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Florentine Families in Hungary in the First Half of the Fifteenth Century*

Krisztina Arany

National Archives of Hungary

This essay, based on a prosopographic database backed by extensive archival research both in Florence and Hungary, offers an overview on the patterns of the presence of Florentine merchants in medieval Hungary. Among the research questions, the Florentine businessmen's main fields of interest in the kingdom are of utmost importance, because their interests shaped the patterns of their presence in the kingdom. Also, their financial and economic background in Florence significantly influenced the opportunities they had in Hungary. Thus, the forms of cooperation within the closer local and extended international networks within which they moved prove to be revealing with regards to business as it was run in Hungary. The reconstruction of this network also allows us to identify clusters of Florentine business partners residing in Florence who were investing in Hungary by cooperating with their fellow countrymen actively present in the country. I also offer a detailed analysis of the Florentines' use of credit in Hungary, focusing on both commercial and money credit transactions and the various forms of transactions used to run business ventures there. Finally, I examine Buda's role as a royal seat and major trade hub from the point of view of the two major foreign trading diasporas hosted in the town, the Italian/Florentine and southern German ethnic groups. I offer a comparative analysis of their interaction and the different patterns of their social ambitions and economic activity in Buda.

Keywords: Florentine merchants, German merchants, Hungary, Buda, King Sigismund of Luxemburg, Florentine Catasto, financial administration, economic relations

Introduction

Florentine merchants were present all over medieval Europe, trading in a wide range of goods, providing large loans, and holding key offices in financial administrations in several regions, including Central Europe. In this essay, I offer an overview of the patterns of their presence in medieval Hungary. In particular, I seek to explore the economic and social context provided by the Hungarian Kingdom for a relatively large number of Florentine businessmen

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working there, whose activity is documented in both Florentine and Hungarian sources.

The study of the activities of Florentine merchants in various geographical regions of medieval Europe looks back on a long historiographic tradition. However, for a number of reasons, in this context, Central Europe has been considered an area of less importance in the international scholarship.¹ In Hungary, in contrast, the question of medieval Florentine–Hungarian relations has been a subject of interest in the scholarship from as early as the late nineteenth century. The majority of the works focusing on the topic, however, address predominantly the history of diplomatic relations, leaving out the study of economic affairs partly because of a lack of relevant source material available in Hungary at the time. However, this neglect of the socio-economic aspects of the presence in Hungary of a social cluster characterized by marked international mercantile activity today seems symptomatic of a somewhat misleading approach. Fortunately, this tendency to regard political historical analysis as the priority when addressing the topic has undergone a shift in recent decades, as evidenced by a number of recent economic historical studies.² These inquiries lay the foundations for more thorough analyses of Florentine–Hungarian economic relations in the Hungarian historical context.

Following in the footsteps of these recent publications on the topic and, at the same time, making extensive use of new possibilities provided by the easier access to information (the result of mass digitization, processing, and the online publication of archival sources), I pursued research on the different aspects of the economic activity and social strategies of the Florentine families working in Hungary, drawing on as diverse an array of sources as possible. My research yielded a set of data, which can be regarded as unusually rich in the Central European context, as it includes written evidence from various Florentine, Hungarian, German, etc. archives. Building also on hitherto unused evidence, I

1 Braudel, “L’Italia fuori Italia,” 2109–10; de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 201–02, 448, footnote 25; Kellenbenz, “Gli operatori economici italiani,” 333–57; Dini, “L’economia fiorentina,” 632–55; Budak, “I fiorentini nella Slavonia,” 681–95; Raukar, “I fiorentini in Dalmazia,” 657–80.

