
ŠTÚDIE

FROM IMPRISONED EMBEZZLER TO COMMANDER. THE APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH PRIAMI TO COMMANDER OF BRATISLAVA, 1663

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The author of this study focused on new strategic situation after the fall of the Nové Zámky (September 1663). The loss of the fortress, which had a high importance in the defence of the fore-field of Vienna, caused extreme panic in the military and political leadership of the Habsburgs. Although the difficult terrain did not favour the Ottoman armies that might attack Vienna from this direction, the possibility of such an action could not be ruled out. Bratislava with its completely outdated defence system needed to be reinforced. Montecuccoli proposed Colonel Joseph Priami to this position, who had previously worked at the fortifications of Prague and had a significant experience as a field officer. The Emperor assigned Priami to be the commander of Bratislava. Priami also presented the plans of fortification, but these were not realized partly because of the usual financial difficulties, and partly because of the essential improvement in the strategic situation. However, in this otherwise usual story, the real curiosity is the person of Priami and his appointment to this responsible position. Priami's past was far from being immaculate, he embezzled the pay and the recruiting money of his regiment, made dealings with the supply of his soldiers, left unpaid debts, and was imprisoned three times because of some of these crimes. At the same time, he tried to push forward himself at all times and everywhere in order to get ahead. The present study seeks to answer two questions: first, why a person with such an antecedent was placed in the above-mentioned important position, and secondly, to what extent Priami's plans to strengthen Bratislava corresponded to the professional requirements and the current possibilities.

Military History. Habsburgh Monarchy. Bratislava in the 17 th Century. Joseph Priami to commander of Bratislava, 1663.

With the fall of the Nové Zámky (September 27, 1663), a completely new strategic situation emerged. The loss of the fortress, which had a high importance in the defence of the fore-field of Vienna, caused extreme panic in the military and political leadership of the Habsburgs. Although the difficult terrain did not favour the Ottoman armies that might attack Vienna from this direction, the possibility of such an action could not be ruled out. Bratislava with its completely outdated defence system stood on one of possible paths of attack, which was therefore urgently needed to be reinforced. However, beyond the material conditions, a person also had to be found to create these plans and who could manage the construction works. Montecuccoli proposed Colonel Joseph Priami to this position, who had previously worked at the fortifications of Prague and had a significant experience as a field officer. The Emperor assigned Priami to be the commander of Bratislava. Priami also presented the plans of fortification, but these were not realized partly because of the usual financial difficulties, and partly because of the essential improvement in the strategic situation. However, in this otherwise usual story, the real curiosity is the person of Priami and his appointment to this responsible position. Priami's past was far from being

immaculate, he embezzled the pay and the recruiting money of his regiment, made dealings with the supply of his soldiers, left unpaid debts, and was imprisoned three times because of some of these crimes. At the same time, he tried to push forward himself at all times and everywhere in order to get ahead. However, these should not be judged according to the morality of today; many similar cases occurred most probably at that time. The present study seeks to answer two questions: first, why a person with such an antecedent was placed in the above-mentioned important position, and secondly, to what extent Priami's plans to strengthen Bratislava corresponded to the professional requirements and the current possibilities.

The members of the garrison who were still alive left the abandoned Nové Zámky¹ at noon of September 27th, 1663,² and the Ottomans took possession of fortress they obtained by a long siege. Nové Zámky became the centre of the last vilayet they established in Hungary. The loss of the fortress, which had a high importance in the defence of the forefield of Vienna, caused extreme panic in the military and political leadership of the Habsburgs, and so they issued a lot of immediate defensive measures.³ First of all, they sent even more troops to reinforce the army, defending the Žitný ostrov⁴ ever since the siege of Nové Zámky began and made great efforts to reinforce the nearby castles to be ready for the defence. The military situation became more serious, when the Ottoman army returning to its winter quarters took first, on October 12th, Nitra,⁵ then on November 1st Levice,⁶ and on that same day, after a month of fighting, the defenders of Nógrád abandoned their castle, as well.

In light of the new strategic situation the military leadership in Vienna first of all attempted to reinforce those points, which could prevent the brake-through of the Ottomans towards Vienna.⁷ If we study the hydrographical map of the land,⁸ we can see, that the most important objective was to guard the line of the River Váh. The key positions of that were the four-bastion-fortress of Kolárovo,⁹ built from wood and soil,¹⁰ erected at the fork of the Váh and Danube, and also Šintava, Hlohovec and Šaľa.¹¹ However, the Ottomans attacked these, as well, and while Šintava prevailed,¹² Hlohovec fell at the second siege attempt.¹³

The area guarded by the mentioned castles was quite watery, which could greatly slow the advance of bigger army units. The same was true for the Žitný ostrov region itself, which the Turkish and Tartar light cavalry was able to cross, inspite all this. It has done this several times in the past and will do so later, as well.¹⁴ To by-pass this difficult terrain, two different ways could be used, one in the North, another to the South. But to go around on the southern path, the Ottomans had to cross the Danube, which manoeuvre was always considered to be dangerous; furthermore, Komárno¹⁵ also threatened the Ottomans' manoeuvres here.

¹ Germ. Neuheusel, Hung. Érsekújvár.

² For the exact time of abandon see: ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/113c.

³ Ausgewählte Schriften des Raimund Fürsten Montecuccoli General-Lieutenant und Feldmarschall, Hrsg. von der Direktion des K. und K. Kriegs-Archivs, bearbeitet von Alois Veltzé, Bd. II, Wien–Leipzig, 1899, 406–407.

⁴ Germ. Schütt, Hung. Csallóköz.

⁵ Germ. Neutra, Hung. Nyitra.

⁶ Germ. Lewenz, Hung. Léva.

⁷ At the same time an order was sent to General Souches to occupy the passes leading to Moravia. ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 29 September 1663 No. 126. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 208r.

⁸ Military Map Collection, Budapest, B IX b 255.

⁹ Germ. Gutta, Hung. Gúta.

¹⁰ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/4c, ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 11 October 1663 Reg. Bd. 871. f. 477v–478r. See the layout: ÖStA KA Kartensammlung K VII k 198-200 (its date is given by its inscription, because it was part of the document with the signature ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1663 Okt. No. 39 Exp; the document was scrapped).

¹¹ Šintava: Germ. Schintau, Hung. Semppte, Hlohovec: Germ. Freistadt, Hung. Galgóc, Sellye: Germ. Schelle or Schelia, Hung. (Vág)Sellye.

¹² ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/9, 9a, 19.

¹³ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/54, further ibid. HKR Prot. 18 October 1663 No. 89. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 242v.

¹⁴ See e.g. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/43 and 126. This latter informing us, that 7000 Turkish–Tartar horsemen are marching towards Bratislava on the left bank of the Danube.

¹⁵ Germ. Komorn, Hung. Komárom.

Even if they could have neutralized Komárno, behind that stood the fortress of Győr kept on building for two decades, which covered the arid passage between the Hanság and Szigetköz regions.¹⁶

Theoretically, the less watery country at the upper flow of River Váh was accessible for the Ottomans from Nitra, which lay more to the north.¹⁷ By turning to the south from there they could advance on a better terrain along the foot of the Carpathian Mountains. At the end of this road stood the Bratislava¹⁸ Castle, which, due to its entirely outdated defence works, was totally unsuitable to stop the Ottomans. It was not incidental, that an elaborate plan was put together at this time to fortify the Bratislava Castle. Reinforcing the castle became necessary not only against a presumed Ottoman attack, but also because the castle and the town got an important role in the campaign as a first line logistic hub. The shipments coming from the Hereditary Lands could be delivered easily on the Danube till Bratislava,¹⁹ where a lot of water-mills and bakeries were in operation.²⁰

So, the intended reinforcement of Bratislava Castle and Town with a modern defence system was a direct result of the military situation. The first determined step happened in mid July 1663, when Count Miklós Pálffy, the *főispán* (the chief officer) of Preßburg County and Captain of Bratislava Castle,²¹ and also Count István Zichy, the Chief of the Hungarian Chamber asked the Aulic War Council to assign Engineer-Colonel Jacob von Holst²² to handle the matter of the defence of Bratislava.²³ The War Council also thought this to be reasonable, as they instructed Raimondo Montecuccoli, the Commander-in-Chief of Emperor's army in Hungary, on July 24th to put a garrison of 150 troops in the castle, further Holst had to devise a plan on how to reinforce Bratislava.²⁴

We can think, nothing interesting happened after that: Holst drew up his plan and then the construction began at a snail's pace and with shortage of money, as usual. These last two occurred, of course, but Holst did not get the chance to plan anything. Although the Archbishop of Esztergom, György Lippay reported to the Hungarian Chamber on August 9th, that Holst arrived to the spot and started handling not only the construction of the castle, but with the building a boat-bridge as well,²⁵ however at the same time Montecuccoli wrote to the War Council, that „Der Obriste Holst Habe die Schütt Zwar recognoscirt, aber wegen Verfertigung einer brukhen Zur Correspondenz vnpracticirlich befunden”,²⁶ which is a really interesting statement to see in writing about an experienced military engineer. The ‘punishment’

¹⁶ The importance of Győr is indicated best by the fact that money was allocated for its fortification during the siege of Nové Zámky. ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 15 September 1663 Reg. Bd. 871. f. 423v.

¹⁷ The citizens of Trnava (Germ. Tyrnau, Hung. Nagyszombat) reported to Johann Spork in Bratislava on September 24th, that the Ottomans laid a bridge on the Váh and advanced toward Trnava. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/104.

¹⁸ Germ. Preßburg, Hung. Pozsony.

¹⁹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 26 September 1663 Reg. Bd. 871. f. 451r.

²⁰ See ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/25, 6 September, Johann Syber's report to Montecuccoli about the logistic.

²¹ He filled this office between January 25th, 1654 and 1679. Fallenbüchl, Zoltán, Állami (királyi és császári) tisztségviselők a 17. századi Magyarországon, Adattár, Budapest, 2002, 227.

²² For his person see Domokos, György, Hadmérnöki vita Szatmárról a XVII. század második felében, Hadtörténelmi Közlemények 119(2006:4) 1059–1071, Domokos, György–Hausner, Gábor, Zrínyi-Újvár és ostroma Jacob von Holst helyszínrajza tükrében, in Portré és ímázs. Politikai propaganda és reprezentáció a kora újkorban, szerk. G. Etényi, Nóra–Horn, Ildikó, Budapest, 2008, 241–264.

²³ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. July 1663 No. 77. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 275r.

²⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 24 July 1663, No. 111. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 138r. Holst's mission was supported by Miklós Pálffy, főispán of Preßburg County and by István Zichy, Chief of the Hungarian Chamber, as well. Ibid. July 1663 No. 77. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 275r, No. 180. f. 284r. To take in the garrison was not easy either, the correspondence with Palatine Wesselényi went on even at the end of August. Ibid. 29 August 1663 No. 79, No. 80. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 169v. At the end of September Graf von Rottal chamberlain was sent to Bratislava for conciliation. Ibid. 28 September 1663 No. 126. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 208r. Finally, the War Council got tired of the veil and foresaw violence if the garrison were not taking in. Ibid. 30 September 1663 No. 128. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 208v–209r.

