Beğ, son of İbri and recorded in his name. [Thus] it was inscribed in the New Register. [It is situated] in the Abode of War (*Darü'l-Harb*).

Income: 30

The above entries both suggest that neither possession was under Ottoman cultivation at the time of recording. In the instance of the village grounds (*mezraa*) turned *çiftlik* between Klis and Trogir this fact is stated explicitly, while in the case of Salona it can be safely assumed from the geographical location of the plot in the Abode of War. Since the benefits from cultivating the *zemin* of Salona were likely to be reaped only at some point in the future, its previous possessors, İsmail Ağa and Pir Ahmed, were found to have been less than meticulous with the requirements of the law. Their titles, on inspection, were found to be lacking the necessary legal endorsement by means of a kadi's *hüccet* or by recording in a *tahrir defteri*. As a consequence, their usufruct rights were annulled and their legal title (*tapu*) transferred to Kasım Beğ İbrizade, a military commander who was to reside near the provincial capital, Sarajevo, making him an absentee landlord for much of the period.¹⁷

As Ottoman possessions not yet under cultivation, both holdings, the large *çiftlik* as well as the much smaller but compact *zemin* grounds of ancient Salona, were each recorded in 1528-1530 as owing their (ultimate) landlord, the *sancakbeği*, a yield (*hasıl*) of no more than 30 *akçe*. This is at, or near, the minimum rate at which uncultivated landed possessions near the frontier, plots in exposed

locations generally or possessions that were (still) in «enemy» hands were assessed regularly at this time.

Taken together, both cases demonstrate early cases of the gradual and at times tentative transition from Venetian to Ottoman rule in the hinterland of the Bay of Split up to two decades before the fall of Klis.¹⁸ The first example represents the moment when Ottoman control in its early stages (indicated by the recording of vacant land in the name of individual Ottoman beneficiaries) was for the first time extended into the area of the former *ager salonitanus*. The second case depicts a moment in time shortly before this control was for the first time extended to encompass the walled grounds of the city of ancient Salona, too. Soon, the ancient site of the former capital of Roman Dalmatia was to become part of a collective *çiftlik* whose purpose was, after the fall of Klis in 1537, to sustain the Ottoman garrison of Klis fortress.¹⁹

In his pioneering article on *The hinterland of Split in the earliest Ottoman survey registers* which he wrote over thirty years ago, Fehim Spaho (dealing with the Zagorje area which consists of the three *nahiyes* of Zminje polje, Petrovo polje and Petrova gora) stated that only the easternmost parts of Zminje polje and Petrovo polje nearest to Sinj fell to the Ottomans before 1528,²⁰ and that Petrova gora further to the south and west became Ottoman territory only between 1528 and 1550.²¹ While these statements may still hold true as far as the establishment of a regular Ottoman administrative system is concerned, Ottoman interest (including financial interest) in these districts goes back much further. Significantly, agrarian areas in the vicinity of strongholds such as Klis, Knin and (to some extent) Sinj appear to have attracted Ottoman «investment» in landed property at a particularly early time, including the walled site of ancient Salona and parts of the *ager salonitanus*.

17 M. Ursinus 2020a, p. 377-382.

18 For more details see M. Ursinus 2018, p. 236-252; M. Ursinus 2020c.

19 F. Hafizović 2014, p. 409-413.

20 F. Dž. Spaho 1986, p. 48.

21 Loc. cit.: «Petrova gora čiji je cjelokupan teritorij [...] pao u tursku vlast poslije 1528, a prije 1550. godine [...]» But see also K. Kužić 1997, p. 95 and map (*zemljovid*) 5 «showing the situation in Zagora during the 16th century».

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Sažetak

Michael Ursinus

Otomanski çiftluk / zemin posjedi na prostoru stare Salone i salonitanskoga agera prije pada Klisa (1537.)

Ključne riječi: Klis, predotomanski Klis, predgrađe Klisa, Salone, Kaštela, çiftluk posjed, zemin posjed

O stanju u salonitanskom ageru i tvrđavi Klis prije konačnoga pada Klisa pod otomansku vlast 1537. godine postoje tek malobrojni povijesni izvori. Zbog toga su od iznimne historijske važnosti dva kratka teksta iz deftera TD 157, koja se u radu objavljuju u turskoj transkripciji i prijevodu. Iz njih je očito da je dio prostora između Klisa i Trogira skoro dva desetljeća prije pada Klisa bio pod otomanskom upravom. Zemljište, vinogradi i mlinovi Jerolima Lukašića bili su dodijeljeni kao çiftluk trojici turskih uglednika, a zemljište unutar razorene Salone kao zemin drugoj dvojici, potom i trećem, također za 30 akči. U vrijeme popisa, spomenuti çiftluk i zemin nisu bili obrađivani, pa je i cijena koja se za njihovo korištenje morala plaćati bila najniža.

Preveo Josip Dukić