2 Huszti, *Olasz–magyar kereskedelmi kapcsolatok*, in particular Zsuzsa Teke’s studies on Florentine–Hungarian commercial relations: Teke, “Az 1427. évi firenzei catasto,” 42–49; idem, “Firenzei üzletemberek Magyarországon,” 129–51, 135–37; idem, “Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok,” 195–214; idem, “A firenzeiek vagyoni helyzete,” 55–59; Teke, “Operatori economici fiorentini in Ungheria,” 697–707; Draskóczy, “Olaszok,” 125–35; Draskóczy, “Adósjegyzék,” 93–113.

explore new aspects of these businessmen's strategies in Hungary. I also revisit some of the earlier research questions.³

My methodology is based on a comparative analysis carried out on two levels: a quantitative and qualitative one. The first is a generalized survey of the research questions from the whole data set collected in the form of a prosopographic database. The latter, the so-called micro level, consists of case studies of the activities of a few of the most characteristic and best documented families. This qualitative analysis is meant to function as a control for the results of the quantitative inquiry.⁴

A Word on the Sources

The prosopographic database primarily contains information from the fond of the *Florentine Catasto*, the documentation on the new, direct taxation system introduced in Florence in 1427.⁵ This is a corpus of fiscal documents, and it is homogeneous, unified, and extremely rich in information. Also, the Datini Archives of Prato were worth exploring, because a significant cluster of Prato businessmen were present in Central Europe.⁶ In addition, I examined the online *Regesta Imperii* and the digitized archival records and database of the Monasterium, looking in particular for information related to King Sigismund's Florentine noble retainers (*familiares*). The data yielded by the Hungarian archival material is much smaller in quantity.⁷ Nevertheless, I consider these records very important

3 Arany, "Success and Failure," 101–23; idem, "Prozopográfiai adattár," 483–549; idem, "Firenzei-magyar," 277–96; idem, "Generations," 133–40; idem, "Apák, fiúk," 157–91; idem, "Magyarországi hitelezésre," 165–77; Recently also see Prajda, "Florentine Merchant Companies". Prajda primarily reports the results of earlier scholarly literature, using the methodology of other recently published articles, but she also utilizes complementary information on the activity of the Panciatichi in Buda.

4 Arany, "Florentine Families." To be published with Solivagus. Forthcoming.

5 Archivio di Stato di Firenze (hereafter: ASF), Archivio del Catasto. On the Catasto see Herlihy and Klapisch-Zuber, *I toscani e le loro famiglie*. The Index of the study by Herlihy–Klapisch is accessible online: *Online Catasto of 1427*.

6 See the digitized online version of the Datini Archives. On the Archives see Dini, "L'Archivio Datini," 199–208. On Prato merchants in Central Europe see Fiumi, *Movimento urbanistico e classi sociali*, 433–35; Nuti, "Un mercante pratese in Ungheria," 1–8. On the Prato community in medieval Dubrovnik see also Bettarini, "I fiorentini all'estero ed il catasto del 1427," 37–64; idem, *La comunità pratese di Ragusa*; idem, "La diaspora dalmata," 41–56.

7 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (=MNL OL, National Archives of Hungary), Diplomatikai Levéltár (=DL, Medieval Charter Collection); MNL OL, Diplomatikai Fényképtár (=DF, Photograph Collection of Charters). The digitized version of the Medieval Charter Collection is accessible online: *Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica: A középkori Magyarország levéltári forrásainak adatbázisa* (Collectio

complementary evidence, since the study is also intended as a comparative and complementary survey of the available Florentine fiscal sources and the rather scattered Central European records. The latter records also provide valuable evidence concerning the Florentines' social and economic integration in this region, something not documented in the Italian archival material at all.⁸

This dataset, of course, could still be enlarged if further research were feasible in other rich holdings of the Florentine archives, and the project is still far from being complete. At present, the prosopographic database includes altogether 191 persons belonging to 100 Florentine families who worked or invested in Hungary. Out of this sample, 81 persons (43 families) appeared personally in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary on at least one occasion. The database contains 31 families who had several family members (altogether 94 persons) interested in business in the territory of the kingdom, of whom 77 businessmen personally worked in the region. Where there were several family members of the same generation (basically brothers or cousins), 10 families (17 persons) are listed along with another nine families (31 persons) who stayed and established themselves in the kingdom for at least two generations. The latter two groups, altogether 19 families with 48 persons, are particularly relevant for the analysis of their attitude towards integration within the socio-economic structures they encountered in the Hungarian Kingdom.⁹