²⁵ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 9 August 1663 Exp. Bd. 325. f. 294v–295r.

²⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. August 1663 No. 20. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 314v.

came quickly, with Montecuccoli sending Holst shortly after to the River Váh.²⁷ It was mentioned later, that he reported about the retrenchments constructed around Bratislava,²⁸ but the plans of fortifying the castle and the town was made by another person in the end.

But even assigning that new person proved not to be so simple. Montecuccoli did not get any explicit directive about Bratislava almost for an entire month, he was only instructed to pay attention on the castle and to put a garrison in it.²⁹ He undoubtedly had enough problems of his own, having an army too small to attack the Ottomans besieging Nové Zámky, so he could only defend the Žitný ostrov. But on September 16th Pálffy suggested to Montecuccoli to assign Colonel Joseph Priami³⁰ to command the garrison consisting of Tyrolean troops, because he „sich alhier sehr bemühet vndt arbeitet“, and asked Montecuccoli to obtain the Emperor's support for this.³¹

Pálffy's letter did not say, if he was aware of Priami's military and ethical past. Regarding the former, there could not have been any object against him, and fortunately, we have a wealth of documents about his activity as a military engineer. Priami himself collected and copied the bigger part of these documents concerning this matter (1661, 1666, 1667³²) to certify his former activity to the Emperor and to prove, that he was the right man for the position he even wished to fill. It is obvious, that we must treat these with a grain of salt, because, as we will see from the following, Priami's life had a sinister side, parallel to the positive side he emphasized in his letters to the Emperor.

According to the mentioned documents Priami was appointed to the commander of Tábor Castle already in 1646,³³ where he got the task to continue the fortifications work ceased despite of the Emperor's order and to send a detailed report of the works.³⁴ Almost at the same time, he put in a claim for the vacant position of major (*Obristwachtmeister*) in the Conti regiment, in which he was supported by the Archduke Leopold as well.³⁵ Two years later, he was already the commander³⁶ of Wittingau.³⁷ He was trusted in October 1649 to take over the key fortress of Eger from the occupying Swedish troops and to stay there until the arrival of the new commander.³⁸ After that, since his regiment-commander found him to be an experienced and competent officer – he was already lieutenant-colonel (*Obristleutnant*) at that time – he tasked him with investigating some fortresses³⁹ vacated

²⁷ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. August 1663 No. 95. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 320v. He had to be there, however, at the end of August, as Emperor Leopold ordered in his instructions to the Hungarian Chamber that the materials needed for fortification were handed over to Holst. ÖStA FHKA HFU 23 August 1663 (Kt. 494) f. 117–118. Holst was already not mentioned in the answer of Hungarian Chamber dated September 12th. Ibid. 12 September 1663 (Kt. 495) f. 23–26.

²⁸ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. October 1663 No. 11. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 377v.

²⁹ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 29 August 1663 No. 80. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 169v, 4 September No. 24. f. 182r–v, 6 September No. 33. f. 184r, 7 September No. 37. f. 186r etc.

³⁰ Joseph Priami Freiherr von Rovorat, Herr auf Lißna und Wistritz. His assignment to colonel: ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 29 December 1653 No. 37. Reg. Bd. 308. f. 159r. The document about his nomination to 'Freiherr' was signed on August 13th, 1656. ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit. B, ibid. HKR Prot. August 1656 No. 151. Exp. Bd. 313. f. 477v.

³¹ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/ad 65 f. 186r. Incidentally, Pálffy wrote almost openly, he suggested Priami, because there was a certain Lieutenant Johann Mersch serving under him, perhaps a relative to the colonel with the same name, who wants to enter service and whom Montecuccoli should include in the muster list of Priami's regiment...

³² ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f., ibid. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f., ibid. 1667 Juni No. 116. Exp. f. 22–45. At that three signatures 48 documents can be found, some of them were attached multiple times by Priami.

³³ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit: D, 29 January 1646. This document was attached by Priami to his petition of 1666. Ibid. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. Lit: A, 29 January 1646. Hereinafter I give only the first occurrence of the repeatedly attached documents. Although there are some minor differences between them, the essence of them remained unchanged.

³⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit: G, Ferdinand III to Priami, 9 June 1646.

³⁵ Ibid. Lit: F, Archduke Leopold to Priami, 23 February 1646.

³⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit: L, Ferdinand III to Priami, 26 August 1648.

³⁷ A settlement in South-Bohemia, today Třeboň.

³⁸ Ibid. Lit: H, 6 October 1649 and Lit: H, 18 October 1649. Ottavio Piccolomini to Priami.

³⁹ In the original text Friedland, today Frýdlant v Čechách; Grabenstein, today Grabštejn; Teschen, in fact Tetschen, today Děčín; Prix, in fact Brüx, today Most, Hněvín Castle, all of them are situated in Bohemia.

by the Sweden after the Westphalian Peace. He was to create blueprints for them and to offer a proposal to fortify and equip them.⁴⁰ In my opinion, these charges show, how valuable he was in this respect for his superiors.

Later, from the beginning of the 1650's his name is mentioned more often with regards to the fortification of Prague. The Bohemian Governor wanted to assign Priami already in October 1650 to direct the ongoing construction works, but the Emperor did not want not trust anybody with this task for the time being.⁴¹ Some progress did happen from the point of view of Priami, in June 1651, when the Bohemian Chamber got an order from the Emperor to dispatch three inspectors – among them Priami – to supervise the fortifications of Malá Strana (Germ. Kleinseite).⁴² Obviously, Priami was assigned, because beside the other two persons, Niclas von Schönfeldt and Alesch Wratislaw von Mitrowitz, both councillors of the Bohemian Chamber, only he was experienced in fortifications. This is proved very well by the expert report submitted by the commission dated November 22nd, which attest to Priami's skill, and although all of them signed that report, it is very likely, that it was made by Priami alone.⁴³

Priami, despite rejection and the obtaining a position in the commission, attempted again and again throughout 1651 to get the supervising of the fortification works, not only in Prague, but in the entire Bohemian region.⁴⁴ A short essay about the necessity of the fortresses published by him in August, dedicated directly to Ferdinand III shows the depth of his resolve.⁴⁵ However, pushing himself forward in that manner meant a totally normal method of prevalence in that time, we should not condemn him.

Priami did not give up, next year he tried again. This time he would have even taken on the supervisor's position for a much smaller pay („gegen einem geringen interteniment"), and he was supported by the Bohemian Chamber,⁴⁶ moreover, Archduke Karl Ferdinand of Tyrol (1628–1662) intervened on his behalf, as well.⁴⁷ However, the Aulic War Council told Priami in the name of the Emperor, that this position would not be filled. The reasoning for that was that the commissioner, who is performing the inspection, must also supervise the construction works, because one official's payment can be saved that way.

Surprisingly, some days after this rejection Priami got an order from the Aulic War Council, that he had to present a written report about the plan he made to fortify the town.⁴⁸ Priami mentioned, that he had already submitted this in April to the Bohemian Chamber, and he thought, that they would forward it to the War Council. Of course, he submitted the report again, while he supplicated the position of the inspector and proved his own qualification at the same time. Priami attached not only his new reports about the Malá Strana and Nové Město (Germ. Neustadt) of Prague written on September 3rd, but some of the documents

⁴⁰ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 July No. 66. Exp. s.f. Report of Don Innocentio Conti about Priami's mission, 20 November 1649, *ibid.* Lit: M, order of Don Innocentio Conti to Priami, 20 November 1649. For the execution of the order see *ibid.* Lit: M, Rudolph Graf Colloredo to Don Innocentio Conti, 22 January 1650.

⁴¹ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 12 October 1650 Exp. Bd. 300. f. 460r, November No. 11. f. 469r–

⁴² ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 19 June 1651 Reg. Bd. 823. f. 625r. The order was repeated on July 4th. ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. Lit: P, 4 July 1651. See further: ÖStA KA HKR Prot. July 1651 No. 9. Exp. Bd. 303. f. 276r. It is strange that there is not any trace of this transliteration in the register books of the Aulic Chamber.

⁴³ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1652 September No. 98. Exp. s.f. Lit: B, 22 November 1651.

⁴⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. February 1651 No. 17. Exp. Bd. 303. f. 41v, December No. 39. f. 515r–v. It seems quite certain that there were two separate tasks here, because the committee had to make a survey (Abmessung), while Priami wanted to get the supervision of the construction (Inspektion).

⁴⁵ „Discorso fatto circa la necessita del fortificar de Stati, o Confini, e Frontiere, specialmente del Regno di Boemia, in breue compendio humilissimamente rappresentato, dal Tenente Colonello Gioseppe Baron Priami suo fidelissimo Vasallo." ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1652 September No. 98. Exp. Prague, 15 August 1651.

⁴⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 16 August 1652 Exp. Bd. 303. f. 227r–v, ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 16 August 1652 Exp. Bd. 825. f. 346v–347r, 16 August f. 347r.

⁴⁷ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. August 1652 No. 20. Exp. Bd. 303. f. 236v.

⁴⁸ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit: N, 22 August 1652. See further: ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 22 August 1652 No. 44. Reg. Bd. 305. f. 96r, the War Council to Lieutenant-Colonel Priami.

made by him in the previous year and in April as a member of the committee, furthermore his printed memorandum, as well.⁴⁹ This provides us with multiple explanations. First, it seems obvious, that making these plans was part of an order he got as a supervisor, although is not confirmed by any written document (at present). We can find in the sources the exact expression ‘surveying’ (*Abmessung*), and the report submitted on November 22nd, 1651 was indeed that type of document.⁵⁰ On the other hand, it is possible, that he took the initiative in his own hand, as in the case of his printed proposals, hoping to attract the attention of the War Council, and attain the dearly yearned office of the inspector. If this happened, he reached his goal. The third, least likely possibility is that he was employed at the construction works in some way in the end.

The last presumption is contradicted by that in December 1654 he supplicated the position of Giovanni Pieroni, who was holding this office until his death at that time.⁵¹ The War Council did not precipitate his decision this time around either, but Priami remained resolute, in 1655 he would once again take part in the supervising of the Bohemian fortifications’ construction,⁵² in 1656 he submitted a report regarding the shortcomings of the Visegrad fort in Prague, requesting the supervision of the works at the same time.⁵³ However, it seems that no mind was paid to his opinion at first.⁵⁴ But, after a few days it was written to the Bohemian Chancellery, that the construction could be continued where Priami’s plan was „vndißputierlich”.⁵⁵ So this means that Priami’s remarks listened to at the least, so he again succeeded in that one payed attention him and had to deal with him.

