

BETWEEN EPHEMERALTY AND FICTION. ADDENDA TO THE HISTORY OF THE BANS OF CARANSEBES AND LUGOJ

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The Banat of Caransebes and Lugoj is an emblematic institution in the region placed among the Carpathians, the Danube, and the Mures and the Tisza rivers. Far for being a long lasting one, its existence might be situated at the medieval and modern ages crossing, as a time delimited and marked by important confessional, institutional, military, and political transformations.¹ The Banat of Caransebes and Lugoj was always inside of the area of Christian civilization and Islamic world contact, a region of more languages and religions interlacing, but also a permanently exposed to military insecurity and political instability border area. The interest in finding out the history of the banat(e) as the representative and supreme dignity was an early one², but it was Pesty Frigyes the only one to realize the most substantial investigations after 1875.³ The data that Pesty Frigyes published are still reference sources for the modern and contemporary historical writing.⁴ The Romanian historiography has later and only tangentially focused on the banat institution although it belongs to

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¹ The banate of Caransebes and Lugoj was certified between 1536, February and 1658, September, the date it was conquered by the Ottomans.

² Samuel Timon, *Imago Novae Hungariae*, vol. I (Cassovia/ Košice, 1734), 38–41 (Caput V. *De Banatu Severinensi*). István Iványi, “A lugosi és karánsebesi bánok,” *Történelmi és Régészeti Értesítő Temesvároott I* (Temesvár/ Timișoara, 1875), no. 2: 100–103.

³ Frigyes Pesty, *A Szörényi Bánság és Szörény vármegye története*, toms I–III (Budapest, 1877–1878) and *Krassó vármegye története*, toms I–IV (Budapest, 1882–1884).

⁴ Imre Lukinich, *Erdély területi változásai a török hódítás korában 1541–1711* (Budapest, 1918), 359–364; László Fenyes, “A temesközi-Szörénységi végvárvidék funkcióváltozásai (1365–1718),” *Studia Agriensia* (Annales Musei Agriensis) XIV (1993): 235–285.

the national space and history. The inquiries on the duties and competences of the bans of Caransebes and Lugoj I made almost two decades ago⁵ have had different responses within the world of historians: from a direct assumption of the ideas and sources I issued then⁶, to professional additions and nuances that have contributed to the investigation progressing.⁷

Enough errors and reference lacunae still last when speaking about the history of the banat holders. New names that have been for various reasons ignored or unknown so far might be added to the list of the 32 already known bans. The five personages I shall dwell on were on the climb during the Báthori's age (1571–1613). According to their deeds and influence, they were studied by certain historians, but their dignity of bans was less investigated. The first two men are registered as bans due to a historiographic confusion. On the following two ones older precise data certified their dignity, but those ones need some supplementary explanations. The last personage had been a ban only for a couple of weeks, an aspect that his posterity totally ignored.

1. Farkas Petky

Farkas/ Wolfgang Petky of Ders and Királyhalma (? – before 1608) is the first of the men I am analyzing here to have appointed for a ban. The early information on him is to be found in the first genealogy repertoire in Transylvania⁸ that opens the series of inedited works in the field, but summary and much more inexactly. The information there shows that he had been a ban of Caransebes and Lugoj (at an unspecified time) and after, he became prince Báthori Kristóf's chancellor, between 1576 and 1580. The data we have so far allow us to underline that Farkas Petky was twice taken for another: firstly, for another Farkas Kovacsóczy, the chancellor of Transylvania between 1578 and 1594; secondly, for his relative János Petky who also was a chancellor in 1607–1608.⁹ On the basis of these two errors and considering the biographic data of his ascendants

⁵ Dragoș Lucian Țigău, "Banii de Caransebeș și Lugoj. Considerații asupra atribuțiilor și competențelor acestora," *Studii și materiale de istorie medie* XVI (1998): 225–241; XVII (1999): 237–251.

⁶ Sorin Bulboacă, "Banii Lugoșului și Caransebeșului în secolele XVI–XVII," *Banatica*, 18 (2008): 297–320 and „Prerogativele militare ale banilor de Caransebeș–Lugoj în secolele XVI–XVII,” *Studii de știință și cultură* VI (2010), no. 2 (21): 82–89.

⁷ Costin Feneșan, "Întregiri și îndreptări la istoria banilor de Caransebeș și Lugoj (sec. XVI–XVII)," *Analele Banatului*, Serie Nouă, Arheologie-Istorie XVI (2008): 187–198; Adrian Magina, "At the Border of Transylvania: the County of Severin/ the District of Caransebeș in the 16th–17th Centuries," *Transylvanian Review* XXII, Suppl. no. 4 (2013): 295–306.

⁸ Ladislau Mikola, *Historia Genealogico-Transsylvanica* (Cluj?, 1731), 27–29 (Petky Family).

⁹ The list of chancellors in Transylvania, at Zsolt Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540–1690* (Budapest, 1980), 181–182.

and descendants, it becomes hardly probable that Petky had an important function within princes István and Kristóf Báthori's decade (1571–1581). Much later he was promoted as a soldier and the genealogy repertoires mentioned a unique of his functions, namely that one as a captain of Fagaras fortress (before the 11th of July 1605), a function that is certified through references.¹⁰ The confusion that Ladislau Mikola had put in circulation lasted and was assumed also by other authors in the 18th–19th centuries.¹¹ The inadvertence was very late perceived and never completely eliminated. Significantly, Pesty Frigyes did not comprise the name of Farkas Petky in the list of bans of Caransebes. It was an omission that might be explained especially through his reticence in giving credit to the up named error and not through ignoring the previous works. That doubt on Petky's given functions was much later explained in a revue.¹² But what had been pointed out then came to naught and so the error issued in another genealogic repertoire and also it entered the virtual world a century later.¹³

2. István Bocskai

The correspondence and the personality of prince István/ Stephanus Bocskai of Kismarjai (1557–1606) both were the object of historians' considerations.¹⁴ Yet nor a recent work notes a word on the function of a ban that the famous Magyar diplomat and politician had got. But it is the remarkable result of eliminating an error of the older reference, belonging to Francesco Grisellini, the first to have written a monograph of the Banat (1780). Grisellini asserted that prince Sigismund Báthori had ascertained him the banate of Caransebes

¹⁰ Wolfgang Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*, vol. VI (Cibinii/ Sibiu, 1793), 290; Szamosközy (István) *történeti munkái* (IV), III. Pótfüzet, újabb pótlék, ed. Sándor Szilágyi (Budapest, 1892), 564.

