



THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS IN THE SOUTHERN HUNGARIAN KINGDOM PREPARATION FOR BATTLE

Summary. Until now, the presence of Teutonic knights in the 15th century was analysed mainly based on historical sources. The publications to date focused on the causes of the Teutonic Order's arrival, the results of their actions, the area they received for administration, and the fortifications they controlled. In this regard, we can mention the works of T.H. Trâpcea (1969), Alexandru Nemoianu (1975), Ioan Hațegan (1979), Eugen Glück (1992), Viorel Achim (2013 and 2014), and Costin Feneșan (2015). The information acquired from written records comes primarily from the documents found in the Teutonic Order's archives. However, other sources also mention the Knights' presence and activities in the Banate.¹ These records were also used by Romanian historians to analyse the Knights' relationship with the local population.

The Teutonic Knights – namely a group of 13 Knights under the leadership of Klaus von Redwitz – arrived in Hungary in the autumn of 1429 at the request of King Sigismund of Luxembourg and withdrew from the Banate 1434 or 1435. Nineteen fortifications on the Danube and three located further north (Almăj, Ilidia/Socolari, Mehadia) were assigned to them. Two others (Carașova and Bârzava) were also in Wallachian districts but were not mentioned and their obligations. Archaeological excavations have been made in the last 50 years, archaeologists carried out excavation works in some fortifications previously administered by the Teutons: at Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Tricule-Svinița, Saint Ladislau, and in auxiliary fortifications which primary role was to supply goods and people (Carașova, Mehadia, Ilidia/Socolari).

¹ The Banat is currently the region of southwestern Romania and partly Serbia east of the Tisza River and Hungary, the portion between the Mureș River to the north and the Tisa. In the Middle Ages, with some interruptions, there was also Western Oltenia, Banatul de Severin, in the part of the current region. Its borders were fluctuating. It followed chronologically that of Lugoj-Caransebeș (created gradually between the years 1526–1536), in the east of the current Banat, integrated into the Principality of Transylvania. It partially overlapped the Banat of Severin. In the modern period, the entire region between the rivers Mureș, Tisa, the Danube and the Carpathian Mountains was known as Banat. In the following, I will use the generic name of Banat.

The preparations for battle with the Ottomans made by the 13 Teutonic knights and their retinues proved to be without great results. Furthermore, the amounts required by the Teutonic Knights to cover the most necessary expenses amounted to 346 140 florins per year, a sum too high for the economic capabilities of the Middle Danube region to be raised locally. The Ottoman campaigns of 1432 and 1433 led to the destruction of some fortresses and of their garrisons, including Severin and St. Ladislau. The tactics of the defenders to lock themselves in the fortresses proved to be inefficient when they had to fight with extremely mobile and numerous Ottoman armies.

Keywords: Teutonic Knights, Hungarian Kingdom, battle, fortifications, weapons, boats

The stage of the research in Romania

Until now, the presence of Teutonic knights in the 15th century was analysed mainly based on historical sources. The publications to date focused on the causes of the Teutonic Order's arrival, the results of their actions, the area they received for administration, and the fortifications they controlled.² In this regard, we can mention the works of Theodor N. Trâpcea,³ Alexandru Nemoianu,⁴ Ioan Hațegan,⁵ and Eugen Glück.⁶

Recently, Viorel Achim published a selection of historical works regarding the presence of Teutonic knights at the Middle Danube in the 15th century, in *Banatica* journal⁷ and in the volume edited by Konrad Gündisch, *Generalprobe Burzenland: Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens in Siebenburgen und im Banat. Harald Zimmermann zum 85. Geburtstag*, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2013.⁸ The first article contains almost all the references in Ro-

² Ș. MATEI, *Fortificații de pe teritoriul Banatului în lumina izvoarelor scrise*, "Banatica" 1979, no. 5, pp. 255–263.

³ T.N. TRÂPCEA, *Despre unele cetăți medievale din Banat*, "Studii de Istorie a Banatului" 1969, vol. 1, pp. 23–82.

⁴ A. NEMOIANU, *Unele aspecte privind prezența teutonilor în Banat (1429–1432)*, "Muzeul Național" 1975, vol. 2, pp. 381–386.

⁵ I. HAȚEGAN, *Cavalerii teutoni în Banatul Severinului (1429 – 1435)*, "Tibiscus" 1979, vol. 5, pp. 191–196.

⁶ E. GLÜCK, *Date noi cu privire la prezența cavalerilor teutoni la frontiera Banatului (1429–1437)*, "Revista Istorică" 1992, S.N. 3, no. 7–8, pp. 783–792.

⁷ V. ACHIM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton în istoria Banatului de Severin*, "Banatica" 2014, vol. 24, pp. 37–46.

⁸ IDEM, *Der Stellenwert des Deutschen Ordens in der Geschichte des Banats von Severin*, [in:] *Generalprobe Burzenland: Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte des Deutschen Ordens in Siebenbürgen und*

manian literature regarding the presence of the Teutonic Order in the territory of present-day Romania and further afield.⁹ The historian Costin Feneşan recently published a detailed paper about the presence of the Teutonic Knights in south-eastern Banate.¹⁰

A main focus of Romanian historians has been the difficulties of the Kingdom of Hungary in the 1420s, especially in its relationship with the Ottoman Empire.¹¹ Moreover, it has also been taken into consideration the organisation of the region both before the arrival of the Teutons¹² and during their presence in the borderland between the Kingdom of Hungary and the Ottoman Empire – on the Danube (between Severin and Haram) and in the Caransebeş area, including the social¹³ and military¹⁴ implications as regards the local population. A large part of the local elites and population suffered: not only was the common population subjected to taxes and additional duties, knyazes and nobles found themselves having reduced authority and becoming auxiliaries of the Teutons. The religious issues between the Orthodox majority and the Catholic Teutons, combined with the order of Sigismund of Luxembourg of 5 December 1428 that prohibited non-Catholics from holding any estates in the Caransebeş region, amplified the tensions in the area.¹⁵

im Banat. Harald Zimmermann zum 85. Geburtstag, ed. K. GÜNDISCH, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2013, pp. 177–188.

⁹ IDEM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton...*, p. 37 and 38. See also the notes no. 3 and 4.

¹⁰ C. FENEŞAN, *Cavalerii Teutoni în Banatul Severinului și la Dunărea de Jos în prima jumătate a secolului al XV-lea (Documente și extrase)/Der Deutsche Order im Severiner Banat und an der Niederen Donau, in der ersten Hälfte des XV. Jahrhunderts (Urkunden und Auszüge)*, Reșița 2015.

¹¹ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 191–192; V. ACHIM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton...*, p. 43; C. FENEŞAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–24.

¹² V. ACHIM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton...*, pp. 39–42.

¹³ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 193. These are, in particular, the trials they adjudicated, but especially the obligations to which the population of the Wallachian districts were subjected. The demands and claims of the Teutons were contrary to the rights of the Wallachians to be tried in trials by their princes or king and not by any other authority. V. ACHIM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton...*, p. 45.