We can presume, that Ferdinand III rewarded him for his zeal, when promised to give him a regiment,⁵⁶ “when the occasion arises”, and later, on September 18th, 1656 assigned him – not to the position of Pieroni of course – among the commissioners supervising the Bohemian fortresses.⁵⁷ Priami already got an order previously to make the ground-plan of the Malá Strana, together with his two colleagues.⁵⁸ The position of supervisor of the fortifications of Prague was filled by Martin Stier at the end, after a long protraction, in July 1657.⁵⁹

⁴⁹ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1652 September No. 98. Exp. s.f. This is the first document of a dossier, on which, however, we cannot find any date. The supplements A-G have been attached to that document. The ones marked with F and G relate to the September 3rd report.

⁵⁰ See note 43.

⁵¹ Pieroni died before October 28th, 1654. ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 28 October 1654 Reg. Bd. 310. f. 179r. Priami submitted his application once in December. Ibid. December 1654 No. 50. Exp. Bd. 307. f. 383r.

⁵² ÖStA KA HKR Prot. February 1655 No. 69. Exp. Bd. 311. f. 60v.

⁵³ Ibid. March 1656 No. 161. Exp. Bd. 313. f. 176v.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 22 March 1656 No. 214. Reg. Bd. 314. f. 134r.

⁵⁵ Ibid. 28 March 1656 No. 253. Reg. Bd. 314. f. 143v–144r. The order sent to Obrist Feldwachtmeister Johann Freiherr von der Cron, commander of Prague, contained the same, by what “mit dem fortifications baw, so weit derselbe vndisputierlich oder nit mangelhafft, embsig forth zu fahren”. ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1667 Juni No. 116. Exp. f. 35, Lit: B, 31 March 1656.

⁵⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. 29 July 1656.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Lit: Q, 18 September 1656. The other two persons were Obrist Feldwachtmeister von der Cron and Francesco Pieroni, son of the deceased Giovanni Pieroni. See further: ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 18 September 1656 No. 120. Reg. Bd. 314. f. 368r, ibid. 18 September 1656 No. 121. Reg. Bd. 314. f. 368r–v, ibid. 18 September 1656 No. 122. Reg. Bd. 314. f. 368v.

⁵⁸ Together with Martin Stier and Francesco Pieroni. ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. Lit: P, Ferdinand III to Priami, 16 September 1656.

⁵⁹ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 7 July 1657 No. 40. Reg. Bd. 317. f. 262v, 9 July No. 65. f. 265r. The deceased Giovanni Pieroni could have been a prominent person, as there were more people beside Priami, who applied for his vacant place: first of all his son, Francesco, then a certain Christoph Hartman Mezler, a certain Filiberto Lachese, a certain Burnacini, further Guilelmus Segers d’Ideghem, who in fact was that Wassenhoven, who was the alleged planner of Zrinyi-Újvár, and of course Stier also announced his claim at that time. In order: ÖStA KA HKR Prot. November 1654 No. 60. Exp. Bd. 307. f. 347r; 14 November 1654 f. 326r, f. 326v; November 1654 No. 60. f. 347r; December 1654 No. 99. f. 388r; 27 November 1654 f. 334r, December No. 38. f. 381v; November 1654 No. 2. f. 339r. I note that I cannot get rid of the idea that the military leadership has deliberately delayed the decision, taking advantage of the fact that the applicants did not spare any time and money to deserve the favour of the lords of Vienna and earn the post.

If somebody would think, that Priami, reaching the hard-won office of the supervisor, leaned back satisfied, then they are mistaken. Priami supplicated the rank of *Generalquartiermeister* [General Quartermaster] already in May 1657.⁶⁰ He did this maybe, because the War Council gave him another task in the meantime: he must lead 300 troops of the de Mers regiment from Silesia to Collato regiment in Moravia.⁶¹ Supposedly, this new command was in connection with the Emperor's promise, that he would get a regiment. But the Aulic War Council and the Court Chamber came into conflict with each other over this matter, and Priami also lost office he has fought so hard for for a long time now.⁶²

What we saw from Priami's life hitherto, we can consider an ordinary fight for prevalence common at that time, and as an ordinary career, even though there were only a few persons, who were considered as good company commanders and engineers at the same time. However, the events of in 1658 show that behind the emerging military career of Colonel Priami hid a less venerable ethical antecedent. Not that all the things written below would have been something unique at that time, and we should not judge these with today's mindset. All in all, Priami forgot to mention those things that come hereunder when he proved again and again his own capabilities to the Emperor.

According to the sources, Wilhelm Graf von Lamboy *Generalfeldmarschall*,⁶³ a veteran of the Thirty Years War, got an order from the Emperor to draft a proposal for an unnamed archduke on a competent officer, who could raise a regiment. The general suggested Priami, „deßen beraiths bekanten valor die künfftige thaten besser alß meiner feder an tag geben werden“.⁶⁴ Later it would be known, that this archduke was none other than Karl Ferdinand of Tyrol, who already once made interceded on Priami's behalf. Already in May the delegate of the archduke conferred with Priami and with the commander of the other regiment to be raised, colonel Bliere about the recruiting money and the portion of the soldiers.⁶⁵ We know from an entry in the register-book from August, that these two regiments, recruited in Tyrol, would have been given temporarily to Spanish service to fight in Spanish Netherland.⁶⁶ The recruiting ended in October, while the two *Obrister*⁶⁷ asked their troops to be mustered at that time, although accomplishing it, it seems, did not happen even in May of next year.⁶⁸ It should also be mentioned that the Court Chamber already in June 1659 was uncomfortable with the low strength of both before-named regiments, but the War Council shrugged off the petition addressed to them, saying that they could only say anything until after the muster would happen.⁶⁹

⁶⁰ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. June 1657 No. 49. Exp. Bd. 316. f. 341r.

⁶¹ Ibid. 18 August 1657 Exp. Bd. 316. f. 457v, f. 458r–v, ibid. 18 August 1657 No. 70. Reg. Bd. 317. f. 289r.

⁶² Ibid. 23 August 1657 Exp. Bd. 316. f. 460r–v, 6 September f. 515v, ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 10 September 1657 Exp. Bd. 845. f. 488r.

⁶³ Same approx. as the General in the British and the US army (four-star general).

⁶⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1661 Juli No. 66. Exp. s.f. Lit: R, 24 February 1658.

⁶⁵ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. May 1658 No. 58. Exp. Bd. 318. f. 191v, ibid. 17 May 1658 No. 37. Reg. Bd. 319. f. 110r. I must note here that the more I tried to discover the military and financial background of raising these regiments, the more confused things became. There were several obvious correlations that could not be substantiated with resources, while others were incomprehensible for lack of documents. For this reason, and because the exploration of this direction diverges from the original purpose of my paper and does not fit into the scope of this essay, I omit to explain this background in more detail.

⁶⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. August 1658 No. 64. Exp. Bd. 318. f. 325v. See further ibid. April 1659 No. 109. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 158r–v.

⁶⁷ That rank here meant really 'colonel', but in other cases can be simply commander of a given unit, or, e.g. in Hungary, in the border defence system, the commander of a military district.

⁶⁸ Ibid. October 1658 No. 22. Exp. Bd. 318. f. 370v, and ibid. 18 May 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 178r–v, May 1659 No. 19. Exp. f. 183v. The muster of the troops happened in August in the end, after they were launched toward Bavaria. Ibid. August 1659 No. 117. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 341v.

⁶⁹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 28 June 1659 Reg. Bd. 855. f. 333v, ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 28 June 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 220r–221r. The Aulic Chamber repeated his question in March 1660, and that time they got already a meaningful answer. ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 13 March 1660 Reg. Bd. 859. f. 117v, ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 16 April 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 137v.

It has been a common story so far, but in June 1658, for an unknown reason, the idea was raised to recruit another five hundred soldiers to Priami's regiment.⁷⁰ However, no progress had been made in this case until April 1659, perhaps for financial reasons. But then 7500 gulden recruiting money was allocated for Priami for that very task.⁷¹ As it turned out later, Priami did recruit some soldier, but did not use up the entire sum. As a first sign that something was wrong, Priami was summoned to Vienna by the Emperor's command dated on September 23rd, for an unknown reason for the time being, and his regiment was assigned to von der Cron, with the additional order that the soldiers should not obey Priami.⁷² The seriousness of the situation is indicated by the fact that two weeks later a measure was taken, to keep Priami in prison and make him account for the money.⁷³ Consequently, after arriving in Vienna, he was probably charged and imprisoned right away. Priami, of course, immediately supplicated his release and to raise a commission to investigate his case, but the decision was that until he has not responded to the accusations against him and does not justify himself, he would not leave from the prison.⁷⁴

And if this had not been enough, his Lieutenant-Colonel, Hans Jakob Graf zu Wolkenstein reported him soon after as well that he abused his regiment's supply, withholding the bigger part of it, and that's why a lot of soldiers deserted.⁷⁵ The lieutenant-colonel turned with his complaint to von der Cron, Priami's former commanding officer in Prague, who forwarded it to the War Council. However, it was more of a trouble for Priami that the lieutenant-colonel handed over von der Cron the accounts of the regiment, which he also sent to Vienna, where it was given to a *Generalkriegskommissar* (chief war commissar) for inspection.⁷⁶ Later the other officers of the regiment joined the accusation as well⁷⁷ and then they did a detailed testimony against their former commander.⁷⁸ Priami, of course, defended himself, as he could, but his attempts seemed to remain unsuccessful.⁷⁹ It is especially interesting that after Priami's imprisonment, Archduke Karl Ferdinand, of Tyrol suggested to not reorganize the regiment, but to trust it to Lieutenant-Colonel Wolkenstein.⁸⁰

Strangely enough the Court Chamber seemed to have no knowledge of the problems concerning the regiments of Priami and Bliere for a year, at least there is no trace of it in the sources as of yet. They turned to the War Council for information only in March 1660 enquiring how many people were actually in the two regiments, how much the shortage was, and from whom could the Court Chamber regain the unused recruiting money.⁸¹

Knowing all this, it is quite surprising that in June 1660 the Emperor "ex plenitudine potestatis" suspended the charges against Priami, although he did not release Priami's debt, he had to pay it back in full by all means. Furthermore, according to the Emperor's command,

⁷⁰ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 19 June 1658 No. 32. Reg. Bd. 319. f. 143r, No. 33. f. 143v, *ibid.* June 1658 No. 92. Exp. Bd. 318. f. 250r–v.

⁷¹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 7 April 1659 Reg. Bd. 855. f. 187v, ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 7 April 1659 No. 29. Reg. Bd. 320/2. f. 75v. However, the money was probably taken only in May. *Ibid.* 16 May 1659 Reg. Bd. 855. f. 253v.

