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OTTOMAN EXPANSION IN ZALA COUNTY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF A Tahrîr Defteri – OPPORTUNITIES AND LESSONS

DOCTORAL THESIS

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I. Goals

One of the most important results of Hungarian early modern historiography of the past two decades has been the exhaustive treatment of the building and organization of the unified Hungarian border castle system. Today, the available results point to the need for an in-depth analysis of the Ottoman military and economic administration. The more so, because parallel to the introduction of the imperial-royal defense system, we still lack micro-studies that draw an accurate picture of the nature of Ottoman power in a certain territory at a given time period. Was it only Turkish temporary military presence that made the everyday life of people living in the frontier zone difficult or had the Ottomans exercised administrative-economic rule over certain regions?

Starting from the mid-16th century, Ottoman and Hungarian sources, primarily tax registers, mention a constantly changing but ever broadening zone in Zala county that formed part of the Turkish administration. As a consequence of constant changes in the balance of power, this zone became narrower or broader over time, and by the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries was integrated into the Kanizsa vilâyet. In the 16th century, Turkish expansion reached its peak in Zala county in 1579, exactly during the time of the reinforcement of the Kanizsa-centered imperial-royal defense system (1577–1580). The tahrîr defterî of the Szigetvár sancak’s Kanizsa nâhiye, a tax register prepared by the Ottoman financial administration, serves as the most revealing proof for this development.

This source, kept in Munich, Germany, is the last snapshot before the defense system finally came into function. It not only accounts those territories in the county that became part of the Turkish zone of occupation, but also
describes the extent of occupation during the period when the organization of small fortresses along the marshy Kanizsa creek on the Eastern side of the county into a unified system had just started. That said, the analysis of the *tahrîr defteri* from the year 1579 enables us to reconstruct a state of affairs that can serve as a reference point to test the efficacy of the border castle system. The primary aim of my dissertation is to publish and analyze this important, but so far understudied document.

II. Methods

As Ottoman sources on the Szigetvár sancak are extremely scarce, it was impossible to work with the material in the traditional way and exercise source criticism through its comparison with different types of *defters*. Of the three *sancak* registers produced during the 16th century, only this single one has remained, and other Turkish control sources are also rare. Therefore we lack those series of *defters* from this region that would make comparative study possible, that would enable us to trace territorial changes, and that could provide us with a broad perspective to study the usability of *sancak* registers and to solve terminological problems according to the actual requirements of international defterology.

The scarcity of sources inspired a special, so far rarely used approach. I carried out a comparative analysis of the widest range of available sources. In this dissertation I made use of all sources and topics that could serve as a tool for interpreting a source that had been torn out from the series of documents of its kind. As interpretation has in many cases broadened into interaction, this method, while reflecting the present challenges of defterology, provides new results to Hungarian historical statistics and broadens our knowledge concerning control sources as well.
III. Sources

In the course of comparative analysis, the primary sources are *tahrîr* registers. Their primary function was to strengthen the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire, to locate additional financial resources and to serve as a basis for the *tîmâr* system. Other available control sources include documents produced during the administration of taxation and estate management, such as *tîmâr defterleri*, *tîmâr-rûznâmçeleri* registers and *cizye defterleri*. These registers could be used to supplement the missing data of *sancak* registers and the also missing 1580 *tîmâr defteri*. They could also serve as the basis for the analysis of the strategic and economic importance of the *nâhiye*. Hungarian documents (household tax registers and *urbariums*) served as good sources in the study of Ottoman taxation in the Hungarian Kingdom and in solving demographic and terminological problems.

The use of a broad range of documents with different provenience also enabled me to set a broader goal of analyzing not only the snapshot of the 1579 *tahrîr*, but also the process of the expansion of the Szigetvár *sancak* in Zala county. It provided a glimpse into the details of Ottoman strategy and estate management, and enabled me to address certain problems of settlement history, historical statistics and historical demography.