¹⁴ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 193; I. HAȚEGAN, L. BOLDEA, D. ȚEICU, *Cronologia Banatului. Banatul între 934–1552. Repere cronologice. Selecție de texte și date*, vol. 2, Timișoara 2006, p. 207. Among the military consequences is the refusal of the locals to help the Teutonic Knights rebuild the fortifications, leading to a complaint by Redwitz to the king in this regard.

¹⁵ C. FENEŞAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 28–29.

Another focus of historians has been the fortifications administered by the Teutons and the obligations of the population towards them¹⁶ – e.g., the physical conditions of the fortifications, the garrisons stationed there, and the financial resources needed for maintenance and defence. Dissensions between the foreign Knights and those native to the Central European area were also discussed.¹⁷

Last but not least, Ottoman expeditions into the area controlled by the Teutonic Knights have been taken into account, as well as the successive defeats suffered by the Knights.¹⁸

The majority of historians conclude that the local nobility was much more effective in defending the southern border of the Kingdom¹⁹ than the Teutonic Knights, who chose to lock themselves in rather small fortifications.

The majority of documentary evidence of the Teutonic Order's presence in the Kingdom of Hungary comes from the Teutonic archives themselves, but we have some evidence from others that recalled their presence there and the processes in which they were involved. By analysing this evidence, historians can conclude that the Knights' relationship with the local population was not very good, mainly due to excessive taxation imposed by the Teutonic knights, but also due to the fact that the local nobility, mostly of Wallachian origin,²⁰ had acquired a secondary role in defending the southern border of the Hungarian kingdom against Ottoman Empire. For example, according to the report of Klaus von Redwitz (the commander of the Teutonic Knights in Hungary) from the 1429 (October–November) to Paul von Russdorf (Grand Master of the Teutonic Order) regarding the revenues his contingent received from the districts of Caransebeș, Mehadia, Almaj, Ilidia and Carașova,²¹ the Count of Cuvin, the committees of the Chamber of Commerce from Timișoara, and the commander of the Belgrade fortress, Matko of Talovac were reluctant to cooperate with the Teutonic Knights. Although Matko de Talovac's men had to collect the salt and sell the surplus to give the Teutons

¹⁶ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 193; C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 30–32.

¹⁷ C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 40–41.

¹⁸ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 194, 195; I. HAȚEGAN, L. BOLDEA, D. ȚEICU, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

¹⁹ I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 195; E. GLÜCK, *op. cit.*, p. 792.

²⁰ V. ACHIM, *Locul Ordinului Teuton...*, p. 45.

²¹ C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 201–202, 204.

their revenue, they were in no hurry to help them. The Wallachian elites became an auxiliary force of the Teutonic Knights, participating mainly in the maintenance of the fortresses.



Fig. 1. The Teutonic area in South Medieval Hungary
(map support provided by M. Florea, SRTM-30; mapping S. Oța)

According to a 1429 report from Klaus von Redwitz to his superior Paul von Russdorf, a group of 13 Knights under the leadership of Klaus von Redwitz arrived in Hungary in the autumn of 1429 at the request of King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Nineteen fortifications on the Danube and three located further north (Almăj, Ilidia/Socolari, Mehadia) were assigned to them.²² Two others (Carașova and Bârzava) were also in Wallachian districts but were not mentioned (just knyazes from here) and their obligations.²³

In this paper we will discuss the location of the fortresses, the Knights' preparations for the conflict with the Ottoman Empire, and to identify the fortifications where possible restorations were recorded during the Knights' occupation.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 32.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 35–36.

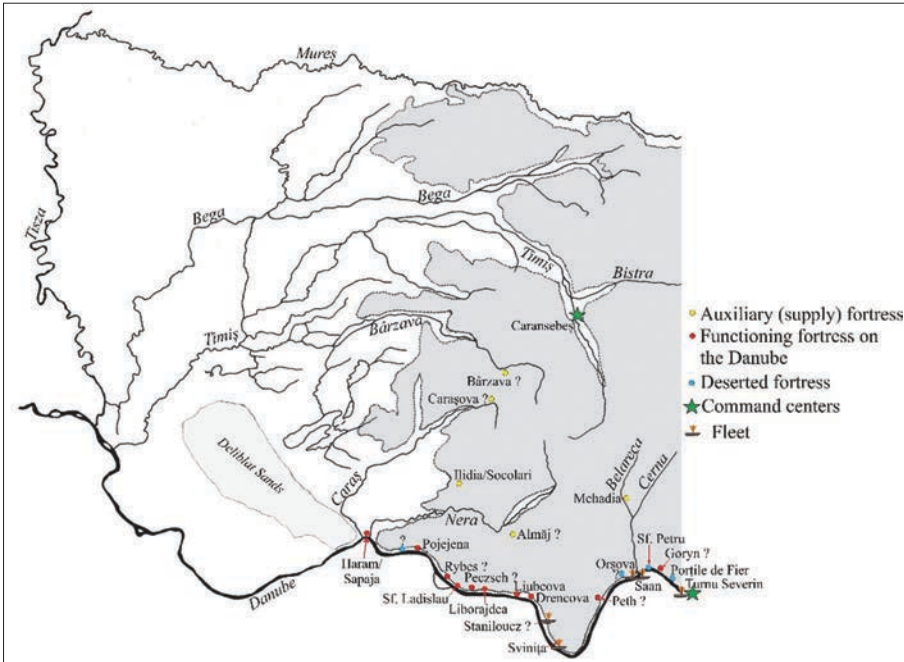


Fig. 2. The Teutonic Order's fortifications (map by S. Oța)

We can assume that despite some differences concerning the interpretation of historical sources, **documentary information about the fortresses** is fairly accurately reported after the 1429 inspection.

Klaus von Redwitz's reorganisation proposal took into consideration only eight fortresses (Mehadia, Saan, Gewrwn, Severin, Orșova, Pecz near Orșova, Svinita, and Stanilowcz). However, we know that many fortifications were not mentioned (the researchers estimate that there were at least 19 fortresses administered by the Teutonic Order in the Middle Danube area and 3 further north (Mehadia, Ilidia, Almăj) and much of the funds considered necessary for the defenders' upkeep were omitted. Furthermore, some of the calculations mentioned in the text are quite imprecise and do not account for specific fortresses and mercenary troops. Thus, large sums of money were generally allocated for the purchase of food (55 000 florins), the construction of fortifications (20 000 florins annually), and the payment of 150 hussars, but the source does not mention how these funds would be distributed between individual towns and garrisons. We also do not know exactly where the hussars were to be stationed.

Severin fortification:

- Current garrison according to the 1429 inspection: 200 foot soldiers and 40 artilleryists to operate ballistae.
- Named personnel: Commander – Klaus von Redwitz, succeeded in this position by Johann von Wedraw; Jost von Gundelfingen, master-porter (*Tormeister*); Mathes Kyczka, master-butler (*Kellermeister*); and Konrad Kafensteiner, master of the dishes (*Küchenmeister*).