⁷² ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 23 September 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 366r, see further *ibid.* 23 September 1659 No. 61, 62. Reg. Bd. 320/2. f. 218r.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 6 October 1659 No. 13. Reg. Bd. 320/2. f. 233v, see further *ibid.* 14 October 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 416v.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 19 October 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 417r, October 1659 No. 76. f. 431v.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* 19 October 1659 Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 417r, October 1659 No. 92. f. 434v–435r, [8] October 1659 No. 125. f. 438r, and *ibid.* 21 October 1659 No. 109. Reg. Bd. 320/2. f. 251r–v.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* 21 October 1659 No. 109. Reg. Bd. 320/2. f. 251r–v, 29 November 1659 No. 93, 94. f. 278r, *ibid.* October 1659 No. 92. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 434v–435r, November 1659 No. 152. f. 483v–484r.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* November 1659 No. 152. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 483v–484r.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* 7 February 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 39r–40v.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.* November 1659 No. 125. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 479v–480r, *ibid.* 14 February 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 45r. At that time, he even demanded that the unjustly accusing officers be imprisoned.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* November 1659 No. 125. Exp. Bd. 320/1. f. 479v–480r. The suggestion was supported also by von der Cron. *Ibid.* November 1659 No. 152. f. 483v–484r.

⁸¹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 13 March 1660 Reg. Bd. 859. f. 117v, ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 16 April 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 137v, [13] April 1660 No. 14. f. 148r.

Priami and the officers of his regiment must forget (literally “in vergessenheit stellen”) the disputes between them, nobody should want compensation nor desire revenge.⁸²

Then the things seemed to return to normal. At the end of June 1660 Priami was reinstated to the head of his former regiment.⁸³ However, it is easy to imagine that the officers and the soldiers did not want to accept this situation, because a rebellion broke out in the regiment soon after.⁸⁴ We can assume this to be reasonable grounds, given that a new report was filed about arguments flaring up once again between Priami and his officers. The War Council sent a commissioner to investigate.⁸⁵ For the time being, we do not know what provoked the fresh turn of the case of recruiting money, perhaps it was delay in Priami's repayment, but at the end of August the Emperor ordered to arrest Priami once again and to prosecute him. So, when he was fleeing from his rebellious soldiers, he ran into another regiment which happened to be marching there, the *Generalkriegskommissar* who stayed at them and already learned about the imperial command of August 27 put him under arrest.⁸⁶

He was only just imprisoned when the War Council already asked the Emperor to release Priami.⁸⁷ We do not know when this happened at last but after this the Court Chamber did not let the case slide. They made requests repeatedly to the War Council that they should let them know what measures were taken to coerce Priami into repaying the unused recruiting money, the sum of 3877 gulden 22 kreutzer.⁸⁸ The Court Chamber's patience ran out in February 1661, when the Bohemian Chamber was instructed to enforce the claims upon Priami, if necessary.⁸⁹ The threat have not had much effect, because Priami asked for an investigation himself in June 1661, while he tried to stop the still ongoing (!) distraint. The Court Chamber however sternly refused and said that he had two weeks to repay the sum, then there would be no more delay, the distraint would be started.⁹⁰ Despite this, the Court Chamber told the Bohemian Chamber in July to put the distraint on hold until the commissions-report arrives.⁹¹

Of course, Priami had not the slightest intent to pay, and strangely enough, the Court Chamber, in a letter to the Bohemian Chamber on August 7th, still talked about Priami's debt in a permissive tone.⁹² Two weeks later, however, they wrote very firmly to the War Council and the government of Lower Austria, indicating that Priami had been found guilty by the commission and demanded that Priami be put in prison until he repaid his debt.⁹³ The response of War Council was more than interesting as it said on August 25th that they no longer have any authority over Priami, because the Emperor dismissed him from military

⁸² ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 12 June 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 220r, *ibid.* 12 June 1660, No. 35, 36, 37. Reg. Bd. 322. f. 100r–100v. In that Archduke Karl Ferdinand, of Tyrol could have also had a part, who asked deliberately, that Priami's officers should not get hurt. *Ibid.* June 1660 No. 5. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 224r.

⁸³ *Ibid.* July 1660 No. 24. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 277r.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* [5] August 1660 No. 47. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 305v, [13] August 1660 No. 75. f. 314r–v.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* August 1660 No. 75. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 314r–v, August No. 91. f. 316v, September No. 28. f. 332r. (the document dated on August 31st), and *ibid.* 9 August 1660 No. 48. Reg. Bd. 322. f. 155v. Priami made excuses, Wolkenstein reported the reasons, the officers testified against him again. *Ibid.* September 1660 No. 4. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 328r–v.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* [3] September 1660. No. 36. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 334r–v. The Emperor's command has not yet appeared. Another interesting thing is that when Priami's rebellious soldiers wanted to be led by their lieutenant colonel and major to the designated place, Priami attacked them in anger, during which quarrel his life was threatened.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* 3 September 1660 No. 15. Reg. Bd. 322. f. 171r–v.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 26 November 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 429v–430v. (the request dated on November 12th), ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 29 November 1660 Exp. Bd. 854. f. 621r–v, ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 7 December 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 526r–v. (the request dated on November 29th), ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 11 February 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 89v. It is clear from that latter entry that Priami committed himself to the repayment, as well.

⁸⁹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 11 February 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 99v.

⁹⁰ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 13 June 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 431v–414r. Here is the exact information that only 274 people were recruited instead of 500.

⁹¹ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 2 July 1660 Reg. Bd. 863. f. 350r.

⁹² *Ibid.* 7 August 1661 Reg. Bd. 863. f. 408r.

⁹³ *Ibid.* 23 August 1661 Reg. Bd. 863. f. 440r, 29 August f. 441r.

service.⁹⁴ Despite this, Priami was imprisoned nonetheless, but he supplicated for his release already on September 5th. The Court Chamber did not want to hear of it of course.⁹⁵ In fact, an entry of similar content indicates a few weeks later that his total deficit in the money for recruiting, paying, and provisioning was over 20.000 gulden.⁹⁶ How long he had to stay in prison and whether he actually paid his debt, is not clear from the sources.⁹⁷

Of course, Priami did not only embezzled the pay of the soldiers, he was not a fair guest either. An example for this was the unfortunate owner of Gold Eagle's Inn, a certain Thomas Wider, to whom Priami owed a fortune of 199 gulden.⁹⁸

Things did not go well in Priami's regiment either. In 1660, when the rationalization of the war economy was discussed, Priami's unit was mentioned as a negative example, where the regiment-staff was too large, and the strength of *prima plana* had more officers than privates in it.⁹⁹ It should be noted that at that time there was no unprecedented selling of the officer's posts for cash.

Priami did a number on his regiment-secretary as well, probably because he turned to the War Council for the 500-gulden debt Priami owed him, and the War Council wanted to claim this amount in Priami's estate in Lisna.¹⁰⁰ Priami had imprisoned the secretary, a certain Johann Kling,¹⁰¹ who would then secure his release by revealing to the Chamber of the abuses Priami had committed.¹⁰² Priami did not leave that matter alone and he protested against the secretary's release, and suggested, that Kling be "in bandt vnd eyßen hier in stadtgraben, oder auf ein hungarischen granitz hauß zuuerschaffen".¹⁰³ Whether as a result of Priami's protest or simply because the Court Chamber's unwillingness to deal with the issue, the secretary were told that he must seek his right in a legal way.¹⁰⁴ As we will see later, the case was not over yet.

After such an antecedent, while Priami disappeared from the sources I studied for a whole year, we can only see his name next in June 1663 where Montecuccoli suggested to the War Council to send Priami to Győr, although to what end is unknown.¹⁰⁵ When he entered back to military service, whether on his own initiative, or on a call, we do not know, but this is reinforced by the fact that after sending him to Győr he was asking money for his armament immediately, and in July he was already requesting his pay.¹⁰⁶ All in all, he got an order directly from Montecuccoli on September 6th to go to Bratislava first, then from there to the Žitný ostrov, where he must evaluate, how both places could be defended, and on his return he must report first to Pálffy, then to Montecuccoli himself.¹⁰⁷ It may be assumed that

⁹⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 25 August 1661 Exp. Bd. 323. f. 366r. This defence was said later: *ibid.* 19 May 1662 Exp. Bd. 325. f. 170v–171r.

⁹⁵ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 5 September 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 583r, *ibid.* 26 September 1661 Reg. Bd. 863. f. 483r, 1 October f. 497r.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.* 24 September 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 608r–v, *ibid.* 26 September 1661. Reg. Bd. 863. f. 483r.

⁹⁷ The last entry, when he supplicated his discharge, dated in December 1661. ÖStA KA HKR Prot. December 1661 No. 111. Exp. Bd. 323. f. 545r.

⁹⁸ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 10 April 1660 Exp. Bd. 321. f. 131v, April No. 42. f. 151v.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* [21] January 1660. No. 77. Exp. Bd. 321. f. 28r.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* November 1660 No. 64. f. 447r, see further *ibid.* December 1660 No. 87. f. 559v. Lisna is today in Ukraine as Лісна (Lishna).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* 20 September 1661 Exp. Bd. 323. f. 406r.

¹⁰² ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 10 September 1661 Reg. Bd. 863. f. 441r, 18 September 1661 f. 467r–v, and see the previous note.

¹⁰³ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. September 1661 No. 90. Exp. Bd. 323. f. 421v.

¹⁰⁴ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 11 October 1661 Exp. Bd. 861. f. 640v.

¹⁰⁵ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. June 1663 No. 74. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 240v.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* June 1663 No. 92. f. 243r, July 1663 No. 149. f. 282r.

¹⁰⁷ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. Lit: F, 6 September 1663, *ibid.* HKR Prot. [7] September 1663 No. 98. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 351v. Priami's report to Puchheim, commander of Komarno see *ibid.* AFA 1663/9/73 f. 198–199, 18 September.

this mission was largely due to the ongoing concern of the War Council for the dangerous military situation and for Bratislava.¹⁰⁸

We do not know whether this mission had anything to do with Pálffy's earlier proposal on September 16th to Montecuccoli on the assignment of Priami in Bratislava, but Montecuccoli wrote in his report to the War Council at the end of September, that he „schlägt zum capo vor den obristen Priami, alß welcher die fortification versteht”.¹⁰⁹ Montecuccoli received the approval of the War Council dated September 30th,¹¹⁰ and he officially informed Priami on October 2nd.¹¹¹

According to the preserved reports, however, Priami had already lost himself profoundly in the fulfilment of the task he has got from Montecuccoli by that time, which is indicated by a relatively detailed, seemingly ready plan signed by him and dated on September 9th, and also some lists of necessities wrote at the same time.¹¹² It is hardly believable, that he could visit Bratislava and the Žitný ostrov in three days, report to Pálffy and Montecuccoli, then still have enough time to create this plan. Because Pálffy wrote in his letter to Montecuccoli on September 16th, that he has sent Priami to the Žitný ostrov by Montecuccoli's order.¹¹³ It is much more feasible in my opinion that Priami, who, as we have seen, has been kept in the area since June at least, went ahead with creating plans from his own diligence – as he did previously in Prague –, maybe to catch Pálffy's and Montecuccoli's attention. Obviously, Montecuccoli also knew Priami's experience in the fortification, so it might be assumed, as well, that he charged Priami to create the plans, then, when he saw that he could produce results, he supported his appointment.¹¹⁴

Acquiring the post of commander seemingly gave a fresh impetus to Priami's activities, while Montecuccoli informed the War Council already on October 1st about the request of Priami for the needed supplies.¹¹⁵ He himself wrote to Pálffy on September 3rd and asked him to obtain money, materials and peoples to fortify the castle and the town, because there was only little time left to construct anything in that year, and to support his request for them at the War Council. In the same letter, Priami informed Pálffy that he had been repairing the old parapets fronting the hill opposite to the castle, further he began to build a crownwork as well.¹¹⁶ He related to Montecuccoli in a long report dated on October 21st on the fortifications that had started and that are being planned.¹¹⁷

Priami actually made four different plans to fortify Bratislava. The first one has the date of September 9th (Figure 1),¹¹⁸ the second one is Fig. No. 8. forming part of the report from

¹⁰⁸ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 4 September 1663 No. 24. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 182r–v, 6 September 1663 No. 33. f. 184r, 7 September 1663 No. 37. f. 186r, 10 September 1663 No. 51. f. 189v–190r.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. November 1663 No. 104. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 432r–v. The entry refers to the letters from Montecuccoli sent on September 27th, 28th and 29th!