¹¹ Andreas Lehotzky, *Stemmatographia nobilium familiarum regni Hungariae*, Part II (Posonii/ Bratislava, 1798), 301; Ferentz Kállay, *Historiai értekezés a nemes székely nemzet eredetéről, hadi és polgári intézeteiről a régi időkben* (Nagy Enyeden/ Aiud, 1829), 276; Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czimerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, vol. IX (Pest, 1862), 272; Balázs Orbán, *A Székelyföld leírása. Történelmi, régészeti, természetrajzi s népismeai szempontból*, vol. I (Pest, 1868), 179.

¹² Bálint Kis, "A Petki Család," *Turul. A Magyar heraldikai és genealogiai társaság közlönye* XIII (1895): 101, 106.

¹³ József Pálmay, *Udvarhely vármegye nemes családjai* (Székely-Udvarhely/ Odorheiu Secuiesc, 1900), 189–190. More recently: <http://genealogy.euweb.cz/hung/petky.html> (last addition on the 16th of March 2005).

¹⁴ Benda Kálmán, *Bocskai István 1557–1606* (Budapest, 1942) and *Bocskai István. Levelek* (Budapest-Bukarest, 1992); *Iratok Bocskai István és kora történetéhez*, coord. László Nagy (Debrecen, 2005); *Principe Ștefan Bocskai și epoca sa*, coord. Tudor Sălăgean and Melinda Mitu (Cluj-Napoca, 2006).

and Lugoj, and also the mission of defending the fortress of Oradea. The author re-took that fact along his narration by asserting that Gabriel Bethlen “went into the Timis areas and incited the more part of area of Caransebes and Lugoj were Bocksai had formerly been a ban”.¹⁵ Requiring other sources becomes necessary as Grisellini is not really rigorous if speaking about his dates. The appointment of Bocksai as a ban might be placed within 1592 and 1598, the time between his appointment as a commandant of Oradea fortress/ the county of Bihor leader, and the Ottomans’ attack upon that fortress. The up mentioned period might be reduced to 1594 through colligating many other historical sources, the year they planned Sigismund Báthori’s elimination. The prince’s policy concerning a rapprochement with the Hapsburgs and also the revolts against Ottomans he encouraged troubled part of the nobles in Transylvania about the Hapsburgs’ possible reentering the principality and also about a war against the Turks. Sigismund Báthori succeeded to defeat the nobiliary opposition and to eliminate the rebels’ leaders with the help of his partisans.¹⁶ István Bocksai was among the prince’s loyalists, the time he was in charge with Oradea fortress defense (... *Váradinum Stephano Bocskaiio avunculo suo, qui nuper ex suscepta contra Tartaros expeditione Váradinum regressus...*) and recruited troops from the principality western lands (*non contemnendis copiis, quas Stephanus Bocskaius ex partibus Hungariae Transsylvaniae annexis, nec non ex praesidio Váradiensi [et aliis] ipsi procuraverant*).¹⁷ This detail comes to prove the military effective authority Bocksai had, including over the districts of Caransebes and Lugoj as integrated parts of the Principality of Transylvania.¹⁸ Certainly, those were the real events Grisellini was referred to, but the assertion concerning Bocksai’s appointment as a ban rested unproved. A confusion might be there as in the case I have presented above. During Grisellini’s life several editions of *Imago novae Hungariae* were published with the following note: *In gestis praeterea Sigismundi Bathorii, principis Transsylvaniae anni MDXCV reperi praefectum hujus tractus fuisse Stephanum Bekeschium sub nomine Bani Lugoschiensis*.¹⁹ The similitude of the name of ban (a real but an obscure one)

¹⁵ Franz Grisellini, *Versuch einer politischen und natürlichen Geschichte des temeswarer Banats*, Erster Theil (Wien, 1780), 85–86, 88, 93; Francesco Grisellini, *Încercare de istorie politică și naturală a Banatului Timișoarei*, ed. Costin Feneșan (Timișoara, 1984), 82–83, 87.

¹⁶ Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. III (1783), 183, 227 (the prince’s anti-Ottoman policy), 379–473 (the nobles’ revolt mentioning).

¹⁷ Ibid., 426, 437–438 (the two quotations).

¹⁸ The Diet articles expressed also the territorial affiliation: *partium Hungariae, comitatum scilicet Byhor ... ac districtus Karansebes et Lugos*, in *Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transsylvaniae* (hereinafter, MCRT), ed. Sándor Szilágyi, vol. II (Budapest, 1876), 544, no. XXIV.

¹⁹ Timon, *Imago* (Košice, 1734), 41; (Viena, 1754), 25; (Viena-Praga-Trieste, 1762), 27.

Stephanus Bekes²⁰ and of the famous captain Stephanus Bocksai facilitates such a confusion and might explain Grisellini's error.

That error lasted for a century at Romanian and German authors who used Grisellini's reference.²¹ Pesty Frigyes came to point it out in the monograph of Severin County (1877)²² without totally eliminating it. All along the 20th century, divergent opinions might be found both in syntheses²³ and in the classic authors' critical editions.²⁴

3. Lajos Rákóczi

Lajos/ Ludovic Rákóczi of Felsővadász's life (1572–1612) is well known in the Magyar historiography. The interest for that military commander comes from his actions and his affiliation to a famous family which gave three princes in Transylvania within the 17th century. Ludovic was a cousin-german of prince Sigismund Rákóczi (1607–1608) and the uncle of prince George Rákóczi I (1630–1648).²⁵ Essential details on captain Rákóczi's personality are to be found in his funeral praise, but also in recent biographic medallions.²⁶ The Romanian historiography has given not much prominence to that one even if he was one of Michael the Brave's co-workers.

A concise sign on Rákóczi's ephemeral presence as a leader in the Mountainous Banat was given by Pesty Frigyes. The historian mentioned a letter of the imperial commissary Imhoff to Rákóczi, dated on the 25 of February 1601, in Sibiu. The addressee was not only the captain of Lipova fortress but also *banus districtus Karansebesensis designatus*.²⁷ The letters hasn't been identified

²⁰ Ștefan Bekes is attested as a ban in Lugoj, in April 1595, Pesty, *Krassó*, vol. IV, 179, no. 481.

²¹ Nicolae Stoica de Hațeg, *Cronica Banatului*, ed. Damashin Mioc, 2nd issue (Timișoara, 1981), 141–142, 145; August Treboniu Laurian, *Temisiana sau scurtă istorie a Banatului temisian* (București, 1848), 114; Leonhard Böhm, *Geschichte des Temeser Banats*, Erster Theil (Leipzig, 1861), 129, 132, 140; Johann Heinrich Schwicker, *Geschichte des Temeser Banats. Historische Bilder und Skizzen* (Grosz-Becskerek/ Zrenjanin, 1861), 202.