Fig. 3. Severin fortification (Source: <https://mehedintiu.meu.blogspot.com/2017/10/cetatea-medievala-severinului.html>, access: 11 VIII 2021)

- Military personnel requirements expected after reconstruction: 300 foot soldiers, a master gunner with 7 aids, 100 boatmen for 6 boats, and 60 artilleryists to operate ballistae.
- Auxiliary personnel requirements expected after reconstruction: 4 carpenters and 2 blacksmiths.
- Annual upkeep cost: 31 318 florins.

Several fortresses on the Danube were deserted (*wuste*): the **fortresses from the Iron Gates** area (on the left Danube bank, between Severin and Orșova), **St. Peter fortress** (on the left Danube bank, downstream of Ada Kale), and an **unnamed fortress** upstream of Severin.

Goryn Fortification (also known as Joryn or Gewryn), built in 1425, on the left bank of the Danube probably near Vârciorova:

- Current garrison according to the 1429 inspection: 60 foot soldiers. Inspection noted no additional personnel needed.

- Named personnel: Commander – Kaspar Götz; Niklas Mochburger, first adjutant (*Kumpfan*).
- Annual upkeep cost: 4500 florins.
- **Saan Fortification** (located on Ada Kaleh island, now submerged):
- Current garrison according to the 1429 inspection: 216 foot soldiers.
- Military personnel requirements expected after the reconstruction: 200 boatmen for 20 boats.
- Annual upkeep cost: 6200 florins.



Fig. 4/1-3. Saan/Ada Kaleh (Source: D. Țeicu, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval Fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009)

Orșova Fortification (Roman built):

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 60 foot soldiers, 30 artillerists to operate ballistae, and 260 servants.
- Military personnel requirements expected after the reconstruction: 70 foot soldiers, 30 artillerists to operate ballistae, 100 boatmen for 10 boats.
- Named personnel: Commander – Erben (Erwin) Haug von Eeiligenberg.
- Annual upkeep cost: 11 010 florins.

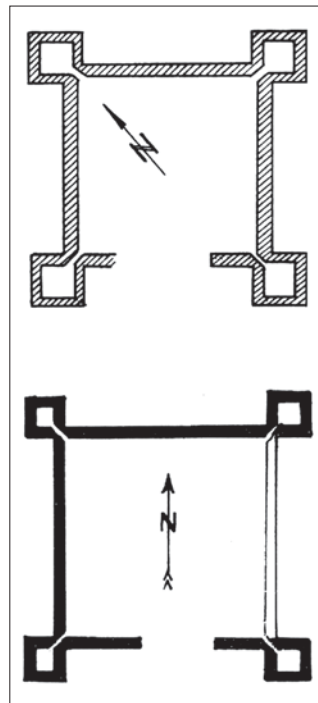


Fig. 5/1-2. Orșova plan (Source: D. Țeicu, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval Fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009)

A fortress in Orșova, still under construction at the time of the Teutonic Knights' arrival, has been attested since 1349 or 1351,²⁴ but information contained in written records from the 14th c. is confusing or even contradictory.

²⁴ A.A. RUSU, *Castelarea Carpatică. Fortificații și cetăți din Transilvania și teritoriile învecinate (sec. XIII-XIV)*, Cluj-Napoca 2005, p. 527.

A note from 1372 is unclear – it probably refers to the reconstruction of the existing Roman-built stone fortification,²⁵ although written records also mention a new fortress under construction at Orșova. Unfortunately, the sparse archaeological research at this stage cannot provide any clues in this regard.

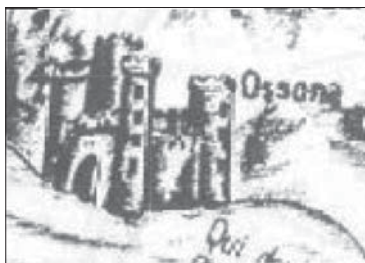


Fig. 6. Orșova (Source: I. DUMITRIU-SNAGOV, *Tările Române în secolul al XIV-lea. Codex Latinus Parisinus*, București 1979)

Upstream of Orșova, there was an unnamed deserted fortress.

Fortress in Peczsch (Peth), located probably near St. Ladislau fortress:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 32 foot soldiers and 20 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Estimated military personnel required after the reconstruction: 40 foot soldiers and 20 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Named personnel: Commander – Albrecht von Ulm, master of fishing (*Fischmeister*).
- Annual upkeep cost: 4440 florins.

Upstream of Peczsch, there was another **unnamed deserted fortress**.

Tricule-Svinița Fortress:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 40 foot soldiers and 6 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Estimated military personnel required after the reconstruction: 40 foot soldiers, 6 artillerymen to operate ballistae, and 60 boatmen for 6 boats.
- Annual upkeep cost: 5582 florins.

²⁵ M. HOLBAN, *Din cronica relațiilor româno-ungare în secolele XIII–XIV*, București 1981, pp. 204–205; D. ȚEICU, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval Fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009, p. 95.



Fig. 7. Tricule-Svinița (Source: *Old and antique prints and maps: Romania, Drey Kule, Swinitza with remains of the Roman Fort*, 1840, Europe, <http://www.antiqueprints.com/proddetail.php?prod=h5197>, access: 19 II 2023)

Staniloucz Fortification, located between Svinița and Drencova:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 32 foot soldiers and 4 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Estimated military personnel required after the reconstruction: a garrison of 20 boatmen for two boats, 40 foot soldiers (=10 ‘spear’ infantry units), 4 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Annual upkeep cost: 4008 florins.

Drencova Fortification:

- **Current garrison according to 1429 inspection:** 24 foot soldiers and 4 *balistari*.



Fig. 8. Dencova (Source: The sunken fort of Dencova, <https://donauinseln.blogspot.com/2013/05/fish-in-tower-sunken-fort-of-dencova.html>, access: 5 IX 2021)

St. Ladislau, the second largest Teutonic Knights' fortress:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 400 foot soldiers and 56 artillerymen to operate ballistae.
- Named personnel: Commander – Eberhard Sax.



Fig. 9/1-2. St. Ladislau fortification. Excavations in 2020 (photos: A. Hamat)



Fig. 10. 1. St. Ladislau, plan of the fortress in 1973 (Source: Ș. MATEI, I. UZUM, *Cetatea de la Pescari*, "Banatica" 1973, vol. 2, pp. 141-155)
2. Excavations in 2020 (photo: A. Hamat)



Fig. 11. St. Ladislau fortification. Excavations in 2020 (photo: A. Hamat)

Pojejena Fortification:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 200 foot soldiers and 30 artillerists to operate ballistae.
- Named personnel: Commander – Peter Hebichler.