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 30 September 1663 No. 128. Reg. Bd. 327. f. 208v–209r.

¹¹¹ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. Lit: G, Lit: H, 2 October 1663, *ibid.* 1667 Juni No. 116. Exp. f. 28. Lit: F, 2 October 1663. Montecuccoli especially stressed that the Emperor had appointed Priami on his proposal.

¹¹² „Eigentliche delinneation oder grundriß deß königlichen schloß zu Prespur, wie sich anietzo befundet vnd waß annach noch guett beduncken interim als anstreichen, caßten abscheinet vnd pallisaten in der fortification besser zuuersehen daran gebauth könte werden. Schloß Prespur, den 9. 7bris Anno 1663.” ÖStA KA Kartensammlung K VII k 251-1. Its original location from which it was took off: ÖStA KA AFA 1663/10/3c f. 400. The lists are the follows: *ibid.* 1663/10/3a f. 396. a list of artillery and ammunition needed to protect Bratislava; *ibid.* 1663/10/3b f. 398. list of food and supplies needed for the garrison for a quarter in case of blockade; *ibid.* 1663/10/3c1 f. 401–403. “Militarische Disposition deß König: Schloß Prespur betreffend den 9. 7bris 1663”, with Montecuccoli's addition on the f. 403v; *ibid.* 1663/10/3c2 f. 404–405. dividing of the garrison and artillery; *ibid.* 1663/10/3c3 f. 406r. same as the 3b. All of them was dated September 9th.

¹¹³ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/9/ad 65 f. 186r, 16 September 1663. Priami reported from Kolárovo September 18th. *Ibid.* 1663/9/73 f. 198r–v.

¹¹⁴ This latter option seems to be correct just for that because the whole material of Bratislava's fortification got into Alte Feldakten as a part of the literary estate of Montecuccoli.

¹¹⁵ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 1 October 1663 No. 119. Exp. Bd. 325. f. 392r–v.

¹¹⁶ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/10/2 f. 390r, 3 October.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* 1663/10/3 f. 375–376, 21 October.

¹¹⁸ See note 112. The pictures were numbered according to order of their mention.

October 21st (Figure 2).¹¹⁹ Both contains Priami's ideas to fortify only the castle. The third one is a comprehensive, complex plan that treats the castle and the city as a whole. Although it was found together with a report from December 4th, the plan has, however, nothing to do with that, and since it is without a date, it can only be assumed from its elaboration that this is the latest (Figure 3).¹²⁰ In addition, the Fig. No. 7. also forming part of the October report should be listed as well (Figure 12), which shows the fortifications surrounding the city, as well, and its ideas for the castle's fortification is almost identical to those of the Fig. No. 5 (Figure 9).¹²¹ Aside from these, seven full or partial plans for the October 21st report were also preserved.¹²²

Priami's plan dated on September 9th is relatively simple (Figure 1). He placed four small bastions (p) on the corners of the four-square palace (c),¹²³ and in front of the palace's sides similarly small sized ravelins. He wanted to fortify the area surrounding the palace (h), encircled by a medieval wall (j) again with four, fully revetmented bastions (O), as well, which would have kept the area under the castle under fire.¹²⁴ Two of them, on the eastern side, were planned on the corners, in front of the old walls, but on the north-western corner (11), not coverable by firearms, he designed two new bastions and a curtain between them to replace the medieval walls. Where he would preserve the old walls, he suggested to strengthen them with palisades (n). A relatively wide dry ditch would have been dug around the whole defence system. The weakest point of Bratislava's defence was the western side, where a small valley spread in front of the castle (it has mostly filled up for present day), but on the opposite site of that valley rose a hill which gave a perfect strong point for the attacking artillery.¹²⁵ Priami wanted to secure this dangerous place twice as much, so he planned a hornwork (q) on the projection on the western side of the palace¹²⁶ and a crownwork (R) on that threatening hill, in such a way as not to build walls, but he wanted to extract soil from inside the new defence works, which probably would be used to fill the bastions of the other side. As far as the crownwork is concerned, Priami remarked that its furthest point would be just a distance of a musket-shot away from the palace, so it could be covered from the palace above.¹²⁷ Priami also wanted to block the shore below the castle hill with walls (s, w) to protect the ship-mills essential for the provisioning of the army, and the boat-bridge(s) for the crossing (u).

The plan seems simple enough, where Priami apparently kept in mind the quick and inexpensive realisation. But in this case, the allocation of the four bastions have been aimed at reinforcing the medieval wall around the castle is food for thought. Although Priami depicted them as if they were standing on the plateau, they actually extended far above the steep slope of the castle hill,¹²⁸ causing two serious problems. On the one hand, the stable construction of the defence works designed on such a steep place caused enormous

¹¹⁹ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2m f. 476. It is interesting and difficult to explain that this and the other drawings attached to it are part of the October 21th report, as the content of that proves, and have nothing to do with the documents with signatures 1663/12/2, 2a and 2b, but the appendices of the October 21th report, together with Priami's first plan, dated on September 9th.

¹²⁰ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2d f. 468.

¹²¹ Ibid. 1663/12/2n f. 477, and 2k f. 474.

¹²² Ibid. 1663/12/2e, f, g, h, j, l f. 469–475. (Figure 6 to 11).

¹²³ Their faces would have been just 100 Viennese feet, say c. 32 m long, their height, obviously depending on time and money, 20–40 feet, say c. 6,5–13 m. 1 Viennese feet = 31,6 cm. Bogdán, István, *Magyarországi hossz- és földmértékek, 1601–1874*, Budapest, 1990, 150.

¹²⁴ Their faces would have been 130 feet, say c. 42 m long.

¹²⁵ For their present location see notes 131–135.

¹²⁶ Its width would have been 200 feet, say c. 64 m.

¹²⁷ Priami gives 66 fathom, which is 660 feet, that is approx. 210 m. This, based on tests with contemporary weapons, depending, of course, on the calibre of the weapon, remained far below the reach of muskets, and was able to fit into their effective range, but it was too far for a targeted fire.

¹²⁸ See the 3D-visualizing of the popular satellite map application on the Internet.

structural problems, and therefore they were everything but not cheap and fast, on the other hand, this produced extremely high walls, which provided an excellent target for the siege artillery.¹²⁹

The details of the draft presented here can only be inferred from epigraphs, and there is not any known report as of yet similar to the October 21st report.¹³⁰ The value of the latter is increased by the fact that, on the one hand, we know the related plans – unfortunately this is quite rare –, on the other hand, in some occasions Priami explained here, what and why he wanted to build – it is not too common either.

Describing his plans, Priami began with the most endangered point, the western side of the palace. It turns out, that the now only small depression here, just below the palace,¹³¹ was considered by Priami to be suitable for the enemy to take up positions there. That's why he recommended the hornwork here,¹³² otherwise the attackers could not have been fired upon from the palace, because they would have been covered by the eastern side of the valley.

He then discussed the problem of the hill standing 400 feet (about 130 m) away on the western side,¹³³ which he suggested to be levelled or be fortified. Seemingly, he did not insist on the former solution, because he does not mention it any more in his report. He suggested another way to decrease the danger. On the western side of the hill, on both side of the mountain ridge stretching to the west,¹³⁴ 200 feet distance from each other, there are two deep clefts still today,¹³⁵ which he wanted to connect with a big ditch, as he showed on the Fig. No. 7. (sign 'NB.' – Figure 4).¹³⁶ A bridge would have led over this ditch, and on its hither side, it would be enough to build a simple parapet for the musketeers sweeping the ditch and the opposite side. According to his argument, the primary way to impede the enemy advance would be demolishing the buildings, destroying the bridges, and cutting off the roads. The latter would have happened here as well and this way the enemy would have not been able to drag cannons near the ridge to the immediate vicinity of the castle and this solution would also save money because the crownwork would not have to be built.

He then explains why the other drawings were made. In his opinion, an enemy attacking with big force might easily have gotten close to the castle between the houses of the city and could have undermined the walls if they do not do something about it. His suggestions for this can be seen on Fig. No. 1-7. He himself found Fig. No. 5. (Figure 5) to be the best, considering the superiority of the Ottomans in artillery and in man-power, against which, as he noted with some smugness, these would have been the appropriate defence works. He also claimed that this plan No. 5. is following the general rule of fortification, that is the closer the defence works (bastions) are to each other, the stronger is the defence.¹³⁷ Furthermore

¹²⁹ On the eastern side of the palace, at the bastion planned in front of the medieval castle wall, the current level of the castle yard is 195 m, while the base of the bastion would have stood at 170 m, which would have meant 25 m height. But even if Priami adjusts the upper level of the bastion to the bottom of the old wall at the time of realization, it would have been at 185-188 m height, that means, that 15-18 m tall walls should have been built! Just for the sake of example, the Bürgerbastei in Graz Castle stay on a less steep slope, but its walls are still about 10m high. A few decades later, in mountain fortresses built or upgraded by Vauban, we encounter similar dimensions – see e.g. Mont-Dauphin, Briançon, Grenoble in France, Exilles and Fenestrelle in Italy – but they were constructed by the strong France of Louis XIV.

¹³⁰ See notes 119–122.

¹³¹ The section of Palisády in front of the palace.

¹³² ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2f Lit: D, f. 470 (Figure 7). In the location of the present-day Západná terasa.

¹³³ This hill is hardly noticeable on the present-day terrain. If Priami's data are correct, the eastern edge of the hill, that was 400 feet from the western side of the Západná terrace, is approx. at the crossroads of Námestie Alexandra Dubčeka and Strelecka.

¹³⁴ It is stretching approx. under the present-day Mudroňová.

¹³⁵ The southern cleft locates between the Mudroňová, the Fialkové údolie and the Slepá, the northern one between the Bartoňova and the Partizánska.

¹³⁶ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2n f. 477.