²² Pesty, *A Szörényi Bánság*, vol. I, 304, 308.

²³ Pesty's opinion was noted by Patriciu Drăgălina, *Din istoria Banatului Severin*, Part II (Caransebeș, 1900), 108, foot-note 1. The former error in turn was taken again by George Popovici, *Istoria românilor bănățeni* (Lugoj, 1904), 241–242, 247.

²⁴ In Stoica de Hateg's Chronicle, edition of 1981, Stephen Bocskai is noted as a ban and Transylvanian prince, in the index of names (p. 335). Costin Feneșan, Grisellini's work publisher, denies with full arguments that Bocksai was appointed as a ban (p. 82, foot-note III).

²⁵ Nagy, *Magyarország családai*, vol. IX, 604.

²⁶ "Concio funeralis in sepultura magnifici domini, domini Ludovici Rakoczi, habita in templo Szerenciensi, anno 1612. 29. februarii, die mercurii," *Magyar protestáns egyháztörténeti adattár XII* (Budapest, 1928): 107–114; *Magyar életrajzi lexikon*, vol. II (L–Z) (Budapest, 1982), 476; Gyula Koroknay, *Kállói kapitányok* (Nyíregyháza, 2006), 30–35.

²⁷ Pesty, *A Szörényi Bánság*, vol. I, 305 (see also p. 89, foot-note 1).

so far but the short note may be checked up in other sources. Pesty's note on the date might be from the very beginning a doubtful one. A brief analyze of the two correspondents' careers should unravel the truth.

The emitter's name and function lead to Charles Imhoff of Malmsbach (Carolus/ Karl Im Hoff auf Malmspach). The nobiliary particle mends our way toward Nuremberg countryside where the village of Malmsbach is placed. We may find out that Charles belonged to a famous family in Franconia, which gave lots of artists and traders beginning with the 13th century.²⁸ On the 8th of January 1593, Carolus Imhoff of Malmspach is registered as a citizen in Nuremberg.²⁹ Ten years after he is registered as a Doctor of Canon and Civil Law (IVD – *ius utriusque doctor*) and appointed as a councilor of the Upper Hungary Fiscal Chamber (*Camera Hungarica*), in Bratislava.³⁰ His last years, he worked as a councilor of the Royal Court of Appeal in Prague (1606–1610).³¹ His relations with Transylvania might be reduced to 1604–1605, the time he was one of the imperial councilors in the principality administration. *Carolus In Hoff camerae nostrae aulicae Hungaricae et Scepusiensis consiliarius* started his mission on the basis of two instructions of emperor Rudolph II (on the 12th and the 20th January 1604).³² The councilors' travel toward Transylvania was a very slow one, on a route that was related in that time letters: Košice – February, 28, Satu Mare – June, 17, Cluj – August, 2, Sibiu – November, 28, 1604.³³ By this token, the letter to captain Rákóczi might be dated for the time being, on the 25th of February 1605.

At the beginning of the 17th century, the addressee of that letter was very active and all the historic sources show him as a constant partisan of the House of Hapsburg. Ludovic Rákóczi was in 1601 one of Michael the Brave's co-workers. From his familial residence at Felső-Vadász (Upper Hungary), he posted, on the 1st of March 1601, a full of data letter to the Romanian voivode who was in exile that time.³⁴ Another confession, on the 28 of March, comes to

²⁸ Johann Wilhelm Franz von Krohne, *Allgemeines Teutsches Adels-Lexicon*, vol. I, Part II (G–M) (Hamburg, 1776), col. 157–158; *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. X (Berlin, 1974), 146–148.

²⁹ Staatsarchiv Nürnberg, Collection *Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, documentary fund *Losungamt*, Reverse 113. As a digital document, it might be found on: <https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/WD3RNGYFEMJKSTQ2TFEUI4BPH4M27AAA#>

³⁰ Matthias Bel, *Notitia Hungariae novae geographico historica*, vol. I (Viena, 1735), 456.

³¹ Jan Florian Hammerschmidt, *Prodromus Glorae Pragenae* (Praga, [1723]), 757.

³² Endre Veress, *Epistolae et acta Generalis Georgii Basta*, vol. II (Budapest, 1913), 359–367, no. 1480; MCRT, vol. V (1879), 244–260, no. LIII.

³³ MCRT, vol. V, 73, foot-note 2; Andrei Veress, *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești. Acte și scrisori*, vol. VII (București, 1934), 220–221, no. 194; *Iratok Bocskai István*, 133–134, no. 40.

³⁴ MCRT, vol. V, 84–86, no. II. Having received the letter, Michael the Brave wrote on it: *de*

confirm that “Mr. Rákóczi willingly remembers Your Highness (Michael the Brave – aut. n.) and says that he is ready to bring even free of charge 600–700 soldiers about, horsemen and pedestrians”.³⁵ A month latter (on the 23rd of April) the promise was renewed, at the time that Ludovic Rákóczi was in Košice.³⁶ The captain stood to his word and contributed to the victory of Michael and General Giorgio Basta’s allied forces upon Sigismund Báthori’s troops at Guraslau, in the well known battle (*Michael Transalpinus cum suis copiis, quas collegerat, extra numerum exercitus Bastae succedebat, quem Ludovicus Rákoczius cum peditatu Hungarico sequebatur*).³⁷ On the 19th of August 1601, Rákóczi was inside the tent of Michael the Brave, assisting to his murdering and being himself gravely wounded by the Walloons who General Basta had sent there (*Ludovicus Rakoczius peditum Hungarorum tribunus, tum forte Michaeli affidens (...) a nefariis illis quatuor vulnera accepit*).³⁸ The captain continued to speak in advocacy of the Hapsburgs’ politics in Transylvania, after that tragic development. On the 16th of October 1601 they let know that *Herr Ragoczy Loys* with the rest of Michael the Brave’s army entered the Székely Land to submit it to the Emperor; he would have intended to enter Walachia too for the same purpose. The captain’s élan was tempered a month later given the every changing odds of the battles with prince Báthori’s army and the Ottoman troops.³⁹

Ludovic Rákóczi showed off his military abilities also the times after. By the end of 1603 he was appointed for commanding the fortress of Lipova. ... *instructio ... domini comitis Georgii Basta comitis in Huszt etc. generoso domino Ludovico Rakoczy capitaneo Lippensi* on the 18th of December 1603, in Cluj, comes to confirm that moment.⁴⁰ Szamosközy, one of his contemporary chroniclers knew the fact too: *Henricus Dauallus* (Duval – aut. n.) *comes, qui resignata Lippensi praefectura Ludouicum Racocium hajdonum ductorum nobilem,*

la Racovți Laeș [from Louis Rákóczi], *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor*, ed. Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki – Nicolae Iorga, vol. XII (București, 1903), 1157, foot-note 1.