IV: The structure of the dissertation

This dissertation consists of five major parts. In Chapter One, I present a historiographical overview, introducing the important stations in the development of defterology and historical statistics. This is followed by the introduction of different types of sources used for analysis.
Chapter Three addresses the methodological problems of comparative analysis of sancak registers. I perform a comparative analysis of the contents of conscriptions prepared by the opposite sides, including the extent and boundaries of Ottoman and Hungarian administrative units, the status of settlements conscribed within their boundaries, and property relations characteristic to those territories. I pay special attention to conceptual issues, including the question of subjection and submission, and to the interpretation of expressions indicating the desolation of settlements (mezraa-tahmîn-hâlí; combusta-totaliter/omnino/penitus/jam diu deserta). Demographic problems, especially the possibility of comparison between households and hânes, and the difficulties arising from the attempt to determine the number of population are also addressed in this chapter. Through these analyses I address question of source value and reliability of tahrîr.

In Chapter Four I analyze the role played by the Kanizsa nâhiye in Ottoman military and financial administration. Following a brief overview of Ottoman expansion in Transdanubia, I introduce in detail the composition of hâss possessions of the sancakbeyis of Szigetvár (financial, strategic and offensive hâss possessions) focusing on the strategic role of nominally possessed settlements (ber vech-i tahmîn) chosen from the territory of the Kanizsa nahiye and the change in their function after the imperial-royal defense system came into effect. In this chapter, I also trace the changes in the geographical location of such settlements in the Transdanubian region between 1554–1580. This overview is followed by the analysis of the proportion of the contribution of different possessions (sultanic hâss, sancakbeyi hâss, tîmâr possessions) to taxes collected on the territory of the nâhiye.

In the last chapter I summarize my conclusions concerning the preparation of the 1579 tahrîr defteri of the Kanizsa nâhiye and concerning the methods of occupation.
As an appendix, I publish the transcript of the *tahrîr* of the Szigetvár *sancak*’s Kanizsa *nâhiye* plus eight maps that I prepared to illustrate my analyses.

V. Results

As a first step, I determined the territory which could serve as a basis for comparative analysis by comparing the *tahrîr defteri* and the household tax register of Zala county. In 1579, the boundaries of Zala county and the Szigetvár *sancak*’s Kanizsa *nâhiye* coincided only in the south and southeast where natural formations constituted a natural border. In the northern and northwestern directions the *nâhiye* expanded to neighboring Vas and Sopron counties and in one case even to Pozsony county. The eastern and northeastern parts of Zala county belonged to the jurisdiction of the Székesfehérvár *sancak*. Accordingly, the comparative analysis could focus on the entire territory of the two administrative regions, but only at the intersection of the two territorial units, that is where the settlements were located within the smaller and larger Kapornak districts.

In this territory the *dical* assessment contained 370 settlements, whereas the *tahrîr* prepared under the leadership of Ahmed bey conscribed only 297 settlements. However, the data contained in the *sancak* register do not follow a unified pattern. The *defter* is divided into two parts. Settlements that make up the core territory of the administrative sub-unit are listed in the first part. Here the name of the village is followed by the list of heads of families and unmarried males. Next, the number of *hânes* which are compelled to pay *cizye* is given, followed by the “*ber vech-i maktû*” formula and the fixed amount of tax calculated as a lump sum (*hâstl*), which already serves as an indicator of regular taxation. The full series consists of 210 settlements, which, with the exception of
17, are all located in Zala county. Of the 318 settlements that make up the second part of the register only about one third belonged to the territory of Zala county under study. Characteristically to the territories that were demanded by the Ottomans, the defter contains only the designated amount of their tax.

The difference between the number of localities in the Hungarian and Ottoman registers and the two occupational zones that can be identified in the defter all point to the fact that in Zala county there existed at least three kinds of territories. Certain regions were occupied and regularly taxed by the Ottomans. Others were taxed only temporarily, primarily only during raids, such as the middle and northeastern parts of the Muraköz region, several iudicates belonging to the westernmost Csernec manor of the Bánffy family, and parts of the Kanizsa castle estate. The rest (e.g., the iudicatus of the Bánffy family in Lippa and Cserencsóc, the southwestern parts of the Muraköz region, and groups of villages all around the county that were ruled by the small gentry) remained untaxed by the occupants.

The comparison of different forms of settlement in the territory under study also provided different results. The Hungarian tax register indicated 15 towns while the defter only 9, of which only in 4 was registered in detail. Therefore in the case of oppidums the dical assessment proved to be much more reliable than the tahrîr that in most cases was based on inaccurate surveys. The latter only indicated the existence of the settlements, and contained relevant and relatively accurate data only in the case of localities that were listed in the first part of the defter. Only Alsólendva, Egerszeg and Szemenye were mentioned under the same status in both registers. One village (Salomvár) was registered by the Ottomans as a town, while five towns were mentioned as villages (Dobronak, Csesztreg, Lenti, Páka, Tornistya). All this prove the uncertainty of surveys. It is clear from the registers that there were at least two urban
settlements in Zala county which remained untaxed by the Turks in 1579 (Csáktornya, Nedölce).

