



# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FRANKAPANS AND THE HABSBURGS AT THE END OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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*At the beginning of the 16th century, the Croatian noble family, the Frankapans, found itself, like the entire Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom, facing increasingly intense Ottoman invasions. In an effort to protect their possessions, the Frankapans could not count on the help of Hungarian-Croatian kings, whose power was weakening, but had to rely on their own strength and the help they could find in foreign rulers. Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan established strong ties with the Habsburgs in the early 16th century, in which they saw help in defending against the Ottomans. Frankapan-Habsburg relations would play a very important role in later political circumstances in the first half of the 16th century.*

**Keywords:** *Bernardin Frankapan, Krsto Frankapan, Habsburgs, the Ozalj branch of the Frankapan family*

## Introduction

In the middle of the 15th century, the Frankapan family had split into several branches. Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan, father and son, came from the Ozalj branch, who, as the most powerful Croatian nobles at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, significantly marked this period of Croatian history. Their policy was marked by efforts to restore lost possessions and maintain existing ones due to the increasing number of Ottoman invasions. The tactic they used was to side with the side that was strongest in Croatian history at one point, resulting in turbulent relations with the Hungarian-Croatian kings and rapprochement with foreign rulers, primarily the Habsburgs. Their ties with Habsburg rulers in the first decades of the 16th century will play a significant role in later periods of early modern Croatian history.



This paper seeks to briefly present the Frankapan-Habsburg relations for Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan and the consequences of this relationship for the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia. In terms of content, the paper is organized in such a way as to first point out the reasons why the Frankapans turned more and more to the Habsburgs at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century, then comes an analysis of their relationship up to the crowning of the Habsburgs as Croatian-Hungarian rulers, finally examining their animosities during the civil war in the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom.

Although there is much literature on the Frankapan blood line, much of that literature falls on their relations with king Matthias Corvinus and their participation in an uprising of noblemen in the mid-17th century. The literature dealing with Frankapan-Habsburg relations at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century is not so extensive, but the foundations for further research have been laid, the most important being Milan Kruhek's research on Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan, presented in the monograph *Krsto Frankopan - with Sword and Speech for Croatia* (Modruš: Chair of the Čakavian Parliament of Modruš, 2016).

### **Trust in the Habsburgs**

The main goal of the Frankapans from the second half of the 15th century was to preserve their family estates in the face of increasingly serious Ottoman invasions and the complicated political situation in the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom. In such circumstances, the Frankapans were forced not only to cooperate with the Hungarian-Croatian kings but also to seek outside help. The Habsburg dynasty was also more than an obvious choice for a position that could secure them the help they needed.

### **Reasons for turning to the Habsburgs**

The main reasons for turning to the Habsburgs were the problems that threatened Frankapan possessions from the outside – the Ottoman invasions, and in part the Venetian invasions, and from within – the strengthening of royal power during the reign of Matthias Corvinus and, later, the lack of effective defence of the kingdom and hence the Frankapan possessions as well.



Occasional Ottoman invasions of Croatian territory became more frequent in the second half of the 15th century. The estates of all Croatian nobles became the scene of frequent conflicts, pillaging and the enslavement of the population. This hit the Frankapans hard, whose estates stretched over a wide area from Trsat, through Lika all the way to Ozalj, and from 1449 they were no longer owned by one, but eight Frankapan family branches, which further complicated their defence.<sup>1</sup> Conflicts and quarrels often arose within the family itself due to dissatisfaction with the division of property. The second threat to the Frankapan estates came from the Venetian Republic, which had an interest in occupying the Kvarner estates, especially the island of Krk, which it succeeded in 1480 due to political turmoil in the Kingdom. The centralization of the power of Matthias Corvinus was especially directed against the nobles, including the Frankapans, whom the king especially resented for his close ties with the Venetians and his opponent in the fight for the throne, the German Emperor Frederick III. In 1469, the royal army occupied Senj to strengthen the anti-Ottoman defence system, and the king soon took Vinodol from the Frankapans. The return of these estates became the main motive of Frankapan politics until the extinction of the Ozalj lineage in the middle of the 16th century, and will be especially strong for Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan. The relationship between the Frankapans and the king was soon repaired by multiple marital ties, but the mutual relations were always on the verge of breaking up, which was seen in the re-conflict of the king with Frederick III in the 1480s. The death of Matthias Corvinus brought an end to the ruler's pressure on the nobles, but it did not return the lost possessions to the Frankapans.<sup>2</sup> The defeat at the Krbava Field showed the nobility, especially the Frankapans, as the strongest nobles in Croatia at the time, the need for financial and military assistance from outside, as it did not come enough from King Vladislaus II Jagiello.