³⁵ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. IV/1 (1882), 246–248, no. CCVI.

³⁶ Lajos Szádeczky, *Erdély és Mihály vajda története 1595–1601. Oklevéltárral* (Temesvár/Timișoara, 1893), 412–413, no. CLXXII.

³⁷ Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. V (1789), 22.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 46; Francisc Kazy, *Historia Regni Hungariae ab anno seculi decimi septimi primo ad annum eiusdem seculi trigesimum septimum* (Tyrnaviae/Trnava, 1737), 33 (quotation).

³⁹ Veress, *Documente*, vol. VI (1933), 467, 474–475, nos. 441, 449–450; *Iratok Bocskai István*, 100–101, no. 16.

⁴⁰ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Wien/ Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv/ Alte Hofkammer/ Hoffinanz Ungarn, rote No. 94, november 1607 (hereinafter, ÖStA FHKA AHK HFU RN 94), f. 125–126. That instruction was preserved as copies only in a larger document of the 8th of November 1607. A. Veress didn’t know that act as it is not presented in *Epistolae et acta*. The document abstract may be read on hungaricana.hu.

successorem sortitus fuerat.⁴¹ Rákóczi kept the fortress command up to the end of June 1605.⁴² One of his actions within that time is to be noted, namely rejection of the troops of Bektes, the beylerbey of Timisoara, who intended together with Gabriel Bethlen to drive the Hapsburgs away from Transylvania. The counterattack was organized by Henri Duval Dampierre⁴³ and Ludovic Rákóczi; they rashly acted overnight, horrified and drove the Ottomans troops away (1604, September).⁴⁴ According to those above, the imperial commissary Imhoff set in Sibiu at the same time.

Thus, by the end of 1604, all what Pesty wrote had been beyond doubt. Rákóczi's appointment as a ban took place in the beginning of 1605 (in stead of 1601, the year that Pesty wrote about) and more references suggest it. The imperial commissaries in Sibiu sent a report, on the 18th of February 1605, to General Basta on the threats against the Hapsburg domination in Transylvania. The most serious was the anti-Hapsburgs rebellion under István Bocksaí leading, which had successfully unleashed in the Upper Hungary (1604, October) and was to cover also the Principality of Transylvania. To all those, they added the possibility that the voivode of Moldavia enter Transylvania at the Ottoman Porte order. Not better was the situation within the south-western lands of the principality: the mercenaries in Lipova claimed their rights while the fortresses of Caransebes and Lugoj had been given to Bocksaí, the rebel.⁴⁵ The imperials' precarious position in the Banat of Caransebes was a consequence of the extremely abusive attitude of the governor imposed there by General Basta. For a year long (1603, November–1604, October), ban Simon Lodi and his haiduks used to be more horrid to the inhabitants than the Turks or Tartars could have been (*non tam Turca hoc fecit et Tartarus, quam Rasciani et alia Christianae militiae agmina*). As long as the claims sent to the imperial commissaries in Cluj had no effect, the people in that banat drove the adventurous ban's soldiers away by their own forces.⁴⁶ The Ottomans exploited the event and promised to István

⁴¹ István Szamosközy, *Történeti maradványai 1566–1603*, ed. Sándor Szilágyi, vol. III (Budapest, 1877), 339 (Collection: Monumenta Hungariae Historica, *Scriptores*, vol. XXIX); Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. V, 525.

⁴² ÖStA FHKA AHK HFU RN 94, f. 127–128 (a brief list of captain Rákóczi's payments between the 18th of December 1603 and the 31st of August 1605).

⁴³ Henri Duval (du Val) Dampierre's personality (1580–1620) who became a general of cavalry is reported in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. IV (Leipzig, 1876), 719–720.

⁴⁴ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. VIII (1894), 284, no. CCCCVIII (piece of news from the 4th of October 1604); a narration at: Nicolaus Istvánfius, *Historia regni Hungariae* (Viena, 1758), 496–497: *Bectes & Bethlenius seminudi & semisomnes transnato flumine Temeso, profugiunt*.

⁴⁵ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. IV/1, 410, no. CCCLI. The report was signed also by „Carolus in Hoff”.

⁴⁶ Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. VI (1793), 45–50, 66–70 (quotation at p. 49); Szamosközy, *Történeti*

Bocksai the fortresses in that banat; that one appointed Paul Keresztési for their leading as a ban (*quibus arcibus Bocskaius obtentis, Banatum locorum eorundem Paulo Kerestesio contulit*).⁴⁷

The imperial commissaries and General Basta tried to impose there a new ban in order to keep the region under their authority, and the experienced captain Ludovic Rákóczi seemed to be the most adequate person. As on the 25th of February 1605 his appointment was but a recent one, we might have the explanation of what Pesty's expression signified: *banus districtus Karansebesiensis designatus*. So, there were two bans for a while, each one representing the interests of the two adversaries' adherents. But certainly Ludovic never arrived in the towns he had entrusted with. The imperial commissaries took him for more important missions according to their cause. One of them was to get the assistance of Radu Serban, voievode of Walachia to drive away Bocksai. The mentioned above report expressed that hope: *quid denique in domini Raduly Walacchiae Transalpinæ principis auxilio nobis spei reliquum sit, inde facile existimare licet*⁴⁸ Within a short time, a lapidary note in Brasov Counting Register showed that: *den 22 Februarii [1605], khombt Lugoschi Ban vom Radul Wayda wellichen Hern Comisari zum Radul geschickt hatten*.⁴⁹ Thus, we have the proof of the diplomatic concrete actions to get assistances. The unnamed ban is certainly Rákóczi, the Hapsburgs' loyal man, from whom he had got the function.