In several cases, however, it was the inaccuracies of the Hungarian registers, primarily as a result of the deficiencies in the registers of the judicial regions (*iudicatus*), that concealed the real data. Therefore, in the case of villages listed in both registers the data contained in the *defter* were more detailed than those of the *dical* assessments. Despite the inaccuracies deriving from the partial occupation of the region, Ahmed bey’s men listed all locations to be taxed by name, whereas in the case of larger estates the portal tax register contained only the name of central settlement of the *iudicatus*. However, the comprehensive continuity study of Zala county’s localities cannot be fully carried out even with the parallel study of the two sources. The bulk of the large number of curialist villages of Zala county are missing from both lists produced in 1578–79.

In most cases, the comparative study of the size and tax load capacity of localities also brought about contradictory results. Based on the available results, I was unable to establish the demographic or economic map of the county. There is a difference between the numbers of households and *hânes* of the same settlement, contained in the household tax registers and the *tahrîr defteri* respectively. This difference primarily indicates the actual degree of pressure by the two administrations. In localities where Hungarian influence was stronger, the number of registered households is higher than the number of *hânes*, whereas in localities where Ottoman presence was more influential, the number of *hânes* is higher than the number of households taxed by the Hungarians. Furthermore, the total number of households and *hânes* does not add up to the actual number of households and *hânes* of the settlement which originates from the peripheral location of the region. In sum, even the comparative analysis of
the two registers could not produce sufficient information to define the actual size and tax load capacity of local settlements.

Moreover, the number of *hânes* and the total sum of taxes to be collected do not show direct correlation. That is, in different localities with similar numbers of *hânes* the amount of tax to be collected could show big differences. This phenomenon might indicate the success of an agreement between the Ottoman and Hungarian landlords or the Ottoman landlord and the people living in the village.

My research on the contiguous body of possessions of the Zrínyis and Bánffys shows that the information regarding subjection contained in detailed part of the *tahrîr* is mostly in harmony with that of Hungarian sources. The sequence of localities listed in the *defter* also regularly matches the structure of the possessions as it is shown in the household tax register. This does not mean, however, that the Ottoman tax collectors took into account the Hungarian property structure. What the sequence of adjacent villages included in the *defter* suggests is rather the direction and time of individual raids, the interests of the *sipahi* who acquired the possession, and in some cases the function of certain groups of settlements.

In the course of my research, several terminological problems occurred. The first one is the mutual relationship between settlements taxed by the Ottomans and territories conquered/occupied by the Ottomans. In other words, were there any settlements that paid tax to the Ottomans outside of the occupied territory? The second problem is the scale of desolation on the periphery of the occupied region. That is, did *deserta* villages, which were referred to in the *tahrîrs* as ones that pay tax to the Ottomans have any inhabitants at all?

As a starting point, following Ferenc Szakály’s practice, I clearly separated the concepts of occupied territory and occupational periphery, despite the fact that in the 16th century both Turkish and Hungarian sources considered
localities that paid tax to the Ottomans as occupied. The next problem that I addressed concerned the temporal relationship between Turkish and Hungarian views on occupation. The question I tried to answer was: at which point did Turkish and Hungarian sources consider a location as subjected to Ottoman rule? Through this approach, I was able to determine the timetable of the Turkish submission of Zala county.

To fulfill this task I took the data of the 1570 tîmâr defters of Szigetvár, Pécs and Koppány as a starting point. They contain 82 settlements that belonged to Kanizsa, which means that presumably the 1569 tahrîr, which does not survive to this day, included them as parts of the newly established Kanizsa nâhiye. In 1570, most of these settlements still paid an estimated amount of tax (ber vech-i tahmîn), but already became prebendae. On the other hand, as the household tax registers from this period still did not consider them as double-taxed territories, the Hungarians still considered them as exempt from Ottoman occupation.