¹³⁷ According to the plan, the distance between the salients of the two north-western bastions would have been 80-90 fathom, the faces 26, the flanks 13, and the curtain 40 fathom long.

he added, that the flanks would be secure, because they are standing in the right angle, that's why they could not be attacked from the valley nor with artillery, nor with mines by the enemy. Consequently, he continued, until the flanks were intact, they could also cover the faces. By his opinion 6 to 8 heavy cannons of 24 pounds would be needed on each flank, which would be supported by numerous light cannons and handguns.

We cannot be surprised by Priami's self-confidence knowing his antecedent. Then again, his plan – in the light of contemporary trends – was far from perfect. It is noteworthy that, contrary to his own statement, Priami did not focus on the strengthening of the cityward side, but of the (north)western one. His conclusion that the proximity of the defence works increased the effectiveness of the defence, was right, at the very least in the sense that adjacent defence works must be within the effective range of the firearms. However, this is far from enough to provide proper defence. For example, at this time, the generally accepted design principle was that the salient of the bastions should have been rectangular or something very close to that, because it was the easiest way to ensure the mutual cover of the bastions. However, we do not see this here.

Another obvious problem was that because of design shortcomings a curtain-flank was created almost everywhere, i.e. the extension of the face of the given bastion reached the adjacent bastion not at the junction of the curtain and the flank but crossed the curtain before this point.¹³⁸ The complicated phrasing simply means that in this case the cannons on the flank of a bastion could not fire parallel to the face of the adjacent bastion, so it would not be 'sturmfrei' [c. free from attacks] using the untranslatable German word. Priami has obviously adapted his plan to the terrain when it was put on paper, but this does not explain its shortcomings. It should be noted that the already indicated construction problems caused by the bastions planned for the steep slope would have been present here as well. It outright astonishing how much firepower Priami demanded. So many and such large calibre cannons were not available even in the largest and most important fortresses in Hungary, not to mention in such a second(third?)-line castle, also, the mass use of small arms was considered much more effective for defensive fire at that time.¹³⁹

Most probably at the end of the document Priami wanted to discuss in fact the aforementioned Fig. No. 8 (Figure 2), but he actually continued to talk about Fig. No. 7 (Figure 4), because the castle and city fortifications can be seen together in the latter. Interestingly, the defence works were built in front of the medieval walls of the city, outside the ditch, he named ravelins, although their form corresponded to bastions, but according to their function and layout, they really seem to be rather ravelins. By the way he noted on the plan, that the four ravelins marked by a continuous line were already being built with the consent of the city authorities, but the others indicated with dashed line still had to be discussed.

So, Priami did not make any substantive reference to Fig. No. 8. (Figure 2) in this document, but its inscriptions fortunately give some indication. Here, the primary defence would have been provided by a four-bastion fortress (a-a) built around the palace, the western side of which actually would have replaced the previously mentioned hornwork, completed by a ravelin (c). Here he drew more clearly, how he imagined connecting the clefts (G) on both sides of the ridge with a ditch (H) above which the passage would have been provided by a wooden bridge (F). The ravelins marked with a dotted line and the two hornworks (E) were planned to be built around the palace just later.

¹³⁸ For this problem and for the meaning of the fortification terms see my previous study in this periodical: Domokos, György, Building History of Fortress of Leopoldov, *Vojenská História* 21(2017:1) 38–60.

¹³⁹ See further Ufano, Diego, Archeley. s. l. 1630, 55–56; Dilich, Wilhelm, *Krieges-Schule*, Frankfurt am Main, 1689, 463–469; *Ausgewählte Schriften...* op.cit. Bd. II, 1899, 93, 325, and 216; Vauban, Sebastien LePrestre de, *A Manual of Siegecraft and Fortification* (*Mémoire pour servir d'instruction dans la conduite des sieges et dans la défense des places*, Leiden, 1740), Translated with an introduction by George A. Rothrock, s. l. 1968, 141.

Finally, we should speak of the drawings only mentioned in Priami's report. Among them, Fig. No. 1 and 2 (Figure 6 and 8) which show only the defence works planned around the palace, which can be considered as variants of the September 9th plan. In my opinion, plan No. 3. (Figure 9) is a kind of prelude to plan No. 8, as the hornwork here has also become a part of the walls around the palace, and here we can find the ravelin defending the western side, as well. The floor plan that resembles a *tenaille* (scissor) was not unknown in the age, many of the engineers have tried it, and it could have been effective for such small fortifications. Plan No. 4 (Figure 10) could be the prelude to plan No. 5 (Figure 5), although its feasibility could be uncertain knowing the terrain in the area. Its advantage was, however, that the defence system would have consisted of a single, coherent unit, which would have made the defence much easier. The plan No. 6 (Figure 11) also conceives a single defence unit of this kind, in which Priami would have included that hill, which was considered to be dangerous. The feasibility raises questions here also.

Priam submitted the report reviewed above to Montecuccoli, who has studied it, then forwarded it to the Emperor with the drawings and his own observations.¹⁴⁰ However, in addition to the usual news and list of necessities, he expressed his opinion that plan No. 8 would be realizable the "most convenient" way but added that the walls facing the hills on the western side should be constructed so that they cover the areas behind them and prevent their cannonade. Montecuccoli's statement about the fortification of the city is a good illustration of contemporary relations, because, according to him, it would be costly to demolish the houses of the suburbs due to the new fortifications, and the fortification itself would be very expensive, furthermore the villas (*Lusthaus*) of the Hungarian magnates were standing there, who would not be happy about their destruction. So, it should be discussed what to do, whether the Hungarian nobles finally would fortify the place at their own expense, or they would demolish their houses themselves.

In the report dated October 21st, Priami made an interesting note, which, in the light of the relations of that age, seems to be as if somebody deliberately challenges fate, but of course it can be understood that, knowing the circumstances, he wanted to face the inevitable events. He offered, that an expert, somebody familiar with the area, should also give an opinion on his plans. However, proofing the chronological order of the events, this offer has become obsolete, because Wenzel Fürst von Lobkowitz, the Chief of the Aulic War Council (1649–1665) asked earlier Giovanni Giacomo Tensini, the famous Italian military engineer serving the Emperor to make his expert opinion. Tensini gave in his answer dated October 31st,¹⁴¹ that means, it could have not written about the October 21st document, which, as we have seen, was sent to Vienna by Montecuccoli only on October 30th. It is also clear from the content of Tensini's writing that he then judged the earlier plan of September 9th.

Tensini rejected the reinforcement of the rectangular palace itself,¹⁴² because he thought the four small bastions were more dangerous than useful. He did not explain, what he meant by that, but he suggested that the whole castle should be fortified, because the palace would not stand the cannonade. He remarked that the planned bastions could be built later, but because he also felt the construction problems of the defence works to be built on the steep slopes,¹⁴³ he came to the conclusion that, due to the urgency of time, a wide and deep ditch surrounded by palisades would have to be digged before the castle-walls, in which the

¹⁴⁰ ÖStA KA AFA 1663/10/4 f. 409–410. 30 October.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 1663/10/1 f. 387r–388v. 31 October. The Italian-language letters used in my study were translated by Levente Nagy, whose help I thank here.

¹⁴² Tensini used the words *palazzo* and the *castello* for the palace and the entire castle. See Tensini's map made for his later report. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2c.

¹⁴³ His text is here rather abstruse, because he writes, "since the soil cannot be kept" – presumably the amount of soil required to fill the large bastions –, that's why it is safer to dig the ditch.

palisades would have served as a covered way. He would not have deployed the artillery in the palace, but on the cavaliers raised on the corners of the old castle-wall.¹⁴⁴ Tensini seems to have been believer in the active defence, because he thought that some well defended and hided sorties would be needed as well. Generally, he suggested to fortify the hills out of the castle, too, for the possibility to attack the enemy from above.

We do not know, if Priami got Tensini's opinion, or not, but there isn't any trace of it anyway, that the latter had any particular influence on the plans of the report on October 21st. A month later, however, Montecuccoli also asked Tensini for his expert opinion. Unfortunately, we do not know again the reason for this, although it would be interesting to know, if it was just a normal check, or neither Lobkowitz nor Montecuccoli trusted Priami. In this case, however, we can be sure that Tensini knew Priami's report and the related plans of October 21st, because Tensini's report, dated December 3rd, even though he did not say it anywhere, was a single comprehensive criticism of Priami's plans made up until that time. Tensini would have kept nothing from them except the hornwork on the western side of the castle (see Figure 12). He was thinking on a higher level than Priami, who focused strictly on the exact task, to fortify the castle and the town of Bratislava, while Tensini's concept included the securing of the connections and the fortifications of other important points besides the existing ones. Knowing the financial state at that time and the anomalies at the construction works, it is clear that not even Priami's plans could be realized, let alone Tensini's grand ideas, but I may not go far beyond the truth when I say that this shows the difference between the expertise of the two persons. Of course, I am not saying that Priami was not adept at fortification.

Tensini proposed a simple solution, which according to the form and the shaping of the defence works was very similar to the defence system constructed at that time around Prague.¹⁴⁵ As we can see on the drawing attached to his report, the town of Bratislava, together with almost the entire suburb, was intended to be surrounded with a single huge wall stretching in a semicircle from castle hill to the Danube (between points 3 and 4), consisting of 8 full and 1 half bastions. The castle hill, however, was not included in these fortification plans, Tensini would only keep, as I mentioned, the hornwork (1) securing the western side.¹⁴⁶ It was explained, that the neighbour hills could be used for the defence of the castle,¹⁴⁷ the distant ones did not pose a threat and the defence works to be built would have dominated the fore-field and would have given protection against the hills. According to him, it would be unnecessary to fortify the castle, because it was capable to repel the Ottoman raids even in his present state, but even after fortifying it would not be able to do more. Besides, the castle was too narrow, which means, it could not take up the inhabitants in the time of a siege. The solution proposed by him, however, could eliminate all those problems, the 'old town' encircled by the medieval wall could serve as a last refuge, if necessary. In addition, the extended defence zone would ensure the river crossing, as well as linking with the Žitný ostrov.

As I said, Tensini considered it important to fortify other points besides the castle and the town. He would close the riverbank with the retrenchment A-A to secure the boat-bridges (E, G¹⁴⁸) from that side, and planned a fortified bridgehead (D) on the opposite bank. The

¹⁴⁴ It is signed with numbers 9, 10 and 11 in the drawing. The mention of these is one of the elements that identified about what plan Tensini speaks.

¹⁴⁵ See e.g. the map suffixed to the already mentioned commission report from 1652. ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1652 September No. 98. Exp. Lit: B, s. f.

¹⁴⁶ What the object numbered 2 is in the fact, was not given by Tensini, he mentions it simply as pezza, which means a stain, a piece of canvas, a carpet, or a cutted piece, perhaps the latter can be interpreted as an enclosed place.

¹⁴⁷ Probably Tensini also thought of the western hills, considered by the Priami as dangerous, which he would have somehow wanted to strengthen.

¹⁴⁸ He noted from the bridge G that this would be necessary because it would ensure the two-way movement of the troops in the same time.

crossing to the Žitný ostrov would be served by two additional bridge (F), where a small six-bastion fort (B) would have provided the cover.