All these challenges that the Frankapan family faced in order to preserve their acquired heritage and privileges prompted them to seek a strong ally among foreign rulers, and the most important ally of the Frankapans in the early 16th century would be the Habsburgs.

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1 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš, Bernardin and Krsto Frankopan - with Sword and Speech for Croatia*, p. 19 (hereinafter: *The Counts of Modruš*).

2 Budak, *Croatia and Slavonia in the Early Modern Age*, p. 14-16 (hereinafter: *Croatia and Slavonia*).



## First contacts

The first contacts with the Habsburgs came as a result of the struggle for the Hungarian-Croatian throne between supporters of the underage Matthias Corvinus and Frederick III, who was also supported by the Frankapans.

Ottoman invasions in the 1460s seriously threatened Frankapan possessions for the first time. Stephen II Frankapan, Bernardin's father and Krsto Frankapan's grandfather, went on a diplomatic mission to Venice and Rome, after the fall of Bosnia, on the king's orders to obtain defence aid, but also privately tried to find help at the court of the Margrave of Ferrara and Modena.<sup>3</sup> He did not receive the expected help, and the Frankapan estates suffered increasing damage from Ottoman incursions and looting, which in 1468 reached Modruš, one of Frankapan's most important estates, according to which the descendants of Stephen II also called themselves "Frankapans of Modruš". Therefore, Stephen II decided to seek help from the Habsburgs, i.e. from the German Emperor Frederick III, to whose court in Graz in 1469 he sent his son Bernardin, then a young man of 16, as a pledge for the help sought. Bernardin Frankapan was given the opportunity to see the then highest European politics at the imperial court and to gain, for later periods of his life, extremely important diplomatic experience, and it was recorded that he attended imperial audiences several times.<sup>4</sup>

Connecting with the Habsburgs and lobbying for help at the doge's court, brought the Frankapans into the king's disfavour. In the new conflict between Matthias Corvinus and Frederick III in the early 1480s, the Frankapans had to be on the king's side due to marital ties. After becoming the head of the family, Bernardin Frankapan devoted himself to strengthening ties with the king, but also continued the family tradition of possible reliance on the Venetians and Habsburgs in the event of a change in political circumstances in the kingdom. The changes came very quickly with the death of Matthias Corvinus, so the Frankapans briefly renewed ties with the Habsburgs, who set their sight on the Hungarian-Croatian crown. Frankapan-Habsburg ties were short this time because the throne did not ultimately belong to the Habsburgs. Since the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom was an electoral monarchy, the nobility chose Jagiello, the Polish dynasty that

<sup>3</sup> Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 30-32

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



ruled the Czech lands at the time, as the new ruler. The main reason for the election of Jagiello was the fear of the nobility of re-establishing a strong royal government under Matthias Corvinus, and the size of the state ruled by the newly elected rulers prevented centralization. The situation after the Battle of Krbava Field again prompted the Frankapans, on whose back now rested a large part of the defence of almost the entire Kingdom of Croatia, to appeal even more to the Habsburgs in order to secure support in organising their defence.<sup>5</sup>

The first Frankapan-Habsburg relations in the second half of the 15th century were mainly the result of dynastic conflicts between Hungarian-Croatian kings and German emperors. The need for support in countering Ottoman attacks on family estates became a priority that ultimately led to a growing rapprochement with the Habsburgs.

### **Attitude towards the Battle of Mohach**

Frankapan-Habsburg relations reached their peak in the first quarter of the 16th century, coinciding with a period of greatest threat to Frankapan possessions. The military service of the most prominent members of the family in the imperial army and the diplomatic activity of the Frankapans, reflect the strong ties between the two families. The Frankapans gradually became the greatest advocates of the Habsburgs as the new rulers of the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom.