The political evolution after that moment followed the way they had stipulated since the beginning of 1605. Paul Keresztési became the ban of districts of Caransebes and Lugoj and Ludovic Rákóczi kept the fortress of Lipova up to the end of June when the Serbian haiduks delivered it to the Ottomans.⁵⁰ After the transfer of power Rákóczi left the Romanian territory, discharging the duties of a commandant of the fortress of Kálló (1606–1608)⁵¹ and captain of the haiduks in the Upper Hungary (1609–1611). For his faithful services he was given material and moral rewards consisting in estates and the title of a baron (on the 5th of November 1607).⁵² In the end of 1610, a new opportunity should have brought

maradványai 1542–1608, vol. IV (1880), 254–255 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica, *Scriptores*, vol. XXX).

⁴⁷ Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. VI, 227; Szamosközy, *Történeti*, vol. IV, 325 (1605, February).

⁴⁸ Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. IV/1, 410, no. CCCLI.

⁴⁹ Nicolae Iorga, "Socotelile Braşovului şi scrisori româneşti către Sfat în secolul al XVII-lea," *Analele Academiei Române. Memoriile secţiei istorice* (hereinafter, AARMSI), series II, tome XXI (Bucureşti, 1899): 120.

⁵⁰ Szamosközy, *Történeti*, vol. IV, 352–353; *Iratok Bocskai István*, 158–161, 178–179, nos. 56, 57, 67.

⁵¹ Nagykálló today, county of Szabolcs-Szathmár-Bereg. Koroknay, *Kállói kapitányok*, 32–34.

⁵² Magyar Országos Levéltár/ Magyar Kancelláriai Levéltár (A 57)/ Libri regii, vol. V, 890–893, no. 327 (Diploma of a baron, with the list of his famous deeds).

Ludovic Rákóczi back to Transylvania. In the context of preparing the military campaign against Walachia, Gabriel Báthori asked, on the 1st of December, *spectabili ac magnifico domino Ludovico Rakozy de Felső Vadasz equiti aurato domino fratri nobis honorando* to supply his army with soldiers.⁵³ The prince's asking failed. On the contrary, Rákóczi is found among the partisans of king Mathias II, who fought against the venturesome prince all along the year of 1611.⁵⁴ His premature death (on the 3rd of January 1612) brought vacancy of an important military function for a long time. That one would be asked in February 1613, by voivode Marcu, son of voivode Petru Cercel, who was taken by Nicolae Iorga for "a terrible captain of haiduks, great in fight and spoils, with the fame of a new Michael the Brave".⁵⁵

4. Farkas Kamuthi

Farkas/ Wolfgang Kamuthi of Szent-László (? –1626) was a very influential nobleman during princes Gabriel Bathori and Gabriel Bethlen. His contemporaries' contrasting remarks as well as those of his posterity speak both about a complex personality. Szamosközy shows him as a refined man (*Wolfgangus Kamuthius vir e nobilitate Transylvana singulari ingenii dexteritate praeditus*)⁵⁶, but prince János Kemény's memories offer the picture of an immoral, conceited and abusive one. His career begins during prince Sigismund Báthori's reign to whom he offered various services by supplying horsemen for the Court (1595–1596), being the prince's messenger to emperor Rudolf II (1599), or spending 10,000 forints for various needs in the country.⁵⁷

In 1603, September, Kamuthi jointed the Transylvanian noblemen who asked the Ottomans' support to remove the Hapsburg reign in the principality.⁵⁸

⁵³ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Wien/ Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv/ Staatenabteilungen/ Türkei I/ Karton 92 1609–1610 (hereinafter, ÖstA HHStA StAbt Türkei 92), 206–207. A copy at Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale, București (hereinafter, ANIC), documentary fund *Microfilme Austria*, reel 426, frame 454. A Latin abstract of the Magyar original document, at: Nicolae Iorga, *Studii și documente cu privire la istoria românilor*, vol. IV (București, 1902), LXXXV, no. V.

⁵⁴ An Italian report from the 21st of November 1611, in Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. IV/1, 447, no. CCCLXXXI.

⁵⁵ Iorga, *Studii*, VI, LXX; Veress, *Documente*, vol. VIII (1935), 300–301, no. 240.

⁵⁶ Szamosközy, *Történeti maradványai 1566–1603*, vol. II (1876), 198 (*Monumenta Hungariae Historica, Scriptores*, vol. XXVIII).

⁵⁷ *Iratok Bocskai István*, 72, no. 7 (the horsemen at the Court); Szamosközy, *Történeti maradványai*, vol. II, 235; Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. IV (1785), 247 (Messenger to Rudolf); Haan Lajos, *Békés vármegye hajdana*, vol. II (Pest, 1870), 211–212 (he was given the fort of Eperjes as a pledge for his expense).

⁵⁸ Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. V, 464; Biró Vencel, *Erdély követei a Portán* (Cluj-Kolozsvár, 1921), 117.

It is the moment of starting his co-operation with Gabriel Bethlen with results that could be noted after 1613, the year that the last one comes to Transylvania leading. But Kamuthi had succeeded until then to win the young prince (1608–1613) Gabriel Bethlen's confidence and respect, and that one gave him forts, estates and functions. Not only through what he deserved, but by immoral means Kamuthi had got those advantages. János Kemény shows that "some ones fawned upon him [the prince] even offering him their wives; among them, Wolfgang Kamuthi was given the fortress of Gilau for such a thing"⁵⁹ Two centuries after, historian Kövari László retook that information and added an important details: the depraved noble was the ban of Lugoj (*ugyszintén a becsvágyó lugosi bán, Kamuthi Farkas, szemet hunytak nejeik Báthorivali csapodárkodására*).⁶⁰ The detail is found further in the first general repertoire of the counts in Transylvania, a Lázár Miklós' work. No reference is shown by the author, but he remembers a princely document of 1609 within which Kamuthi bears the title of a ban. As he knows Pesty's monograph where no ban was recorded for those years, Lázár lances the idea that Farkas Kamuthi was in charge between 1608 and 1610 (*alkalmasint 1608-tól fogva 1610-ig*).⁶¹ What Lázár had noted became a constant reference for all the subsequent studies and syntheses.⁶² Only in 1944 the documentary confirmation came, with the Gilau fortress urbarium publishing. The famous medievalist Jakó Zsigmond mentioned that ban Kamuthi was given the estate of Cluj-Manastur in 1609.⁶³ On Jakó's detail we could arrive to the document emitted on the 21st of March 1609 through which prince Gabriel Báthori gave ban Kamuthi and his wife Caterina Moise, the estate of Cluj-Manastur. The estate included the homonymous fort and the villages of Burjános Buda and Makó.⁶⁴ It wasn't a real donation but a temporary pledge in change of 12,000 forints the prince had been given by the beneficiaries. A dona-

⁵⁹ Ioan Kemény, *Memorii. Scrierea vieții sale*, edition Ștefan Fay (Cluj Napoca, 2002), 39.