Between 1570 and 1579, the submission of the western parts of Zala county proceeded gradually. As a first step, in 1572–1574, the fortified settlements outside of the Kanizsa marsh (Kapornak, Rajk, Gelse, Isabor, Palin) became subjects of the Ottomans. During this period, the proportion of subjected localities in this region increased from 4 percent to 10.7 percent. Starting in 1575, as a result of the series of raids, the proportion of deserta territories grew significantly in the whole territory of the Kapornak district. Meanwhile, the number of double-taxed settlements grew minimally, to 11.2 percent. From 1576, when the Ottomans were able to breach the system of observatory houses in the outskirts of Kanizsa, passage to the territories within the grove became freer. This resulted in the rapid increase in the number of new submissions. In the two districts in question, the proportion of subjected locations grew to 51.8 percent by 1576 and to 75.1 percent by 1578. At that point, over 90 percent of
these settlements were not yet registered in the *tahrîr* that also served as a tool for the legitimation of Ottoman rule. This means that as opposed to the early 1570s, this time the Hungarian sources contained references to the fact of submission earlier than the *defter*. In administrative terms these settlements were located outside of the Ottoman Empire, but they had nevertheless become taxpayers of the Turks.

However, the Hungarian tax register does not indicate the territory as fully occupied. Several *deserta* zones were omitted, which, in turn, were registered by the Ottomans as inhabited in 1579. As the concept *deserta* is still the source of regular debates and misunderstandings in the demographic and settlement historical literature, I attempted to solve this contradiction by using the comparative analysis of concepts referring to desolation in the two registers.

With the help of a register from 1574-75 from Zala county, in which the *deserta* settlements that denied paying tax are classified into several categories (*jam diu, omnino, totaliter, penitus ...*), I attempted to provide an explanation for and a typology of the phrases. First I studied the adjectives in a series of registers and compared their contents with the similar expressions of Ottoman *defters* (*mezraa, ber vech-i tahmîn, hâli ez raîyyet*). I found that it is possible to accurately interpret the phrases which otherwise seem to be synonyms.

As a result of my analysis, I identified nine different types of settlements:

1. Settlements that pay tax only to the Hungarian side, and are not included in the *tahrîr*. Their proportion in the two districts is 14 percent.

2. Inhabited locations that call themselves subjected, but are still omitted from the *tahrîr*. Their proportion is also 14 percent.

3. Double-taxed localities included in both registers. They appear as subjects of lump-sum taxation (*ber vech-i maktû*) in the *tahrîr*, and the Hungarian tax register refers to their inhabitants as subjects (*subjectus*) or *omnino deserta*. Their proportion is 29 percent.
4. Territories that are not double-taxed because they lie beyond the borders of Turkish taxation but are demanded by the Turks. The *tahrîr* mentions them as territories “without *reayas*” (*hâli ez raîyet*). Their proportion is 11 percent.

5. Territories located near Hungarian castles but demanded by the Turks. The Hungarian tax register mentions them as *penitus deserta*, and the *tahrîr* also refers to them as registered locations without *reayas*. Their proportion is 2 percent.

6. Territories demanded by the Hungarians. This refers to those locations where the army of the Hungarian castles did not allow the collection of the *dical* tax. In the *tahrîr* they are mostly mentioned without *hâne* numbers. Their proportion is 8 percent.

7. Ravaged, burnt down settlements. They were located along the route of Turkish raids, and had been long (*jam diu*) deserta or *totaliter deserta*. The Turks either did not register their population at all, or mentioned them as uninhabited (*mezraa*), or only provided an estimated number of their population (*ber vech-i tahmin*) in the *tahrîr*. Their proportion is 9 percent.

8. Locations that avoided Hungarian taxes, paid high taxes to the Turks after a small number of heads of families (*müzевvec*), but were mentioned in the Hungarian registers as long *deserta*. Their proportion is 1.5 percent.

9. Uninhabited locations that did not pay tax to either side. They are either omitted from the *tahrîr* or it mentions them as bare (*mezraa*). In the Hungarian survey they are mentioned as *penitus deserta* or *jam diu deserta*. Their proportion is 11.5 percent.