### **Bernardin Frankopan**

While his son Krsto was away from Croatia, Bernardin Frankopan had to devote himself entirely to the defence of his estates, and thus also of Croatia, in which he could do nothing but rely on himself and partly on the support of the Habsburgs.

By the early 1420s, Bernardin was already in an advanced age and less and less capable of active military and political service, but he did his best to defend the family estates. The fall of Belgrade in 1521 was a particularly worrying event because this conquest showed the seriousness of the sultan's intention to conquer the kingdom, i.e. the imminent great attack.<sup>6</sup> The Croatian nobility was not united in its ap-

5 Budak, *Croatia and Slavonia*, p. 15-16.

6 Kruhek, *Bernardin Frankopan, The Prince of Krk, Senj and Modruš - the Last European of Modruš of the Croatian Middle Ages, 1453 - 1529.*, The Modruš Almanac Vol. 3 No. 3



proach to the Ottomans due to various quarrels, which Bernardin had with some nobles, so, as, by far, the most powerful nobleman, he most-ly stood out in preparing the defence. This prompted him to seek help, traditionally, from foreign rulers. A visit to Venice in 1522 did not bring the expected result<sup>7</sup>, so he went to the Assembly of the German Nobility in Nuremberg, where he gave one of the most famous Croatian anti-Ottoman speeches before Archduke Ferdinand and Emperor Charles V. He hoped that the Habsburgs, with whom the Frankapans had had developed relations for decades, would be understanding and give him the necessary support in the fight against the Ottomans. He delivered his speech before the German classes on three occasions in November 1522.<sup>8</sup> In his speech, he stressed the need to defend Croatian lands, which are a bulwark of Europe, which was expressed in the claim that Croatia is “the shield and door of Christianity”. He did not receive the desired response from the emperor and the archduke, and thus neither the necessary help, because the Habsburgs were more preoccupied with the strengthening of Luther’s teachings than with the growing Ottoman threat. However, the archduke increased the presence of soldiers on the borders of Carniola and in the fortifications he took under the protection from the Croatian nobles.<sup>9</sup>

The intercession of Bernardine Frankapan with the German Emperor and Archduke Ferdinand led to the strengthening of closer ties with the Habsburgs, but, at the same time, showed the unwillingness of the Habsburgs to fully respond to, what were, in their eyes, at the time, second-class demands.

### **Krsto Frankapan**

Krsto Frankopan entered the military service of the German Emperor Maximilian at the beginning of the 16th century, which in many ways determined his later life. The relationship with the Habsburgs later, as in the case of Krsto’s father Bernardin, was largely maintained through diplomacy.

The war between the Venetian Republic and the German emperor gave Krsto the opportunity to take revenge on the Venetians for the alienation of Krk, but also for the possible return of the island to Franka-

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(2009), p. 214-216

7 *Ibid.*

8 Bernardin Frankopan of Modruš, *A Speech for Croatia (1522)*, p. 90-93

9 *Ibid.*



pan rule. The collapse of these efforts proved to be very possible during the armistice between the Venetian Republic and the emperor, but it did not last, so Krsto continued his engagement on the battlefield in Friuli and Istria. After proving himself to be an experienced and skilled warrior and commander, Krsto was given command of the imperial forces to liberate some Istrian towns from Venetian rule, which he did very successfully.<sup>10</sup> With these successes, Krsto's prestige with the emperor grew more and more, so in 1513, after several successful attacks and repulsed sieges in previous years, Krsto became the supreme military commander of the imperial army in the new war against the Republic. Krsto was assisted in the war by his father Bernardin, especially in the first years, but the focus of Bernardin's activities in that period was on the defence of family estates, especially in Lika and Pounje.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, two significant events in Krsto's life took place that affected the relationship with the Habsburgs in two ways. Frequently visiting the people on the imperial court, Krsto met Apollonia Lang, a young widow and sister of Matthias Lang, Bishop of Krk and Archbishop and Cardinal of Salzburg, and one of the emperor's closest and most influential advisers. Krsto and Apollonia were married in 1513, and with this marriage Krsto significantly strengthened his ties at Maximilian's court and entered the circle of the most privileged people loyal to the emperor. His wife bequeathed Pazin and Gorica to him, thus expanding and consolidating the Frankapan estates after a long time.<sup>12</sup> Military merits further expanded the Frankapan estates after the emperor granted Krsto the cities of Novigrad and Postojna in Istria together with the corresponding estates of the Postojna estate.<sup>13</sup>