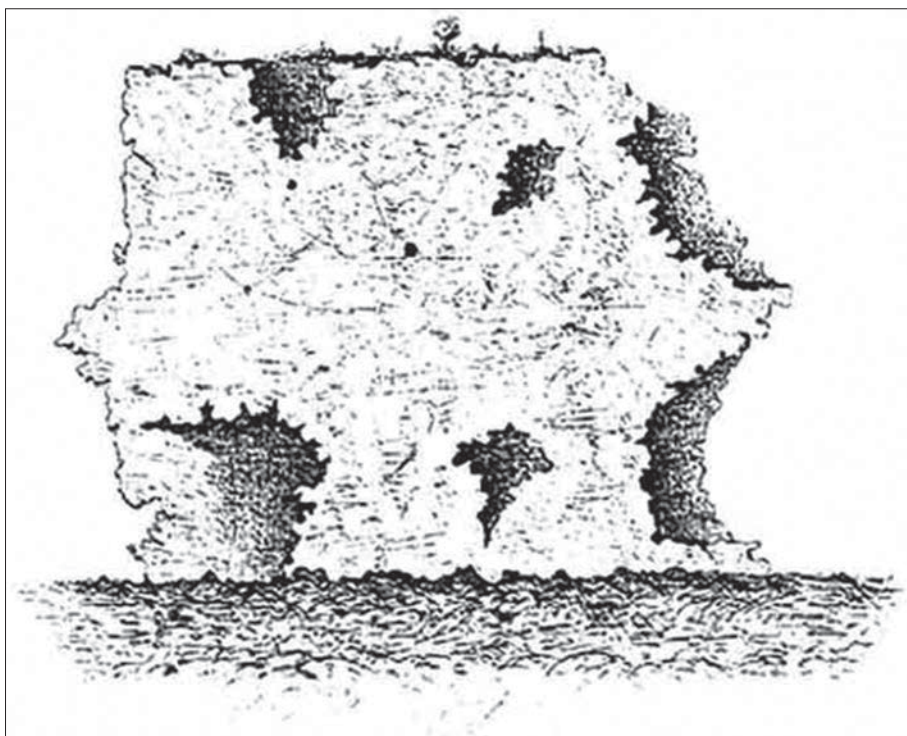


Fig. 12. Pojejena (Source: D. ȚEICU, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009)

Upstream of Pojejena, an unnamed deserted fortress.

Rybes Fortifications, downstream of Moldova Nouă:

- Current garrison according to 1429 inspection: 40 foot soldiers.
In addition, the Teutons proposed building a new fortress and a farm between Svinița and Pecz, at the cost of 20 000 florins.

Auxiliary (supply) fortresses. Remains of three such fortifications were identified in the discussed region: at Mehadia, Ilidia/Socolari, and Carașova. Another two, known from written records, i.e., Almăj (supposedly located in the

area of the village of Dalboșeț) and Bârzava (probably in the Reșița area) have not yet been discovered in the field. The main purpose of these fortifications was to collect taxes and levies (including in the form of livestock and crops) owed by the local population to the Teutonic Order. However, although they primarily served as economic centres, these fortresses also had to be kept in a good state of repair in order to sustain a potential attack.

Mehadia was excavated, probably sometime in the 1970s, but unfortunately the results remained unpublished and are currently inaccessible.²⁶ We only know the site plan and the proposed reconstruction of its façade.



Fig. 13. Mehadia fortification

(Source: <https://romaniaunica.com/2019/11/08/donjonul-de-la-mehadia>, access: 11 VIII 2021)

²⁶ N. SECARĂ, *Castrum Myhald*, “Tibiscus” 1975, vol. 4, pp. 167–184; Ș. MATEI, *Aspecte ale evoluției arhitecturii de fortificații din Banat în perioada feudalismului timpuriu*, “Studii de Istorie a Artelor” 1982, vol. 1, pp. 110–113; D. ȚEICU, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–94.

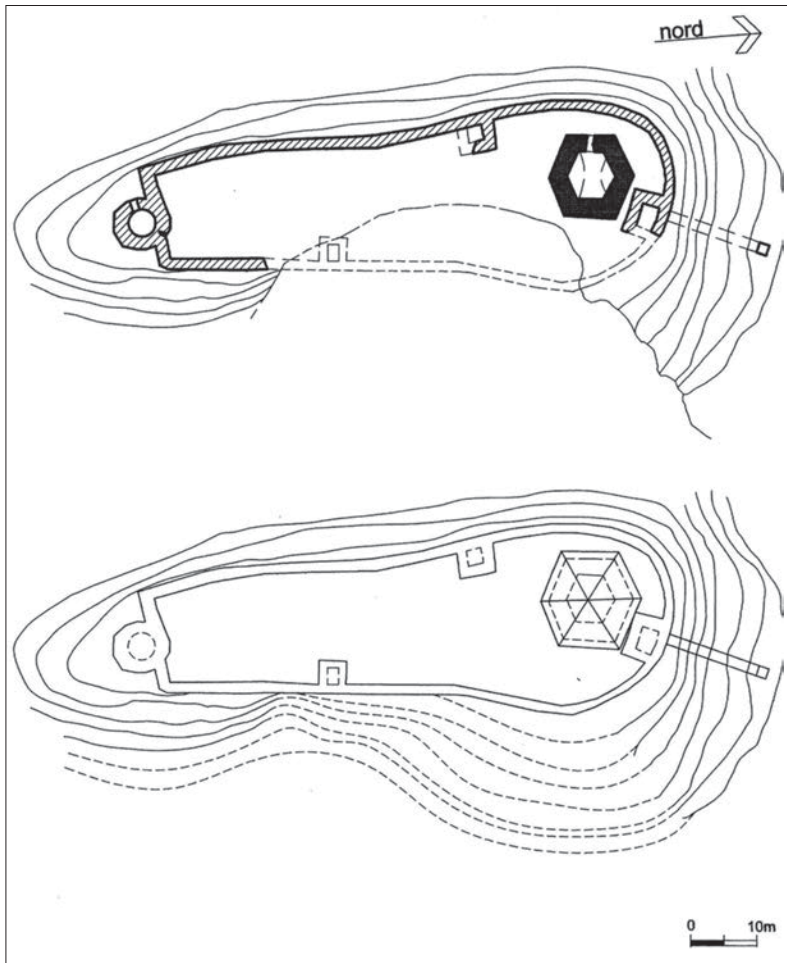


Fig. 14/1-2. Plan of the fortress in Mehădia (Source: D. ȚEICU, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009)

The Mehădia garrison consisted of 30 defenders (7 and ½ ‘spear’ units) and the required annual upkeep cost was 2250 florins.

The fortress in **Carașova** was systematically excavated,²⁷ but archaeological investigations did not confirm the actual presence of the Teutonic Knights here.