The next question I addressed was: to what extent can *tahrîr defters* be used as sources for the study of demographic issues. To answer this question, I compared the lists of names of serfs contained in the *tahrîr* and in the *urbariums*. I found that the lists of names in the *defter* from the periphery of
occupied territory contain only a certain, locally different proportion of the population. Based on their data, only a very rough estimate of the magnitude of even the approximate number of the total population can be given, and that is also only with the parallel use of control sources. Such uncertain results distort all further results of analysis regarding the number of population or migration. Therefore, *tahrîrs* from such territories provide very limited opportunity to carry out demographic research.

As the Turkish lists did not include the whole population, looking for the place of the existing part within the larger whole seemed to be a more effective approach. The question I tried to answer was: who were included in the *tahrîr*? To answer this question, the study of neighborhood relations seemed to be an appropriate method. I took the data referring to the land system in the *urbariums* of two towns and compared them with the lists of names in the *defter*. As a result, I identified two different kinds of towns. The first is a town that was subjected during a raid (Egerszeg), where all the conscripted came from the same neighborhood. The second is a town that had already paid tax to the Ottomans as a subject (Kapornak). From this latter kind of town, only one person from each street was included in the *defter*. The latter shows similarity to the the *mahalle* system in the Balkans. However, the full clarification of the problem needs further inquiries based on a wider base of sources.

One of the questions of defterology is: from what age to what age are the sons of tax payers registered as the sons of their father and at what age are they included in the *tahrîr* in their own right? The small proportion of registered population, according to the rules of statistical analysis, does not influence the study of the age of taxpayers’ sons. Nevertheless, the lack of control sources enabled me to carry out this analysis in merely one single town, Egerszeg. Here I found that the average age of the sons of taxpayers registered in the *tahrîr* was between 10 and 16 years old, which corresponds to Muslim religious law.
In the next chapter, I studied the role of the Kanizsa nāhiye in the Ottoman military and financial administration. My question was: how did the mega-nāhiye of Kanizsa, which included more than 500 settlements, promote Ottoman intentions for further conquests. The data contained in the tîmâr defters and rûznâmçes served as sources for this analysis, based on my previous functional distinction within and among the structures of possessions of sancakbeyis (financial, strategic and offensive hâss).

Characteristic of the periphery are those well-delineated groups of revenues, which at the time of their allocation were still not subjected and whose value, differently from the general practice, was defined only as an estimate (ber vech-i tahmîn). First, I deal with the whole of Western Transdanubia and treat it as a background. As a next step, I show the linear location of estimated possessions of sancakbeyis – the offensive hâss –, which between 1554-1579 spanned through several sancaks (Simontornya; Pécs; Koppány; Szigetvár) and overlapped with important routes of raids.

From the analysis of the above data we can conclude that the sancakbeyis with such hâss possessions also played an important role in determining the direction of further conquests. This is also true for the beys of Szigetvár after 1566, whose offensive hâss spanned further in two directions as compared to the similar kinds of possessions of the previous bey of Koppány. The hâss located southwest from the Újudvar passage leading through Kanizsa creek were called “beyond the waters of Kanizsa”. As they stretched to the territories behind the castle of Kanizsa, their location was ideal for providing information about the supply lines of the castle. Furthermore, they could serve as a starting point for further conquests in the direction of Murakőz and the castle of Lenti. The so called Zalavár hâss were located around the passages over the river Zala, which secured conquests in the direction of Kapornak.
Those hâss possessions in Zala that were registered according to the ber vech-i tahmîn system belonged to sancakbeyis who had already gained significant knowledge of the region during their previous service. These lands were located in strategic points that had been rationally selected well in advance. They provided the location from which to gain further detailed knowledge of the planned operational areas in order to enlarge taxed territories. They also served as sites for the concentration of troops before raids. All this made further Turkish expansion possible. As a result, the territory was submitted in a relatively short time. No wonder that the 1579 register contains a significantly enlarged Kaniza nâhiye.

The establishment of a unified imperial-royal defense system, developed in the late 1570s, brought about a sharp turn in the Turkish revenue system. The new defense system put an end to the so far unlimited taxing efforts of the Szigetvár and Pécs sipahis. In the Szigetvár sancak it resulted in the loss of offensive hâss possessions’ reason for existence. The role of strategic hâss possessions was taken over by hâss possessions redistributed on the basis of the 1579 tahrîr. Surrounding the inner territories of the county and in the Muraköz, these possessions served as military routes toward demanded territories, and facilitated the cooperation between more sancaks in order to retain those territories that had already been brought under taxation or to promote further conquests.