Contrary to the previous case, we can be sure here that Tensini's report got to Priami, because the large-scale fortification including the suburbs, proposed by Tensini, can be found on Priami's last, well-elaborated plan as well, perhaps made still in December,¹⁴⁹ although in a much smaller size. Priami here actually summarized all his ideas up until that time. He wanted to reinforce the castle-hill based on plan No. 8. from October, with the exception, that he added the crownwork to the hilltop considered to be dangerous on the western side. In front of that we can see the ditch connecting the clefts on both sides of the ridge with the bridge whose western bridgehead would have been covered by a small ravelin-like work. As an addition, he drew the walls stretching from the crownwork and from the south-eastern corner to the Danube, which, as we saw earlier, would have protected the bridges and watermills.

With overlapping colours and lines, the fortification of the city seems confusing, but if we read the inscriptions, they gain meaning immediately. The ravelins shown on the outside of the ditch in front of old city wall, which was perhaps already partially completed, but was always aimed to be temporary, were the same as that of Fig. No. 7. of October, but they have been elaborated on much more, and the adherent glacis has completely surrounded the city. What Priami drew in front of all that, was, as I said, very similar to Tensini's idea, but it was much smaller and consisted only of six and one half-bastions instead of eight. Priami, contrary to Tensini, also displayed ditch, counterscarp, covered way, places of arms and glacis in front of the bastioned wall and placed a hornwork on the shore of the Danube, on the east side, obviously to protect the junction of the ditch and of the Danube, and further to impede bypassing the wall from the water. Priami added some new element, a bridgehead on the opposite end of the bridge, as well as the retrenchments defending the riverbank of the Danube under the city.

It is uncertain, whether Priami intended this to be a final plan or just to reassure his superiors. Its elaboration and seeming thoroughness are in favour of the former, but the design of the defence around the city, in my opinion, is rather rough. If we take a closer look at the form of the bastions, their layout and their relative position to each other, we can discover elementary defects. If these were thought of seriously by Priami, then we must have serious doubts about his competence. It has never occurred even at the planning phase that the flank and the curtain would have closed an acute angle, as it would be impossible to sweep the face of the adjacent bastion. This angle was always right or even more so an obtuse angle. Curtain-flanks also emerged in several places, which defect was already mentioned earlier. The glacis was not wide enough, which, if it would have been too low because of that, did not have protected the walls from the cannon fire, but if its height would have been correct, it would have been so steep that it would have created a dead angle for the cannons of defence. Unfortunately, in the absence of a description or a detailed explanation, we cannot yet say what Priami's intention was.

We do not know if any higher-level decision was made on, what should happen exactly with the construction,¹⁵⁰ but after that the fortification of the castle and the city continued in the usual way. Priami has made a lot of requests to the Aulic War Council and to the Emperor to finally get the money and materials needed to continue the work, and the weapon and ammunition needed to equip the garrison, but with not much success. It is likely that he became more and more tired of the futile struggle, because he asked for a regiment, more

¹⁴⁹ We can only deduce this from the signature, which, however, as we have seen in the case of the other plans, does not necessarily refer to the source's date of origin.

¹⁵⁰ All we know is that in December 1664 a draft was negotiated in which Priami and Tensini agreed. ÖStA KA HKR Prot. December 1664 No. 77. Exp. Bd. 328. f. 611r–v.

precisely, its command from the War Council in March.¹⁵¹ His intention to leave must have been serious, because at the beginning of April they were already looking for an engineer who would lead the construction works of Bratislava as his successor.¹⁵² However, Priami remained, as he still supplicated for the necessities of the construction work in July, but he applied for the command of the Schönkirchen regiment in August.¹⁵³ His name contacted last Bratislava in October 1664 when he asked the Emperor for a decree for the military and the inhabitants to obey him as their superior.¹⁵⁴ Meanwhile, as a 'reformierte officier', even his due portion him was reduced, he got only the half of the previous amount, even less than his other fellow officers in the same rank.¹⁵⁵ Finally, in June 1665, the Emperor, referring to the peace with the Ottomans, retired him, but with the proviso that he would be reactivated if necessary.¹⁵⁶ His two attempts prove, that he would not accept his retirement. First he applied for the councillor's post of the War Council in August of the same year,¹⁵⁷ then in March 1666, for the regiment of his former commander of Prague, *Generalwachtmeister* von der Cron, who had died in the meantime, and at the same time for the commanding post of von der Cron in Prague.¹⁵⁸ However, this office was received by *Generalwachtmeister* Wolfgang Friedrich Cobb Freiherr von Neiding, which is known, because in June 1667 Priami tried to obtain the vacant post in Prague again, after Cobb's relocation to Großglogau.¹⁵⁹

Despite his retirement, the things he committed in the past caught him repeatedly. In May 1667, he requested the help of the War Council as he was imprisoned again because of his 500 gulden debt to his former regiment secretary.¹⁶⁰ In January 1668 he had to defend himself because he had been charged by the Aulic War Chancellery for a debt of 1000 gulden.¹⁶¹ In military affairs, we can see him for the last time in the sources at that time he supplicated for his colonel's pay and the recruiting money he had previously paid already.¹⁶² Priami's last known mention was in December 1671, when the Emperor ordered to pay him a subsidy of 600 gulden.¹⁶³

Anyone, who has ever visited Bratislava or seen it on a picture, not to mention the popular satellite map applications on the Internet, would be looking vainly for the realization of these large-scale plans or their traces. Apart from a few minor pieces, nothing was realized. There are two possible reasons for this. One is the lack of money repeated again and again and the other is the change in the strategic situation. On May 3rd, 1664, the Emperor's troops led by *Generalfeldzeugmeister* Louis Raduit de Souches recaptured Nitra and on June 14th Levice. As a result, Nové Zámky, surrounded by Komarno, Nitra, Levice, seemed less dangerous, and the movement of the garrison was also restricted by the watery Váh-valley, but the threat to Bratislava was definitely reduced. By the way, Montecuccoli wrote to the War Council already in February 1664, that, according to the commander of Magyaróvár, the

¹⁵¹ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. March 1664 No. 56. Exp. Bd. 328. f. 112r.

¹⁵² ÖStA KA HKR Prot. [2] April 1664 No. 10. Exp. Bd. 328. f. 150v–151r.

¹⁵³ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1667 Juni No. 116. Exp. f. 26. Lit: F, 28 July 1664, *ibid.* HKR Prot. August 1664 No. 124. Exp. Bd. 328. f. 415r.

¹⁵⁴ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. October 1664 No. 85. Exp. Bd. 328. f. 516r.

¹⁵⁵ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 16 September 1664 Exp. Bd. 328. f. 437v–438r.

¹⁵⁶ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. Lit: M, 20 June 1665. At that time, it was promised him a slightly higher pay.

¹⁵⁷ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. August 1665 No. 105. Exp. Bd. 329. f. 396r.

¹⁵⁸ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. 1666 März No. 52. Exp. s.f. There are twenty different annexes to this document, in which he tried to prove his and his family's loyalty to the Emperor.

¹⁵⁹ ÖStA KA HKR Akt. Juni 1667 No. 116. Exp. f. 40–41, 45, Lit: B.

¹⁶⁰ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. May 1667 No. 9. Exp. Bd. 332. f. 252v–253r.

¹⁶¹ ÖStA KA HKR Prot. 4 January 1668 Exp. Bd. 332. f. 8v.

¹⁶² ÖStA KA HKR Prot. January 1668 No. 40. Exp. Bd. 332. f. 16v.

¹⁶³ ÖStA FHKA HF Prot. 10 December 1671 Exp. Bd. 901. f. 658r.

construction of Magyaróvár, Bratislava and Šintava was on hold due to lack of materials.¹⁶⁴ Later almost no mention was made about the fortification of Bratislava, only about the matters of its garrison stationed there.¹⁶⁵

Finally, we need to answer two questions: first, how Priami's plans corresponded to solving the given situation, and secondly, how he became from an imprisoned embezzler to commander of Bratislava's castle, which involved a really high responsibility in that time. Either of them has an easy answer.

To the first question I can say that Priami was apparently aware that the limited time and material available made it impossible to implement larger plans. Indeed, he restricted himself to the most necessary fortifications. I judge his last plan made in December more as a response to the criticism given by Tensini, rather than an idea to be actually realized. From a point of view of fortifications, his work left much to be desired, but some of these problems can also be on the account of the above-mentioned barriers. It cannot be denied that he had the appropriate experience and knowledge, but the depth of this knowledge in the light of the plans for Bratislava is questionable.

Regarding the second question, we have only one piece of data that can at least seemingly try to explain that – as we have seen – Montecuccoli suggested the appointment of Priami with respect to his expertise in fortifications.¹⁶⁶ However, this in itself does not seem to be sufficient, especially in the light of the former events. Especially since many well-trained military engineers were at the service of the military leadership in Vienna, from the previously mentioned Jakob von Holst to the builder of Győr, Joseph Wymes, but we can also mention Martin Stier, Giovanni Giuseppe Spalla, Lucas Georg Ssicha, or even Tensini. It obviously affected the decision that he was a troop commander and an engineer at the same time, thus the War Council saved the pay of one person. For my part, however, I would look for the real reasons elsewhere. On the one hand, he had prestigious patrons behind him such as Karl Ferdinand, Archduke of Tyrol in the 1650s, and later Miklós Pálffy or Montecuccoli.¹⁶⁷ And we know exactly how important such relationships were – in this age as well – in the advancement of a given person. On the other hand, based on the small amount of data, features of Priami's personality, that may not be sympathetic to us like his violence or his unscrupulousness also contributed to his advance.¹⁶⁸ However, these qualities – I emphasize again – should not be measured by the moral standard of our time. So, I think that Colonel Priami, who was incarcerated on multiple occasions, who cannot be considered a decent man at all, but who has seen a lot and was very experienced, most probably acquired the command of the Bratislava Castle for his above listed relations and qualities.

¹⁶⁴ ÖStA KA AFA 1664/2/15 f. 93, 17 February

¹⁶⁵ Until now, I have found a single document relating to this, in which 1000 gulden was ordered fortifying Bratislava. ÖStA FHKA HFU 22 September 1664 f. 99–105.

¹⁶⁶ See note 109.

¹⁶⁷ Obviously, there could be many such personalities in the background, about whom the sources do not tell anything.

¹⁶⁸ For example, he was already threatened with imprisonment due to embezzled recruiting money when he applied for a post of artillery-colonel at the army of the Elector of Mainz with the greatest peace of mind. ÖStA KA HKR Prot. [21] August 1661 No. 201. Exp. Bd. 323. f. 398v–399r.