²⁷ G. EL SUSI, *Cercetări arheozoologice preliminare în cetatea medievală de la Carașova (jud. Caraș-Severin)*, “Analele Banatului. Arheologie–Istorie” 2002–2003, vol. 10–11, pp. 285–297; S. OȚA, L. OȚA, *Historical and Archaeological Data Regarding the Fortress from Carașova-bill Grad, Commune of Carașova, Caraș-Severin District*, “Muzeul Național” 2006, vol. 18, pp. 3–13; IIDEM, *Cercetările arheologice de la Carașova-Grad (com. Carașova, jud. Caraș-Severin), campaniile 1998, 2000 și 2001. Date privind elementele de construcție ale cetății*, “Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice” 2008,

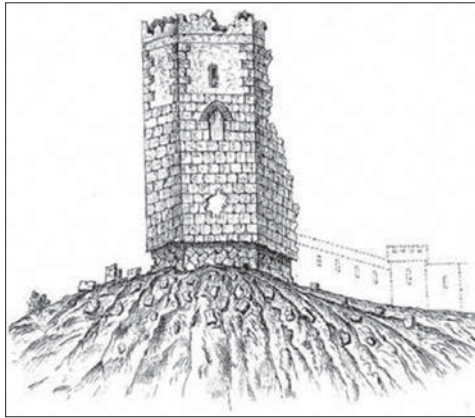


Fig. 15. Mehadia. Proposal of reconstruction (Source: N. SECARĂ, *Castrum Myhald*, "Tibiscus" 1975, vol. 4, pp. 167–184)



Fig. 16. Carașova fortress. View from the northwest (photo: S. Oța)

vol. 4, pp. 183–221; IIDEM, *Câteva date privind încetarea funcționării cetății de la Carașova-Grad (jud. Caraș-Severin)*, "Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice" 2009, vol. 5, pp. 193–201; S. OȚA, L. OȚA, M. GEORGESCU, E. POPA, *Piese de metal, os, sticlă și piatră descoperite în cetatea de la Carașova (com. Carașova, jud. Caraș-Severin)*, "Materiale și Cercetări Arheologice" 2011, vol. 7, pp. 83–113; S. OȚA, L. OȚA, *Characteristic Features of the Defensive System of Carașova-Grad Fortress (comm. of Carașova, Caraș-Severin County)*, "Studia Universitatis Cibiniensis. Series Historica" 2011, vol. 8, Supplementum no. 1, pp. 159–181; IIDEM, *Statutul juridic al cetății de la Carașova în secolele XIV–XVI*, "Apulum" 2011, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 109–115; IIDEM, *Cercetări arheologice în cetatea de la Carașova-Grad. Instalații de încălzire, cisterna, construcție anexă*, "Acta Terrae Fogarasiensis" 2012, vol. 1, pp. 47–59; IIDEM, *Some Comments on the Reconstruction of the Carașova-Grad Fortress (Caraș-Severin County)*, "Transilvanian Review" 2017, vol. 26, Supplement no. 1, *The Medieval Banat between the Hungarian Kingdom and Ottoman Empire (14th–18th Centuries)*, pp. 157–170.



Fig. 17/1-2. Carașova fortress. View from the southwest. View from the north (photos: S. Oța)

The coins uncovered at the site suggest that some important changes were made during Sigismund of Luxembourg's reign,²⁸ possibly in 1424.²⁹ Archaeological studies indicate that following a slightly earlier restoration, when the fortifications were extended to the southwest (the so-called second phase³⁰), the Caraşova fortress was almost completely redeveloped; the old walls from the 14th century were strengthened with new ones and the area of the entire fortification was expanded.

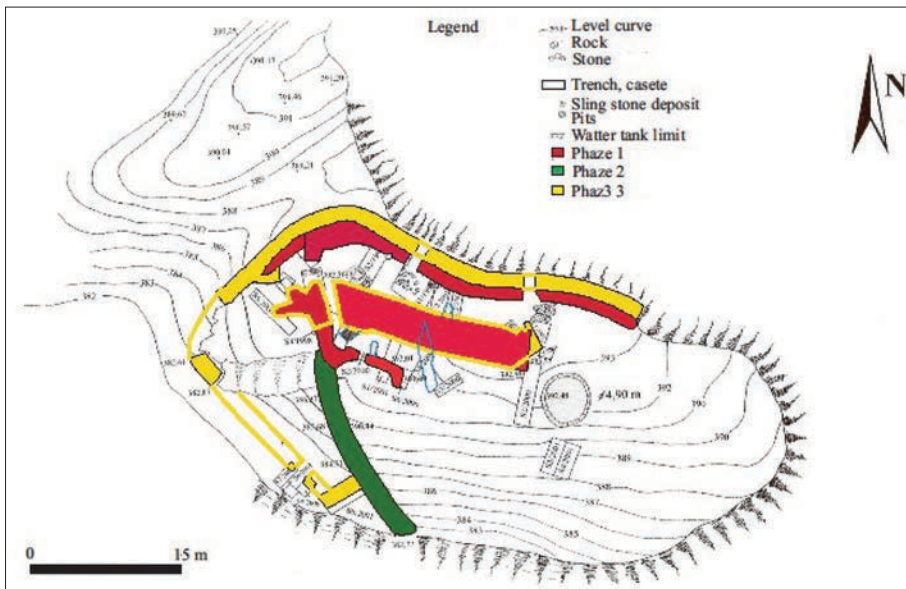


Fig. 18. Caraşova, plan of the fortress (Source: S. OŢA, L. OŢA, *Some Comments on the Reconstruction of the Caraşova-Grad Fortress (Caraş-Severin County)*, "Transilvanian Review" 2017, vol. 26, Supplement no. 1, *The Medieval Banat between the Hungarian Kingdom and Ottoman Empire (14th–18th Centuries)*, pp. 157–170)

²⁸ F. PAP, *Repertoriul numismatic al Transilvaniei și Banatului secolele 11–20. Despre circulația monetară în Transilvania și Banat în secolele 11–20*, Cluj–Napoca 2002, p. 49; S. OŢA, L. OŢA, *Characteristic Features of the Defensive System...*, p. 163.

²⁹ C. FENEŞAN, *op. cit.*, p. 13, 60. It is assumed that extension or repair actions have been made at the same time on the fortresses on the Danube line and from the inside.

³⁰ S. OŢA, L. OŢA, *Some Comments on the Reconstruction...*, pp. 57, 63.

Another fortress, so far only partially investigated in the 1980s and in 1998, is the fortress in **Ilidia** (otherwise known as **Socolari**). Unfortunately, the fortress was badly damaged most probably in the 16th century, and there are no significant finds, such as weapons.³¹

Written records attest the presence of only knyazes, serfs, and other people from the Wallachian districts at Ilidia, Carașova, Almăj, and Mehadia, who were all subordinate to Klaus von Redwitz and acted as auxiliary forces but not constituted an organised garrison officially controlled by the Teutonic Order.³²



Fig. 19/1-2. The Socolari/Ilidia fortress (Source: <https://oravita.ro/cetatea-socolari-ilidia1>, access: 11 VIII 2021)

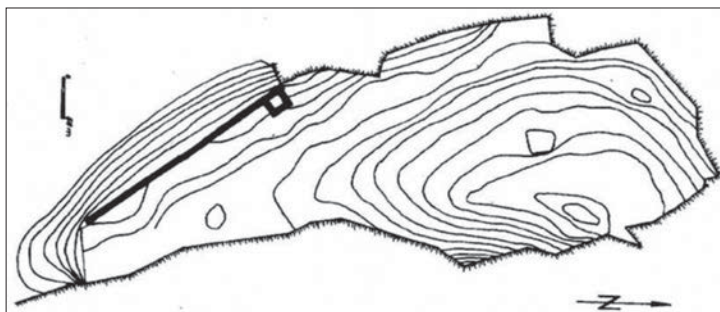


Fig. 20. Socolari/Ilidia, plan of the fortress (Source: D. ȚEICU, *Cetăți medievale din Banat/Medieval fortifications in Banat*, Timișoara 2009, p. 95)

³¹ D. ȚEICU, *Cercetări arheologice în depresiunea Oravița*, "Banatica" 1987, vol. 9, p. 335.