⁶⁰ László Kövari, *Erdély történelme*, vol. IV: *A Báthoriak, Bocskai és Bethlenek kora* (Pest, 1863), 196.

⁶¹ Miklós Lázár, *Erdély főispánjai (1540–1711)* (Budapest, 1889), 117.

⁶² *Magyar Életrajzi Lexikon*, vol. I (A–K) (Budapest, 1967), 848; Trócsányi, *Erdély*, 29; Báthory Gábor és kora, coord. Klára Papp, Annamária Jeney-Tóth, Attila Ulrich (Debrecen, 2009), 147, 191.

⁶³ Zsigmond Jakó, *A gyalui vártartomány urbáriumai* (Kolozsvár/ Cluj, 1944), XVIII, referring to the archival fund (fideicomisionar) of Jósika of Brănișca family, *Kamuti-levelek*, Fasc. VII, no. 2, Km. Comitatus Colos K. 78. That granting had been mentioned without explanatory notes, by Elek Jakab, "Erdély egyháztörténelméhez, I. A kolosmonostori apátság," *Magyar Történelmi Társ XIII* (1867): 7.

⁶⁴ Serviciul Județean Cluj al Arhivelor Naționale [Cluj Branch of the National Archives], *Fondul fideicomisionar Jósika* (no. 255) 753/ Fasc. 7, f. 5. Nowadays, the two villages are called Vechea and Macău, in the county of Cluj.

tion would have been more difficult as long as the estate of Cluj-Manastur was a public property of the Principality of Transylvania.

The princely letter from the 3rd of April 1609, that reconfirmed the old privileges of 1457 and 1551 in the Banat, is a supplementary sign for Kamuthi's function. On the back of the paper we may find the note on Ladislau Garlesteanu's presence there as he took the entitled ban's turn. The first publisher of the document, Pesty Frigyes transcribed: *presentatae coram me Ladislao Gerlistey substituto bano ac generoso domino Vulphango Kamuty*.⁶⁵ *Ac* as a conjunction shows two persons, so that *coram nobis* should have been more adequate. A couple of decades after, Andrei Veress republished the document with the variant *presentatae coram me Ladislao Gerljstej substituto bano a generoso domino Vulphango Kamuty m(anu) p(ropria)*.⁶⁶ The preposition *a* in ablative shows this time that Ladislau Garlisteanu was a deputy on the part of ban Kamuthi.

The so few notices on Kamuthi's function do not allow us to set its length. What Lázár Miklós proposed, from 1608 to 1610 might be plausible, but not documentary confirmed. The same difficulties work in his estate identification as well as in his effective presence in that banat. Partly, the condition of having got properties in the area so to gain the function was materialized. His ownership on Eperjes fortress with the distributed possessions in the county of Arad, and the ephemeral donation of two villages in Zarand are the only noticed ones.⁶⁷ Caterina Moise, Kamuthi's wife had a yard with a house in Caransebes, but her possession is referred to only in 1619.⁶⁸ So, the presence of Kamuthi in the Banat might be taken as a sporadic one. The nobleman was at the same time count of Turda and a princely councilor⁶⁹, two more advantageous functions then that of a ban. Kamuthi was convinced that his political influence would be efficient only through his constant presence near the prince. Thus, his function as a ban could have been but a sporadic one. The entitled one changing took place before the 6th of September 1610 when *Volfgangus Kamuti consiliarius et comes co(mi)t(a)tus Thorden(sis)* and *Paulus Keresztesi*

⁶⁵ Pesty, *Krassó*, vol. IV, 255, no. 520 (dated: *anno 1609. 1-a die Juny*).

⁶⁶ Veress, *Documente*, vol. VIII, 65, no. 60 (dated *anno 1609 19. die Iunii*).

⁶⁷ Prince Sigismund Rákóczi reconfirmed his ownership on Eperjes fortress on the 19th November 1607 (Magyar Országos Levéltár/ Erdélyi fejedelmi kancelláriai (F 1)/ Libri regii, vol. IV, f. 244r. A copy at ANIC, documentary fund *Microfilme Ungaria*, reel 872, frame 660). He was given the estates of Monostor and Rokzin in Zarand by Gabriel Báthori, on the 29th of October 1608, but the donation was taken back after (*Liber regius*, vol. V, f. 91v.–92r.; *Microfilme Ungaria*, reel 872, frame 774. On the register side (f. 91v.) it was noted *annihilata est hac donatio*).

⁶⁸ Antal Molnár, "Jezsuita misszió Karánsebesen (1625–1642)," *Történelmi Szemle* XLI (Budapest, 1999), nrs. 1–2: 140, foot-note 88.

⁶⁹ Lázár, *Erdély főispánjai*, 117–118 (count of Turda); Trócsányi, *Erdély*, 29; Báthory Gábor és kora, 145 (councilor).

*banus civitatis ac districtus Karansebesien(sis)*⁷⁰ put their signature and seal on the same document. Kamuthi stood his high political ground long time after, as long as Gabriel Bethlen confirmed his former functions and offered him other honorable dignities.

5. Gergely Némethi

Némethi Gergely/ Gregorius (? –1612) puts an end to the list of the person-ages in this issue. His origin and youth are still unknown. Only his final 12 years are registered by the historical sources. In the context of fights for supremacy in Transylvania, Némethi began to be noticed in 1601.⁷¹ His real notoriety came in 1604, October–1606, May, the time of anti-Hapsburgs rebellion under Bocksa István leading. Némethi Gergely became the commander of haiduks' troops with the help of whom he occupied the mid Danube valley, besieged the town of Sopron and invaded Styria. Remaining always an adversary of the Hapsburgs, he proved his power and boldness through his deeds (*Gregorium Némethium, hominem obscurum, sed manu promptum et ad audendum paratum*).⁷²

Némethi offered his services to claimant Gabriel Báthori in 1607–1608.⁷³ Their co-operation lasted for the next years with mutual advantages. The captain proved to be one of the most loyal of the prince's subjects and was rewarded with some of the most important functions and honors. First of all, Némethi married Cristina Kendy, chancellor Kendy István's sister. That matrimonial alliance helped his entering the Princely Council (1608–1612).⁷⁴ At the same time Gergely became the general captain of Odorhei Seat (1609–1612), and count of Inner Szolnok County (1610–1612).⁷⁵

Némethi Gergely's connections with the banat we are spoken about are noticed in a document emitted on the 8th of May 1609. The prince had donated him a short time before the borough and district of Lugoj to the great chagrin of the local inhabitants. Their letter of protest shows how generous the young prince was and that the donation was an unfair action.⁷⁶ One month before (on

⁷⁰ MCRT, vol. VI (1880), 186–187, no. XXIII.