Abbreviations

Bd.	Band
Exp.	Expediit
f.	folio
ÖStA FHKA HF Prot.	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Hoffinanzprotokollen
ÖStA FHKA HFU	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Hoffinanz Ungarn
ÖStA KA AFA	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Alte Feldakten
ÖStA KA HKR Akt.	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Akten des Wiener Hofkriegsrates
ÖStA KA HKR Prot.	Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Protokollen des Wiener Hofkriegsrates
Reg.	Registratur
s.d.	sine dato
s.f.	sine folio

List of Figures

Fig. 1 Priami's first plan, September 9th, 1663. ÖStA KA Kartensammlung K VII k 251-1

Fig. 2 Priami's plan Fig. No. 8, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2m

Epigraph: dise ist widerumb das könig: schloß Preßburg mit 4 Bolbergkh litt: a fortificiert, dasselbige

aber an dem wahl zu ligen komen, dabey zu mörckhen, daß eins litt: a:b: auf die höhe mit der faccie langet, auch daruor ein halbermondt litt: c gelägt werden konndte, der eben dahin vnd so weitt mit der spitze alß ietzt ein hornberkh ausserste boligon angeben, litt: d zu ligen komet; mit der zeit können auch soliche außwerckhe vermög litt E. gebawt

F Jst ein bruchen [Brücke] vber zweyen thallen litt: G wann dieselbe zuzamen geführt werden solten zu machen, deren zweyen thallen oben weitte litt: H edwan in die 200 schuen zu graben seindt möchten / J ist ein berg der einweder explaniert oder sonsten fortificiert werden solte, K seindt weinberg, L. ist ein höhe die nottwendig zubliesen

Fig. 3 Priami's grand plan, December (?) 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2d

Fig. 4 Priami's plan Fig. No. 7, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2n

Epigraph: Jst das könig: schloß und stadt Preßburg grundriß zusehen, wie dieselbigen mit etlichen schanzen und revelinen interim versehen, und dafür aufgeworffen werden. die 4 reuelin mit dünsten gezeignet litt: aa werden, mit bewilligung des burgermeister vnd rath anietzo gebawet, die mit puncten aber annoch darvber zu resoluiren sein wirdt

Fig. 5 Priami's plan Fig. No. 5, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2k

Epigraph: Seind 2 haubt: und real-proportionirte bollwerkke, deren eüerste polligone in die 90 ruthen kommen, eine mächtigen gewalt zu widerstehen

Fig. 6 Priami's plan Fig. No. 1, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2e

Epigraph: Jst eine figur mit halber bollwerkke an dem wall angehenkkt

Fig. 7 Priami's plan Fig. Lit: D, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2f

Fig. 8 Priami's plan Fig. No. 2, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2g

Epigraph: Jst eben wie vorige 1. an dem wall, doch mit mehr flanken und 2 ganze bollwerkke

Fig. 9 Priami's plan Fig. No. 3, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2h

Epigraph: Jst noch stärcker als 1 und 2, zu mal nicht allein an dem hauptschloß und mauren
forn ganze bollwerk von qvader stükken aufgeföhret, sondern noch darvor an den
wall andere flanken kömmen und darzwischen der graben bleiben thut

Fig. 10 Priami's plan Fig. No. 4, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2i

Epigraph: Jst wie die dritte, an dem hauptschloß aller das an stat 2 halbe, alda 3 ganze
bollwerk, deren auserste distanz in die 60 ruthen kommen, stärcker als die vorige zu
sein erscheinet

Fig. 11 Priami's plan Fig. No. 6, October 21st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2j

Epigraph: Diese fig: ist gestellet, wann man die schädliche berge mit dem schloß in die
fortification bringen wolte

Fig. 12 Tensini's plan, October 31st, 1663. ÖStA KA AFA 1663/12/2c

GYÖRGY DOMOKOS: BEBÖRTÖNZÖTT SIKKASZTÓBÓL VÁRPARANCSNOK. JOSEPH PRIAMI KINEVEZÉSE POZSONY PARANCSNOKÁNAK, 1663

Érsekújvár elestével (1663. szeptember 27.) teljesen új stratégiai helyzet állt elő, elveszett Bécs védelmének egyik fontos erőssége. Bár a terepadottságok nem kedveztek az ebből az irányból esetleg Bécs felé támadó oszmán seregeknek, egy ilyen akció lehetőségét azonban nem lehetett kizárni. Ez pedig óriási pánikot keltett a Habsburg kormányzat köreiben. Az egyik ilyen lehetséges támadási úton helyezkedett el Pozsony amúgy teljesen elavult védrendszerű vára, amelyet épp ezért sürgősen meg kellett erősíteni. Ehhez azonban az anyagi feltételek megteremtésén túlmenően egy olyan személyt is kellett találni, aki a szükséges terveket el tudja készíteni és irányítani tudja a kivitelezést. Montecuccoli Joseph Priami ezredest javasolta e posztra, aki korábban már dolgozott Prága erődítéseinél, továbbá komoly csapattisztai múlttal is rendelkezett. Az uralkodó ki is nevezte Priamit Pozsony parancsnokának, aki be is nyújtotta az erődítési terveket, ezek azonban a részben a szokásos anyagi okok miatt, részben a stratégiai helyzet jelentős javulása folytán nem valósultak meg. Az amúgy szokványos történetben az igazi érdekesség azonban Priami személye és kinevezése e felelősségteljes posztra. Priami előélete ugyanis korántsem volt makulátlan, elsikkasztotta ezrede toborzópénzét, üzletelt a katonák ellátmányával, kifizetetlen adósságokat hagyott maga után, s ezen bűnök egyike-másika miatt háromszor is börtönbe vetették. Ugyanakkor arcátlan magabiztossággal igyekezett saját személyét mindenütt és mindenkor előtérbe helyezni, hogy előbbre jusson. Mindezeket azon-ban nem szabad a mai kor erkölce szerint megítélni, akkoriban nagy valószínűséggel sok hasonló eset történt. Jelen tanulmány két kérdésre keresi a választ: először arra, miért pont egy ilyen előéletű személy kerül az említett fontos pozícióba, másodszor arra, hogy a Priami által Pozsony megerődítésére készített tervek mennyiben feleltek meg a szakmai követelményeknek, illetve a pillanatnyi lehetőségeknek.

GYÖRGY DOMOKOS: VOM INHAFTIERTEN VERUNTREUER ZUM KOMMANDANT. DIE ERNENNUNG VON JOSEPH PRIAMI ZUM OBERBEFEHLSHABER VON PRESSBURG, 1663

Mit dem Fall von Neuhausel am 27. September 1663 entstand eine völlig neue strategische Situation, da eine der wichtigen Festungen der Verteidigung Wiens verloren ging. Obwohl die Terrainbedingungen für einen eventuellen Angriff gegen Wien aus dieser Richtung für die osmanischen Heere nicht günstig waren, konnte die Möglichkeit einer solchen Aktion nicht ausgeschlossen werden. Dies verursachte große Panik in den Kreisen der Habsburger

Regierung. Entlang eines dieser möglichen Angriffsrouten befand sich die Pressburger Burg – deren Schutzsystem übrigens völlig veraltet war, und deshalb eiligst verstärkt werden musste. Neben den materiellen Voraussetzungen war es auch nötig, eine Person zu finden, die die Pläne entwerfen und die Ausführung leiten konnte. Montecuccoli empfahl für diesen Posten *Obrister* Joseph Priami, der früher schon an der Befestigung Prags gearbeitet hatte, sowie über eine ernsthafte Vergangenheit als Truppenoffizier verfügte. Der Kaiser ernannte Priami zum Kommandanten von Pressburg, der die Befestigungspläne auch vorlegte; diese wurden aber teils aus den üblichen finanziellen Gründen, teils wegen der bedeutenden Verbesserung der strategischen Lage nicht verwirklicht. Das wirklich Interessante in der ansonsten gewöhnlichen Geschichte ist die Person Priamis und seine Ernennung auf diesen verantwortungsvollen Posten. Sein Vorleben war nämlich keineswegs makellos, er hatte die Rekrutierungsgelder seines Regiments veruntreut, betrieb Geschäfte mit der Verpflegung der Soldaten, hinterließ unbezahlte Schulden, und wegen einigen dieser Straftaten wurde er dreimal auch ins Gefängnis gesperrt. Gleichzeitig war er versucht, seine Person immer und überall in den Vordergrund zu schieben, um weiter nach vorne zu kommen. All dies darf jedoch nicht nach der Moral der heutigen Zeit beurteilt werden, damals kamen aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach viele ähnliche Fälle vor. Vorliegende Abhandlung sucht die Antwort auf zwei Fragen: erstens, warum kam eine Person mit solchem Vorleben auf genannten wichtigen Posten; und zweitens, inwiefern die von Priami entworfenen Pläne den fachlichen Anforderungen, sowie den augenblicklichen Möglichkeiten entsprachen.

GYÖRGY DOMOKOS: OD UVÄZNEŇHO DEFRAUDANTA AŽ PO VELITEĽA.
VYMEŇOVANIE JOZEFA PRIAMIHO ZA VRCHNÉHO VELITEĽA BRATISLAVY
V ROKU 1663

Po páde Nových Zámkov 27. septembra 1663 nastala celkom nová strategická situácia, v dôsledku ktorej prišla obrana Viedne o jednu veľmi dôležitú pevnosť. Hoci terén pre prípadný útok na Viedeň z tohto smeru nebol pre osmanské vojsko výhodný, napriek tomu sa však takáto možnosť nedala celkom vylúčiť. Nová situácia vyvolala veľkú paniku v kruhoch habsburskej vlády. Pozdĺž tejto jednej z možných línií útoku sa nachádzal Bratislavský hrad, ktorého obranný systém bol celkom zastaraný a musel sa urýchlene posilniť. Okrem materiálnych predpokladov bolo potrebné nájsť aj osobu, ktorá by naprojektovala plány a dozerala aj na ich realizáciu. Montecuccoli navrhol do tejto funkcie plukovníka Jozefa Priamiho, ktorý sa už predtým podieľal na opevňovaní Prahy a v minulosti mal aj praktické skúsenosti ako dôstojník. Cisár vymenoval J. Priamiho za veliteľa Bratislavy, ktorý predložil aj plány nového opevnenia. Tieto práce sa však nerealizovali sčasti pre zvyčajné finančné dôvody a sčasti kvôli zlepšeniu celkovej strategickej situácie. Zaujímavosťou na tomto, inak bežnom príbehu, je osoba J. Priamiho a jeho vymenovanie do tejto zodpovednej funkcie. Jeho predchádzajúci život nebol totiž v žiadnom prípade bezúhonný. Zdefraudoval peniaze pre regrútov svojej jednotky, robil obchody s proviantom pre vojakov, zanechal množstvo dlhov a kvôli týmto trestným činom bol aj trikrát uväznený. Zároveň sa pokúšal všade a vždy pretláčať do popredia svoju osobu a dostať sa vyššie na kariérnom rebríčku. Toto však nemôžeme posudzovať na základe dnešnej morálky, lebo v tom čase so všetkou pravdepodobnosťou bolo podobných prípadov viac. Predložený príspevok hľadá odpovede na dve otázky: po prvé, prečo sa dostáva osoba s takýmto životom na dôležitý post; po druhé, do akej miery zodpovedali plány J. Priamiho odborným požiadavkám a momentálnym možnostiam.