³² I. HAȚEGAN, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

The same situation is known for **Caransebeș**, where only local (Wallachian) people with military or auxiliary roles, responsible for the supply chain, are attested in written records.

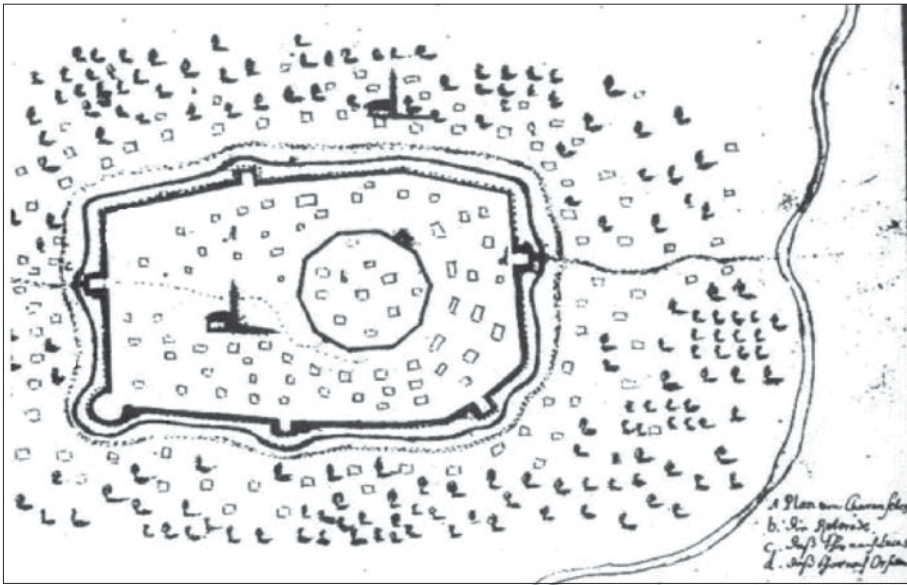


Fig. 21/1-2. Map of the town of Caransebeș from the end of 17th century (Source: L. GROZA, *Cetea Caransebeș - Câteva precizări cronologice*, "Banatica" 1993, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 89-99) and a fragment of wall (photo: S. Oța)

While carrying out their inspection in 1429, the Teutonic Knights did not draw up any official inventories of the weapons stored in any of these fortresses.³³

In addition to the fortresses known from written records, a number of fortifications in the Middle Danube area were identified in the field. Only a part of all the fortifications attested for the whole period of the Teutonic presence were identified in the field (St. Ladislau, Turnu Severin, Saan/Ada Kaleh, Svinița, Orșova, Pojejena, and Drencova).

In total, there are at least 19 fortifications in the Middle Danube area and 3 further north (Mehadia, Ilidia, Almăj), which in 1429 were transferred to the Teutonic Knights by the order of King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Starting from east to west, these are: Severin, Ada Kaleh (Saan), Orșova, Drencova, Svinița, St. Ladislau, and Pojejena. A still debated issue represents the location of Haram (Stara Palanka), that could be the fortress or the Roman fortification from Sapaja, used during the Middle Ages, too.

A fortress, destroyed in 1971–1972 by redevelopment of the area (identified by Dumitru Țicu) was recorded at Stăncilova (Stanilowcz), but it was situated on the road between the Danube and River Nera valleys. However, despite the similarity of place names (Stăncilova), this cannot be one of the fortifications attested in the documents of the Teutonic Knights, because it was not located close to the Danube. After the destruction of Turnu Severin, in the summer of 1432, Klaus von Redwitz made the town of Caransebeș his headquarters.

Over the last 50 years some **archaeological excavations** have been carried out in selected fortifications administrated by the Teutons (Drobeta-Turnu Severin),³⁴ at Tricule-Svinița,³⁵ St. Ladislau,³⁶ and auxiliary fortifications with

³³ Excavations Silviu Oța, Adrian Ardeț and Dimitrie Negrei (2017, 2018, 2019). The literature about fortifications from Caransebeș from the 15th century is poor and is mainly limited to interpretations of maps and documents. For example, *vide*: L. GROZA, *Cetatea Caransebeș – Câteva precizări cronologice*, “Banatica” 1993, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 89–99 and G. SEBESTYEN, *Unele cetăți ale Banatului și desenele lui L. F. Marsigli*, “Revista Muzeelor și Monumentelor. Monumente Istorice și de Artă” 1984, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 4–49.

³⁴ M. DAVIDESCU, *Cetatea Severinului*, “Buletinul Monumentelor Istorice” 1970, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 9–14; G. CANTACUZINO, *Certains problèmes concernant les vestiges médiévaux de Drobeta-Turnu Severin*, “Dacia” 1999–2001 (2003), vol. 43–45, pp. 159–182.

³⁵ A. CORVĂTESCU, A. RĂDULESCU, *Despre ansamblul fortificat de la Tricule-Svinița (jud. Mehedinți)*, “Tibiscus” 1979, vol. 5, pp. 169–182.

³⁶ Ș. MATEI, I. UZUM, *Cetatea de la Pescari*, “Banatica” 1973, vol. 2, pp. 141–155.

the predominant economic functions: Caraşova,³⁷ Mehadia,³⁸ and Ilidia/Socolari.³⁹ Although systematically researched, the presence of the Teutonic knights in these above-mentioned fortifications was less debated.

As we can see, only very few of the fortifications described in this paper have been investigated through archaeological excavations. However, there are several sites for which we have fairly detailed information – both in the form of written records (including the 1429 Teutonic Knights' inventory) and archaeological material from excavations – which tells us about the architecture, weapons, and daily life in these fortresses. These include: Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Tricule-Sviniţa, St. Ladislau, and Pojejena.

As mentioned above, the fortress at Drobeta-Turnu Severin may have been a medieval structure built in the corner of the former Roman camp. The site at Tricule-Sviniţa was only partially excavated, with only a few sections of the towers investigated so far. St. Ladislau was the second most important Teutonic fortress in the Banate. It was briefly investigated in the 1970s,⁴⁰ and more recently in 2019–2021. The new excavations yielded spectacular results in terms of archaeological material and analyses of the wall construction. Archaeologists discovered fragments of artillery items, arrowheads for crossbows, and many fragments from wooden structures and furnishings.⁴¹

The fortress in Pojejena was seriously damaged in the 19th century by the Danube, and it is now completely submerged. According to historical sources, the same happened at Drencova, which was drawn and investigated in 1880, but nowadays remains inaccessible; unfortunately, the 19th-century descriptions are very brief.⁴²

All fortifications presented in this paper had been constructed before the arrival of the Teutons, as evidenced by the archaeological excavations and by the report sent by Klaus von Redwitz to his superior.