Another important event was a period spent in Venetian captivity, from 1514 to 1519. Namely, Krsto hoped that, as a high military officer of the imperial army, he would be quickly released through the emperor's mediation. His father Bernardin, who at one point offered Venice some of his estates in exchange, the Hungarian-Croatian king and their cousin Matthias Lang, also worked to release him through diplomatic channels, but the emperor was the greatest hope for his liberation. The situation turned out to be different, so Krsto's captivity lasted for five long years, during which he first realized that, to the Habsburgs,

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10 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 110-111

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Ibid.*, p. 112-113

13 *Ibid.*



their interests were above all other matters. Maximilian did not completely abandon Krsto, whose liberation he partly advocated through diplomacy, and occasionally sending letters of support and financial aid to Krsto, but the foreign policy situation did not allow concessions to Venice, which could lead to Krsto's liberation. When a truce was finally reached between the warring parties, which required the release of prisoners on both sides, the Venetians excluded their most precious prisoner from it.<sup>14</sup> Better opportunities came in 1519 when the Venetians released Krsto from Venice to Milan, where he stayed as a prisoner of the French king. The emperor's imminent death marked the end of a hope that he could be released through the emperor's mediation, which he eventually won by fleeing Milan.<sup>15</sup> One of the first things he did at liberty was to connect with the new German emperor, Charles V, who in 1521 named Krsto "Captain of Rasp and Kras". That is to say, he gave him command over the same territory he commanded under the previous emperor. The opportunity to show all his warrior skills again in the service of the Habsburgs did not arrive because a long-term truce was made with Venice, so Krsto then turned to domestic, Croatian circumstances.<sup>16</sup>

Krsto did not return to his homeland immediately, but spent some more time in imperial political circles, hoping to strengthen ties with Emperor Charles and Archduke Ferdinand. In Linz he attended the wedding of Archduke Ferdinand and Anna, the sister of the Hungarian-Croatian king Louis, and then returned to Croatia where there were increasingly difficult circumstances caused by Ottoman attacks and the fall of key fortifications in the south, which allowed the Ottomans almost unhindered attacks on Croatia and hence on the Frankapan estates. Before returning to Croatia, after realizing that his military service was no longer as good as before, he asked to be discharged from Habsburg military service, which was granted, but he remained connected to the Habsburgs via the estates he had received for his services in the war against the Venetians.<sup>17</sup> Krsto advocated strengthening the anti-Ottoman defences as much as he could with King Louis, and he gave a famous speech before the pope in 1523.<sup>18</sup> Complete disappointment in the king's defence

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14 Kartelo, *Bernardin and Krsto Frankopan*, p. 30-31

15 *Ibid.*, p. 32-35

16 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 135

17 Klaić, *The History of Croats*, vol. 4., p. 394-395

18 Klaić, *The History of Croats*, vol. 4., p. 360-361





policy came after the successful siege of Jajce in June 1525, after which, despite the king's gratitude, he was publicly humiliated for not being appointed Ban of Croatia and Slavonia, as demanded by the Croatian nobility. It was a much bigger insult for Krsto that the king refused to return Senj to the Frankapans. Guided by the Frankapan example, most Croatian nobles, in the hope of military and financial assistance, began to turn to Ferdinand of Habsburg, who had previously taken under his protection a fortress that the nobility could not defend.<sup>19</sup> Together with a part of the nobility, Krsto went to the Archduke in Augsburg in the spring of 1526 to place himself under his protection. Despite refusing the request, Ferdinand appointed Nikola Jurišić supreme captain of his army in Croatia, and Krsto re-entered the military service of the House of Habsburg, believing it to be the best way of aiding the fight against the Ottomans.<sup>20</sup>

In the first two decades of the 16th century, Frankapan-Habsburg relations intensified significantly. Although there were some disagreements, the Habsburgs became the main hope of the Frankapans in their efforts to preserve family power.