⁷¹ "Maros-Vásárhelyi Nagy Szabó Ferencz memorialéja," in Mikó Imre, ed., *Erdélyi történelmi adatok*, vol. I (Kolozsvár, 1855), 69.

⁷² Description of the military acts, at: Kazy, *Historia*, 33–44, 47–51 (quotation at p. 48); Istvanfius, *Historia*, 496, 499–515; Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. VI, 301–308.

⁷³ András Komáromy, "Levelek és akták az 1607/8-ki hajdúlázadás történetéhez," *A Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* VI (Budapest, 1893): 80, 85, 87, 88.

⁷⁴ Báthory Gábor és kora, 140 (marriage), 145 (counselor).

⁷⁵ Lázár, *Erdély főispánjai*, 162, 225 (count); Balogh Judit, *Székelyföldi karrierok. Az udvarhelyszéki nemesség hatalomszerzési lehetőségei a 16–17. században* (Budapest, 2011), 151, 161 (captain).

⁷⁶ Pesty, *Krassó*, vol. IV, 256–257, no. 522.

the 3rd of April), the same Gabriel Báthori had reconfirmed the local inhabitants' former liberties and privileges as they had lasted for centuries. The opposition of inhabitants in Lugoj was entirely justified and the donation was annulated.

Némethi's presence as a ban of Lugoj was similarly an ephemeral one by the end of 1610. But this hypostasis is deeply obscure as the historiography rarely noted it.⁷⁷ Némethy's function is obdured by that one of Paul Keresztesi he succeeded to interrupt or to redouble. Keresztesi is certified as *banus civitatis ac districtus Karansebesiensis* (on the 6th of September 1610), and as *arcium Lugasi et Karansebesi banum supremum* (7th of January 1611).⁷⁸ The two records are relative close in time and give the impression that the dignity was a continuous one. However, Gergely Némethi is referred to as a ban between the 3rd of November and the 7th of December 1610. Such a change might be set down to the prince impulsive and unpredictable behavior. But more illustrating explanations are given by the political juncture. Gabriel Báthori had tense relations with Walachia and Moldavia as he had manifested from the beginning of his rule the ambition of a political supremacy upon them. He always had in view to remove the Walachian voivode Radu Serban and claimed Moldavia to pay him a tribute.⁷⁹ Inside the country, the prince's behavior displeased part of the noble class led by chancellor Kendy István who planned the prince elimination. The nobiliary complot was disclosed but the conspirators succeeded to escape (1610, March).⁸⁰ From then "the mad prince" began to worry that the rebels who had run in the Upper Hungary had played booty with the Hapsburgs and negotiated with Radu Serban to attack him from two directions. A very duplicitary person, Báthori told the Ottomans the Hapsburgs' intentions to start a new war against them, suggesting that the Romanian voivodes elimination would thwart the Austrians' plans. On the other hand the prince told the Hapsburgs about an imminent coming in Transylvania of the former chancellor Kenedy István's troops with the Polish's help. The situation was eloquently related by Nicolae Iorga: "rather than waiting at home for his enemies, Gabriel prefers to leave for finding them. In that month of November [1610], he sent all the parts his couriers to ask for support. He appealed to Magyar magnates he knew as being powerful and friends of him, to the haiduks at the borders, to Pasha in Buda, and to other Turks".⁸¹

It is Némethi Gergely's moment to come in the stage as he didn't took part to the conspiracy and stood high in the prince's favor. Báthori informed, on the 3rd

⁷⁷ Orbán, *A Székelyföld leírása*, 50, foot-note 1. Even Fr. Pesty did not know that detail.

⁷⁸ MCRT, vol. VI, 187, no. XXIII; Hurmuzaki, *Documente*, vol. IV/2 (1884), 314, no. CCCXXI.

⁷⁹ Victor Motogna, "Războaiele lui Radu Șerban (1602–1611)," *AARMSI*, series III, tome VI (1927): 299–302.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 302–303.

⁸¹ Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXII.

of November, the “magnificent mister” Némethi, a princely counselor, general captain of the Seat of Odorhei, and ban of Lugoj (*necnon bano Lugasiensis*), on the imminent attack on Transylvania; he was asked to defend the frontier toward Moldavia. He had to provide his soldiers, riders or pedestrians, in order to act right away.⁸² Four days after, the prince remembered Némethi (*Magnifico Gregorio Nemethi de Csiabragh*⁸³ *consiliario nostro nec non sedis Siculicalis Udvarhely capitaneo comiti comitatus Szolnok Interioris ac bano Lugasiensis etc. affini nobis honorando*) the former asking to beylerbey of Buda to send him 800 horsemen for the ban to renew that asking.⁸⁴ There are data concerning the fact that the support had been asked for since the beginning of October, Némethi being the leader of the messengers. The mission was effectively done as long as beylerbey Hassan Pasha wrote a letter to the prince to let him know about Némethi’s courier receiving; the letter also informed the prince that Hassan ordered bey of Erlau and other pashas to send him soldiers.⁸⁵ The Ottoman dignity’s intervention was a prompt one as on the 28th of October Ibrahim Pasha of Erlau wrote Némethi on his decision to offer him his all support.⁸⁶ At the same time commander Némethi was authorized to inform palatine George Thurzó in Košice both on General Sigismund Kornis’ capture following the last spring conspiracy and on the former chancellor Kendy’s preparations to penetrate in Transylvania.⁸⁷

Báthori’s emergency might be found also in other letter to Némethi to order him to run “day and night” for recruiting as many as possible soldiers because he “was in the greatest need of” (8th of November).⁸⁸ All along the month of November Némethi worked for that mission. The prince rewrote him on the 29th of November, asking him to urgently come back, preferably with the promised Ottoman troops.⁸⁹ The last found out mention on ban Némethi Gergely

⁸² ÖstA HHStA StAbt Türkei 92, p. 172. A copy at ANIC, documentary fund *Microfilme Austria*, reel 426, frame 425. A German abstract of the Magyar genuine document, at: Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXV, no. VII.

⁸³ A locality in Slovakia, formerly named Csábrágrvarbók; today: Čabradský Vrbovok.

⁸⁴ ÖstA HHStA StAbt Türkei 92, p. 175. A copy at ANIC, documentary fund *Microfilme Austria*, reel 426, frame 427.