As far as we can see from the archaeological records, the Danubian fortresses had quite significant armament for that time (e.g., artillery at Severin, arquebuses

³⁷ Excavations Silviu Oţa and Liana Oţa.

³⁸ N. SECARĂ, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–184.

³⁹ D. ŢEICU, *Cercetări arheologice...*, p. 335, fig. 13.

⁴⁰ Ş. MATEI, I. UZUM, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–155.

⁴¹ I would like to thank my colleague Ana Hamat for the information provided.

⁴² D. ŢEICU, *Cetăţi medievale...*, pp. 96–97.

and crossbows discovered at Turnu Severin⁴³ and St. Ladislau,⁴⁴ although we do not know the exact types of weapon used by the defenders of the Middle Danubian area and stored inside the above-mentioned fortresses. The documents talk about artillerists to operate ballistae, which probably also included the use of crossbows judging by the great number of crossbow arrowheads discovered by archaeologists in the St. Ladislau fortress (around 600 found only in 1971 and 1972, in addition to finds known from previous excavations). Similar weapons were also found at Drobeta-Turnu Severin, where, according to Klaus von Redwitz, there was a master gunner (*Büchsenmeister*) and seven aids on the payroll. Arquebuses were found in both fortifications (St. Ladislau and Drobeta-Turnu Severin) but, unfortunately, these weapons can only be dated generally to the 15th century, without more accurate chronology given in the relevant publications.

At the same time, so far, no weapons from the first half of the 15th century (except for a sling stone deposit) were found at Carașova. Artefacts discovered at this site (entire weapons or fragments) are dated to the end of the 15th century and the 16th century. A spearhead (possibly from the 11th–13th c.) was found during the excavations at Tricule-Svinița, on a slope near the towers and fragments of artillery items, are known at Drobeta-Turnu Severin.⁴⁵

We also know from the records that at least several Danubian fortresses had boats: at Saan (Ada Kaleh) – 20 boats, Orșova – 10 boats, Severin – 6 boats, Tricule-Svinița – 6 boats, and Staniloucz – 2 boats.

Based on the 1429 inventory, it seems that Klaus von Redwitz was planning to strengthen the garrisons of the Middle Danubian fortresses following their redevelopment by employing mercenaries, more precisely 150 hussars, 100 ‘spear’ units (400 soldiers) under the leadership of Matko of Talovac, commander of Belgrade and Count of Cuvin and additional 7 and ½ spears for Mehadia (a total of 30 soldiers).⁴⁶

Klaus von Redwitz ordered four hundred horses to be sent to the same commander of Belgrade, Matko of Talovac but we are not certain that they were actually provided by the Knights.

⁴³ M.I. NEAGOE, *Cetatea medievală a Severinului, centru de putere la Porțile de Fier*, Craiova 2021, p. 110, 111, 183, Pl. XIX/11–12, p. 184, Pl. XII/1–9.

⁴⁴ Ș. MATEI, I. UZUM, *op. cit.*, p. 146, fig. 6e, p. 154.

⁴⁵ M.I. NEAGOE, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–116, 185, Pl. XXI/1–3, p. 186, Pl. XXII/1–3.

⁴⁶ C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

The total amount of the expected military pay for the mercenaries and expenses for the military equipment was estimated to be 346 140 florins per year.⁴⁷

The supplies for the Teutons were supposed to be provided by the subordinated Wallachian districts (Caransebeș, Mehadia, Ilidia, Bârzava, Carașova, and Almăj), by the mints in Sibiu and Brașov, salt barrels sent from Transylvania, free fishing rights on the Danube, crops from the county of Jász-Kúnság, and livestock from the estates of the archbishop of Kalocsa.⁴⁸ In addition, 80 boats together with equipment and people were sent from Bavaria for the Danubian fortresses subordinated to Klaus von Redwitz.

In 1431, Johann von Pommersheim, Klaus von Redwitz's superior, carried out an inspection to evaluate von Redwitz's activity, which ended up with a von Redwitz's denunciation to the Grand Master.⁴⁹ The next inspection, again carried out by Johann von Pommersheim, took place in February/March 1432 and was followed by Klaus von Redwitz's to the Grand Master (signed by all his knights stationed in Hungary) listing their achievements to date and explaining the problems faced by the Order in the Middle Danube area.

The first conflicts with the Ottomans most likely took place in 1432, when the Turkish armies were preparing to attack Belgrade, where Frank of Talovac was the commander. In the same year, at the beginning of the summer, the fortress of Severin was attacked and the Teutons were defeated. Klaus von Redwitz went to the king seeking reinforcements, and his first adjutant (*Kumpān*), Oswald Weyler, sent a message for von Redwitz from Caransebeș, possibly calling for reinforcements.

In August, Frank Talovac, Count of Cuvin, Cenad, and Caraș and commander of the Belgrade fortress was gathering troops to help protect St. Ladislau fortress. In the autumn, the Ottomans again attacked the Teutonic fortifications on the Danube and destroyed three of them (possibly including Severin and St. Ladislaus). One year later, in 1433, in March–April, they attacked for a third time. In this situation, since the reinforcements promised by King Sigismund of Luxembourg and the superiors of the Teutonic Order did not arrive, in 1434 or 1435 the Knights abandoned the Danubian fortresses and left the Banate.

The preparations for war with the Ottomans made by the 13 Teutonic Knights and their retinues proved to be without great results. The rather difficult

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁸ E. GLÜCK, *op. cit.*, p. 789.

⁴⁹ C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 40–42.

situation of the Teutons in the Middle Danube area was caused by local factors such as the lack of cooperation from the local population (as a result of the excessively high taxes imposed on them and the decrease in the role of the local nobility in defending the border) and the conflict between the Teutonic Knights and Wallachian authorities, and King Sigismund of Luxembourg's refusal to send reinforcements, but also the Teutonic Order itself, which not only did not help the Knights stationed in the Banate, refusing to send more men and funds, but even created more problems for them, causing further disputes between various members of the Teutonic Order. The amounts required by the Teutonic Knights to cover the most necessary expenses amounted to 346 140 florins per year, a sum too high for the economic capabilities of the Middle Danube region to be raised locally.

As mentioned above, the Ottoman campaigns of 1432 and 1433 led to the destruction of some fortresses and of their garrisons (at least three, according to the written records, probably including St. Ladislau).⁵⁰ The tactics of the defenders to lock themselves in the fortresses proved to be inefficient when they had to fight with extremely mobile and numerous Ottoman armies.

After the Teutonic Order withdrew from the Banate, the defence of the Danubian border was taken over by local nobility, and in 1439 by the future governor of the Hungarian Kingdom, Iancu of Hunedoara (John Hunyadi).

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⁵⁰ “the Turks were in the country that was given to the Order of Mercy Yours, (...) they destroyed three castles and, besides that, they took people and goods with them” (*die törken in dem lande das ewer gnade Orden ist gegeben, sienth 46 gewesen (...) drey slosser haben vorhert, dortzu lewthe vnd gut haben loszen treyben*), according to C. FENEȘAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–46.