### **Frankapans against the Habsburgs**

Bernardin and Krsto Frankapan became the leaders of the Croatian nobility in the period after the death of Louis II of Hungary, and with their influence they significantly contributed to Ferdinand of Habsburg gaining the support of the Croatian nobility. Such circumstances in the second half of 1526 will mark the peak of the close relations between the Frankapans and the Habsburgs, but, at the same time, due to a combination of circumstances, their sudden coup will take place as well.

### **Siding with John Zápolya**

The Battle of Mohács left the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom without a ruler, and the division in the nobility between the Archduke's supporters and the supporters of John Zápolya, further aggravated the whole situation.

From the beginning, the Frankapans firmly held the Archduke's side, not only the Ozalj branch but also other branches of the fami-

<sup>19</sup> Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 143-145

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*; Kartelo, *Bernardin and Krsto Frankopan*, p. 41; Budak, *Croatia and Slavonia*, p. 18



ly. It was extremely important to Ferdinand that Krsto Frankapan, as the most powerful Croatian nobleman, and at the same time the best Croatian military leader, be on his side. Together with Captain Nikola Jurišić and Ivan Puchler, the commander of the city of Mehovo, Krsto formed Ferdinand's delegation that went to Croatia to persuade the Croatian nobility to elect the Habsburgs to the throne.<sup>21</sup> Krsto's reputation grew even more when both Croatian and Slavonian nobles proclaimed him, in September 1526 at the Parliament in Koprivnica, their *supreme leader and defender*, making him one of the central figures of the kingdom, without whose support none of the conflicting parties could do anything. Although loyal to Ferdinand, and also in his service, he had not yet fully committed himself to the Archduke, as evidenced by the rejection of the invitation of Queen Anne, Louis' widow and Ferdinand's sister, to come to a meeting in Heinburg. The main reason for his indecision was that Ferdinand did not give a clear guarantee regarding the return of Senj, and Krsto, having in mind his strong position and the power needed by both sides, wanted to get as much out of it as possible.<sup>22</sup>

At the beginning of November 1526 he met with Ferdinand in Bratislava, who then promised that Senj would return to the Frankapans and that Krsto would become the supreme commander of Hungary, but only when Ferdinand was crowned with the crown of Saint Stephen. Again, there was no clear guarantee because the conflict with John Zápolya could last.<sup>23</sup> Zápolya had the support of most of the Hungarian and Slavonian nobility, and the Hungarian nobles crowned him with the crown of Saint Stephen in early November in Székesfehérvár, so he gained a great advantage over the Habsburg side. In such circumstances, Krsto decided to change sides, and at the end of November 1526, together with the Bishop of Zagreb, Šimun Erdödy, he recognized Zápolya as his king.<sup>24</sup> The refusal to support Ferdinand was conditioned by previous experience with unfulfilled Habsburg promises, but mostly by the fact that Zápolya fulfilled all the demands regarding the return of confiscated Frankapan possessions and requested serv-

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21 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 150

22 *Ibid.*, p. 151; Klaić, *The History of Croats*, vol. 5, p. 74; Ferdo Šišić, *The Election of Ferdinand I as Croatian King*, Old Croatian Enlightenment Vol. 1 No. 1-2 (1927): 22-24 (hereinafter: *The Election of Ferdinand I*).

23 Andreja Kartelo, *Bernardin and Krsto Frankopan*, p. 44.

24 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 153; Šišić, *The Election of Ferdinand I*, p. 28-30



ices. Krsto thus became the Ban of Croatia and Slavonia and the supreme captain of Hungary between the Drava and the Danube rivers, and he also received money to equip the army for the war against Ferdinand. Bernardin followed his son's choice, while the other branches of the family remained on the archduke's side.<sup>25</sup>

Family and class demands brought Krsto over to Zápolya's side, positioning him in the next civil war as one of the main enemies of the Habsburgs.

### Civil war

The civil war between the two contenders for the Hungarian-Croatian throne became inevitable by the beginning of 1527, and Krsto Frankapan played a very important role in it.