Next, I dealt with the utilization of territories that appear in the 1579 tahrîr. The problem I addressed was: did the new nâhiye influence the financial balance of the Buda vilâyet that had been prospering between 1569–1580?

Because of the insufficient information contained in the fragmentary 1580 timâr defter, it was not possible to compare the estate management of the Kaniza nâhiye with the other nâhiyes of the sancak. The only set of data of the Szigetvár sancak’s tahrir defter that can be used is the one that refers to the
planned revenues from different nâhiyes. The average tax of the 528 settlements in Kanizsa region (1175 akce) does not reach even one half of the amount of tax in the neighboring core territories or in the nâhiyes that were on their way to consolidation. The reason for the very low average is the low amount of tax in demanded territories. However, when I took only the first part of the Kanizsa defter as the basis for calculation, that is, leaving out the demanded territories, I found that the expected income from the Zala–Vas occupied territory matches the average of neighboring territories (2858 akce). This means that the nâhiye’s tax load capacity was not underestimated despite the rather small number of registered hânes.

The biggest part of the expected income (48.6%) went to the military – not an unusual practice in the periphery. The proprietors came from among local soldiers of Szigetvár and those cavaliers from Pécs who had already possessed land in this region. Almost one third (32.4%) of the nâhiye’s total revenue went to the sancakbeyi. This fact proves both the strategic importance and economic load bearing capacity of the territory. The unusually high proportion of sultanic hâss possessions (19%) also serves as proof for the latter.

In 1580, however, no new tîmârs were allocated to soldiers on the territory of the Kanizsa nâhiye, that is the newly registered territories from Zala and Vas counties. In the 1570s, the organization of the Kanizsa nâhiye definitely did not influence the budget of the self-sustaining Buda vilâyet directly by replacing the salary of the defenders of castles. In order to determine whether the inclusion of the Zala-Vas territories had an indirect effect in the liberation of core territories for tîmâr allocations, further studies are needed.

The most important new results of my research pertain to the preparation of the tahrîr. It became clear that the sequence of registered settlements do not correspond to the real geographic sequence of localities, that is they were not prepared as a result of inspection of the territory. Neither do they correspond to
the time of their inclusion into the Ottoman taxation system nor to the Hungarian estate structure, which would refer to an agreement between the Hungarian landlords and the sipahis. Nevertheless, the localities are not registered in a random order, but in groups of localities close to each other. However, the sequence of groups of settlements contains villages that are located far away from each other geographically. So far, scholars have accepted the explanation provided for this phenomenon by Lajos Fekete who claimed that the tax collectors recorded the data on separate sheets on the spot, and the sheets were later mixed during the compilation of the tahrîr.

The comparison of tahrîr with tîmâr defters, and in our case, because of the fragmentary state of the latter, with rûznâmçes that contain the possessions of sipahis, provides us with a completely new explanation. I found that the tahrîr in question exactly follows the structure of tax registers: begins with the lists of sultanic hâss possessions, followed by the hâss possessions of the sancakbeyi and in most cases ends with possessions listed in groups of settlements that serve as a supplement for the revenues of sipahis. All this proves that the tahrîr was edited parallel to the tîmâr defteri according to the demands of future landlords. This novel argument contradicts traditional wisdom, which argues that the allocation of property was started only based on the tahrîrs that had been approved in Istambul.

This new result raises the question whether the example of the Kanizsa nâhiye was unique or was this practice typical for the periphery of Ottoman occupation. Based on available studies so far, we can only surmise that in different regions of the border zone (both linearly and in depth) different practices existed. The practice in the Kanizsa nâhiye – where property was registered in the tahrîr according to the demands of future landlords – seems to be unique among other methods of selecting and handling new acquisitions.
My case study, based on the *tahrîr defteri* of the Szigetvár sancak’s Kanizsa nâhiye, ultimately confirms the current view in international defterology which stresses that all *tahrîrs* from a given region and all other available contemporary sources should be studied contemporaneously. Consequently, we should exercise caution when we make general statements concerning the contents, source value and conditions of preparation of *tahrîr defters* and the possibility of their utilization, particularly because of such unique cases. Although they seem to follow a unified pattern in terms of contents, the source value of the data contained in them can differ significantly from region to region. As they can be products of different production mechanisms, their use without control sources can lead to erroneous conclusions.
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