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Silviu Oța

RYCERZE ZAKONU KRZYŻACKIEGO W POŁUDNIOWYM KRÓLESTWIE WĘGIERSKIM. PRZYGOTOWANIA DO BITWY

Streszczenie. Do tej pory obecność Krzyżaków w XV w. analizowana była głównie na podstawie źródeł historycznych, a publikacje skupiały się na przyczynach przybycia zakonu krzyżackiego na omawiane tereny, skutkach ich działań, administrowanym przez nich obszarze i kontrolowanych fortyfikacjach. W tym zakresie można wymienić prace T.H. Trâpcea (1969), Alexandru Nemoianu (1975), Ioana Hațegana (1979), Eugena Glücka (1992), Viorela Achima (2013 i 2014) oraz Costina Feneșana (2015). Chociaż informacje pozyskane ze źródeł pisanych pochodzą przede wszystkim z dokumentów znajdujących się w archiwach zakonu, istnieją również inne źródła, które wspominają o obecności i działalności rycerzy w Banacie⁵¹. Źródła te zostały wykorzystane przez rumuńskich historyków do analizy stosunków między Krzyżakami i miejscową ludnością.

Krzyżacy – a konkretnie grupa 13 rycerzy pod wodzą Klause von Redwita – przybyli na Węgry jesienią 1429 r. na prośbę króla Zygmunta Luksemburskiego i wycofali się z Banatu w 1434 lub 1435 r. Przydzielono im dziewiętnaście fortyfikacji nad Dunajem i trzy twierdze położone dalej na północ (Almăj, Ilidia/Socolari, Mehadia). Dwie inne fortyfikacje (Carașova i Bârza) także znajdowały się na Wołoszczyźnie, ale nie zostały wymienione w źródłach. W ciągu ostatnich 50 lat archeolodzy prowadzili prace wykopaliskowe w niektórych twierdzach administrowanych w przeszłości przez Krzyżaków: w Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Tricule-Svinița, Saint Ladislaw, oraz w mniej znaczących fortyfikacjach, których główną rolą było dostarczanie towarów oraz ludzi do pracy i obrony (Carașova, Mehadia, Ilidia/Socolari).

Poczynione przez 13 rycerzy zakonnych i ich orszaki przygotowania do walki z Osmanami nie przyniosły większych rezultatów. Co więcej, nakłady finansowe, których Krzyżacy potrzebowali na pokrycie najpotrzebniejszych wydatków, wynosiły 346 140 florenów rocznie, co było sumą zbyt wysoką jak na możliwości gospodarcze regionu środkowego Dunaju i niemożliwą do zebrania na miejscu. Kampanie osmańskie z lat 1432 i 1433 doprowadziły do zniszczenia

⁵¹ Obecnie Banat obejmuje region południowo-zachodniej Rumunii i częściowo Serbii na wschód od rzeki Cisy i Węgier, w rejonie pomiędzy rzeką Maruszą na północy a Cisą. W średniowieczu na części tego obszaru – z pewnymi przerwami i w zmiennych granicach – funkcjonowały także Zachodnia Oltenia, Banat Seweryński, a następnie Banat Lugos-Caransebeș (tworzony stopniowo w latach 1526–1536) – na wschodzie obecnego Banatu, włączony do Księstwa Siedmiogrodu, który częściowo pokrywał się z obszarem Banatu Seweryńskiego. W okresie nowożytnym cały region pomiędzy rzekami Maruszą, Cisą, Dunajem i Karpatami nazywany był Banatem, dlatego w artykule autor używa ogólnej nazwy Banat.

niektórych twierdz i ich garnizonów, w tym Severin i St. Ladislau, a taktyka obrońców, polegająca na zamknięciu się w twierdzach, okazała się nieskuteczna w starciu z niezwykle mobilnymi i licznymi wojskami osmańskimi.

Слова ключовые: Krzyżacy, Królestwo Węgierskie, bitwa, fortyfikacje, broń, łодzie

Сильвиу Оца

РЫЦАРИ ТЕВТОНСКОГО ОРДЕНА НА ЮГЕ ВЕНГЕРСКОГО КОРОЛЕВСТВА. ПОДГОТОВКА К БИТВЕ

Аннотация. До сих пор присутствие тевтонских рыцарей в XV веке в Венгерском королевстве анализировалось в основном на основе исторических источников. В публикациях основное внимание уделялось причинам прихода Тевтонского ордена в обсуждаемые районы, последствиям их действий, управляемой ими территории и контролируемым ими укреплениям. В этой связи можно упомянуть работы Теодора Х. Трапча (1969), Александру Немояну (1975), Иоана Хацегана (1979), Ойгена Глюка (1992), Виорела Ахима (2013 и 2014) и Костина Фенешана (2015). Хотя информация, полученная из письменных источников, исходит в основном из документов в архивах Ордена, существуют и другие источники, в которых упоминается присутствие и деятельность тевтонцев в Банате⁵². Эти источники также использовались румынскими историками для анализа отношений между тевтонскими рыцарями и местным населением.

Крестоносцы, а именно группа из 13 рыцарей во главе с Клаусом фон Редвицем, прибыли в Венгрию осенью 1429 года по просьбе короля Сигизмунда Люксембургского и отошли из Баната в 1434 или 1435 году. Им было отведено девятнадцать укреплений на Дунае. и три крепости дальше на север (Алмай, Илидия/Соколари, Мехадиа). Два других укрепления (Карашова и Бырзава), также расположенные в Валахии, в источниках не упоминаются. За последние 50 лет археологи раскопали несколько крепостей, которыми в прошлом управляли тевтонцы: Дробета-Турну-Северин, Трикуле-Свиница, Святой Ладислав и менее значительные укрепления, основная роль которых заключалась в обеспечении товарами и людьми для работы и обороны (Карашова, Мехадиа, Илидия/Соколари).

Подготовка 13 рыцарей и их свиты к борьбе с османами не принесла особых результатов. При этом финансовые затраты, которые требовались крестоносцам для покрытия самых необходимых расходов, составляли 346 140 флоринов в год, что было слишком

⁵² В настоящее время Банат охватывает регион юго-западной Румынии, часть Сербии к востоку от реки Тиса и регионы Венгрии, в районе между рекой Маруша на севере и рекой Тиса. В средние века часть этой области – с некоторыми перерывами и с различными границами – также функционировала как Западная Олтения, Северинский Банат, а затем Банат Лугош-Карансебеша (созданного постепенно в 1526–1536 гг.), на востоке нынешнего Баната, включенного в состав Трансильванского княжества, которое частично совпадало с территорией Северинского Баната. В Новое время всю область между реками Маруша, Тиса, Дунай и Карпатами называли Банатом, поэтому в остальной части статьи я буду использовать общее название Банат.

велико для экономических возможностей среднего Подунавья, ведь было просто невозможно собрать такие средства на месте. Османские кампании 1432 и 1433 годов привели к разрушению некоторых крепостей и их гарнизонов, в том числе Северина и Св. Ладислава, а тактика замыкания в крепостях оказалась неэффективной против чрезвычайно мобильных и многочисленных османских войск.

Ключевые слова: Тевтонский орден, Венгерское королевство, битва, укрепления, вооружение, лодки