The Slavonian nobility, led by Krsto, sided with John Zápolya at the Parliament in Dubrava on January 6, 1527, while the Croatian nobility had previously confirmed the decision of a small number of Hungarian nobles at the end of 1526 to elect Ferdinand of Habsburg. Zápolya was initially in a better position due to greater support from the nobility and recognition by leading European states, but he did not make the most of it. Krsto's advice to immediately act militarily while the opponent was weaker was not taken into account, so over time the balance of power became more and more equal and eventually turned in Ferdinand's favour.<sup>26</sup> The hostile relations with the Habsburgs did not bring Krsto the expected success because, due to the obligations assigned to him and the gathering of Zápolya's army, he was less and less able to defend his possessions, and in lack of money he was forced to mortgage them. Although aware that the transition to Zápolya's side was a bad tactical move, Krsto remained in Zápolya's service and continued preparations for a conflict with Ferdinand's forces.<sup>27</sup>

The first major conflicts occurred in early September 1527, when part of Ferdinand's forces reached Varaždin. After several successes in open skirmishes, Krsto decided to conquer the Varaždin fortress, which, although the rest of the city surrendered, was still held by Ferdinand's supporters. At the same time, Zápolya was under heavy pressure in Hungary, so he invited Krsto to come with the army, but Krsto

25 Klaić, *The History of Croats*, vol. 5, p. 78

26 Šišić, *The Election of Ferdinand I*, p. 40-43; Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 153.

27 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 153-154



did not want to leave unfinished business. However, in preparation for the siege, he was hit by a cannonball and died of his wounds on September 27, 1527.<sup>28</sup> Krsto's death facilitated Ferdinand's victory in Slavonia, while the Ozalj branch of the Frankapan was brought almost to extinction. The aged and disabled Bernardin Frankapan had no choice but to recognize Ferdinand as king. Surviving his sons, in his will, he bequeathed all the family estates to the king, until the grandson of Stjepan reached the age of majority, which the king accepted and appointed Nikola Jurišić as the manager of the Frankapan estates after Bernardin's death.<sup>29</sup> With this, Frankapan-Habsburg relations were normalized again, but they will never have the same strength and role as before the civil war.

Participation in the civil war brought the Frankapans a sudden weakening of power and the loss of many estates, resulting in the loss of primacy among the Croatian nobility in the following decades.

## Conclusion

Frankapan-Habsburg relations at the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century, especially expressed in military-political issues in the first quarter of the 16th century, arose as a result of complex processes that affected the historic Croatian lads in the late Middle Ages. Firstly, it was the increasingly larger Ottoman threat that threatened the Croatian nobility, especially magnates like the Frankapans, their possessions and thus their existence, and the strengthening of royal power of Matthias Corvinus, then the weakening of Jagiellonian royal power, which weakened the defence of the Hungarian-Croatian Kingdom. The Frankapans are an example of a noble family that is forced, unable to effectively deal with these threats on its own, to seek outside help, which in the Frankapan case is represented by the Habsburgs. From the first and weakest ties with the Habsburgs in the second half of the 15th century, the relations of the two families in the first decades of the 16th century gradually reached their peak. Bernardin and, in particular, Krsto Frankapan, are the main protagonists of the increasingly strong positioning alongside the Habsburgs, which is achieved through military service and diplomatic seeking of help in

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28 Klaić, *History of the Croats*, p. 100-102; Budak, Strecha, Kušelj, *The Habsburgs and the Croats*, p. 45

29 Kruhek, *The Counts of Modruš*, p. 81-82



defending their estates. The Frankapan course of action was gradually accepted by other Croatian nobles, so the Habsburgs became the main hope of the Croatian classes in their protection from the Ottomans. The relationship between the Frankapans and the Habsburgs became especially important for the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia at the time of the election of the new king in the mid-1520s, when the Frankapans, embodied by Krsto Frankapan, were in the role of the main advocates and later the main supporters of John Zápolya. Short-term participation in the civil war for the Hungarian-Croatian throne left severe consequences on the Frankopans, who were left without heirs and much of their former power, but also on the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, which became a much easier target for Ottoman conquests. Taken as a whole, the attachment of the Frankapans to the Habsburgs ultimately had negative consequences for them, but made it easier for the latter to ascend the throne.

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