⁸⁵ Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXII, foot-note 5; vol. XX (1911), 389–390, no. CCCXXXVIII b).

⁸⁶ Iorga, *Studii*, vol. XX, 390, no. CCCXXXVIII e).

⁸⁷ Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXII, foot-note 3; vol. XX, 390–391, no. CCCXXXVIII c) and i).

⁸⁸ Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXII, foot-note 4; vol. XX, 390–391, no. CCCXXXVIII h).

⁸⁹ ÖstA HHStA StAbt Türkei 92, p. 205. A copy at ANIC, documentary fund *Microfilme Austria*, reel 426, frame 452 (to *Magnifico domino Gregorio Nemethy comiti comitatus Zolnok Interioris districtus Caransebesiensis bano, sedis Siculicalis Wdvarhely capitano et consiliario nostro etc. fideli nobis honorando*). A Latin abstract of the genuine Magyar document, at Iorga, *Studii*, vol. IV, LXXXV, no. IV.

belongs to a letter of one of his co-workers, posted on the 7th of December 1610.⁹⁰ The inconstant prince changed his mind after that date and reappointed Paul Keresztesi in that function. If Némethi proved military abilities, Keresztesi in turn was a good diplomat and stood well with the nobility in the Banat. It was but naturally then that ban Keresztesi should have been sent as the prince's messenger in Istanbul to let the Sultan know the reasons of Báthori's campaign southwards of the Carpathians and to ask for that one the confirmation of his appointment as a voivode of Walachia (7th of January 1611).

The captain's involving in the princely campaign in Walachia is not documentarily pointed out. But his loyalty to the prince at the moment of confrontation with Radu Serban who came in Transylvania to take his revenge upon the prince is a sure fact. Before Brasov battle, Némethi involved in agitating the masses and recruiting soldiers from the border with the Hapsburgs' possessions, a fact that irritated the last ones.⁹¹ Having lost the battle, Báthori took refugee in Sibiu with 1,000 soldiers and his faithful counselors Kamuthi Farkas and Némethi Gergely.⁹² The next year he proved his supreme devotion. Némethi took part in the siege of the fortified church at Bod where the prince's Saxon opponents had taken refugee. Fatally injured by a bull (the 23rd of August) Némethi died at Ders/ Dirjiu (the 4th of September) and was buried at Benedek/ Benic (12th of September 1612).⁹³

In the end of this short investigation we might observe that the men who really had been appointed for a ban had a nominal presence in the society of the districts of Caransebes and Lugoj. Their appointment was based exclusively on military and politically reasons. The ephemerality of their functions had also other important reasons: lack of relations with the local nobility and of proprieties in the Banat. But in spite of their fleeting or imaginary relations with the Banat, the five personages are still important through their own destiny. What is to be noticed is the ambition to climb the social ladder, through some high dignities up to that of a prince of Transylvania. The function of a ban was of a secondary importance for all of them. More relevant are those noblemen's relations with the great names of their time. Ludovic Rákóczi co-operation

⁹⁰ András Komáromy, "A szécsényi árulás," *A Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* IX (1896): (202-) 204: Az tekintetes és nagyságos Némethy Gergely uramnak ... lugasi bánnak.

⁹¹ Veress, *Documente*, vol. VIII, 188, no. 144 (letter of king Mathias II to palatine Thurzó, the 14th of July 1611).

⁹² Iorga, *Studii*, vol. XX, 402, no. CCCLV (a report from the 25th of July 1611). The two former bans met in Oradea (on the 21st of December 1611) as members of the prince's contingent to conclude peace with the Hapsburgs, *MCRT*, vol. VI, függelék, 553–554, no. II.

⁹³ "Segesvári Bálint Krónikája 1606–1654," in Károlyi Szabó, ed., *Erdélyi történelmi adatok*, vol. IV (1862), 180.

with Michael the Brave deserves a special investigation. How István Bocskai and Gabriel Báthori were given Kamuthi and Némethi's support is of the same importance. Ludovic Rákóczi and Gergely Némethi even in different alliances stood at the same table during the treating time in Košice (14th of June 1606), to conclude peace between Bocskai and the Hapsburgs.⁹⁴ By the same token, the testimonies attentive investigation and interpretation are paid in turn. An ampler and more accurate restitution of some of old people and institutions' destiny is the real profit.

ÎNTRE EFEMER ȘI FICTIV. COMPLETĂRI LA ISTORIA BANILOR DE CARANSEBEȘ ȘI LUGOJ

Rezumat

Acest studiu reia problematica titularilor funcției băniei de Caransebeș și Lugoj (atestată între anii 1536 și 1658). Șirul celor 32 de bani deja cunoscuți se poate completa cu nume noi care, din diverse motive, au fost ignorate sau necunoscute până acum. Cele cinci personaje prezentate aici s-au afirmat în epoca principilor Báthori (1571–1613). Acestea sunt: Farkas Petky, István Bocskai, Lajos Rákóczi, Farkas Kamuthi și Gergely Némethi. Istoricii le-au analizat existența, pe măsura faptelor și influenței lor, dar cercetarea s-a dovedit deficitară în evidențierea ipostazei de ban. Primii doi bărbați figurează cu funcția de ban doar printr-o confuzie istoriografică. Despre următorii doi demnitari, certitudinea dregătoriei de ban este susținută prin informații concise mai vechi, care necesită precizări suplimentare. Ultimul personaj a fost ban doar câteva săptămâni, aspect total ignorat de posteritate.

Ancheta întreprinsă a evidențiat faptul că personajele care au deținut cu adevărat funcția de ban, au avut o prezență nominală în societatea districtelor Caransebeș și Lugoj. Numirea lor s-a făcut exclusiv din rațiuni militare și politice. Efemeritatea funcției a avut și alte cauze importante: absența legăturilor cu nobilimea locală și lipsa proprietăților în Banat. Deși au avut legături fugitive sau imaginare cu Banatul, cele cinci personaje rămân importante prin destinul lor. Se remarcă ambiția de promovare socială, concretizată în ocuparea unor demnități înalte, mergând până la cea de principe al Transilvaniei. Pentru ei, funcția de ban a rămas de importanță secundară.

⁹⁴ Sándor Szilágyi, "Bocskay István és Illésházy István levelezése 1605 és 1606-ban," *Történelmi Tár* I (1878): 288, no. LXI (*Ludovicus Rakoczy capitaneus and Nemethi Gergely kapitány were among the signatories of the document*).