Florentines in the Hungarian Financial Administration

Florentine businessmen engaged in an array of activities in the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary. In all probability, the most important and best documented of these was their participation in the financial administration. In the case of the businessmen who were active in administration, we have a more complete picture of their activity, because the *Florentine Catasto's* open account reported on the features of the complementary trading-banking operations, partners, and their social and economic backgrounds, and the majority of the scattered records preserved in Hungary and elsewhere in the region provide precious insights into their tasks as royal officers and noble retainers and their relations with local

Diplomatica Hungarica: The Database of the Archival Sources on Medieval Hungary). On the database see Rácz, "Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica: Medieval Hungary online," 423–45.

8 See an earlier, less detailed version of the database in Arany, "Prozopográfiai adattár." A more recent and extended version is included in Arany, "Florentine Families."

9 Arany, "Florentine Families," Appendix 1.

communities. Finally, these scattered sources sometimes corrected the picture given in the tax declarations on these merchants' rather poor business profits in the kingdom. Therefore, I first outline and analyze the chronology of the first appearances of these merchants and their main activities in the kingdom.

Their presence was mainly tied to the collection of papal incomes and the lease and exploitation of mines for precious metals and salt until the second half of the fifteenth century. Based on the prosopography, of the 35 Florentines settled for a longer period of time in Hungary, 30 individuals (19 families) worked in the financial administration. The administration of royal revenues was a traditional field of activity for Florentine businessmen working abroad.¹⁰ The written records reveal their presence in the financial administration of a number of countries, including England, France, the German lands, and Poland. This kind of activity differed in its possibilities and duties from the work of the collectors of papal revenues.¹¹ Unlike the collectors, who acted as part of an extended international network which also involved the great banking houses, the activity of the officers of the Hungarian royal chambers was based on their relationships as noble retainers to the chief officers, in other words, the counts of the chambers who employed them, and the leading office holders were also bound as servants to the king himself. The formation of royal monopolies required their prolonged presence in the country and their regular interaction with both the royal court and, in the case of second-level officers of the royal monopolies, also with members of the local nobility and urban clusters.¹² Thus, for someone to work in the royal financial administration, it was preferable that he was continuously present in person, and it also required greater flexibility and an ability to adapt to changing conditions and increased the probability of someone settling in the chamber centers. The administrative reforms introduced by King Sigismund in 1395–97 set the framework for a mixed system of appointed officers and entrepreneurs, who managed the centralized chamber system, contrary to the previous general lease system of the chambers.¹³ Most of the Florentine office holders were rather officers and financial experts than entrepreneurs, especially in the case of the salt chambers and the offices of the

10 On Florentines in the state finances of England, France, Tyrol, and Poland see: Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 230–36. For Germany, see Weissen, “Florentiner Kaufleute,” 368–69.

11 Dini, *Saggi su una economia-mondo*.

12 Weisz, “Entrate reali e politica economica,” 205–13.

13 Draskóczy, “A sóigazgatás 1397. esztendei reformjáról,” 289.

thirtieth custom of the kingdom.¹⁴ This is confirmed by the research on the financial background of officers of Florentine origin. The information gathered is particularly revealing, as it shows that most of them, in fact, did not dispose of larger amounts of capital.¹⁵ The importance of the salt chambers is best shown by the keen participation of these businessmen in the proffered positions under the leadership of Filippo di Stefano Scolari.¹⁶ This, however, is not reflected in the *Florentine Catasto* entries, in which little mention is made on shipments of salt, an item generally considered a regular ware traded over long distances. Hungarian sources, on the other hand, include mentions of officers often being paid with salt, which had to be put to market.¹⁷

Many of the businessmen in the table of officers of mining and minting chambers also held offices in the salt administration on occasion.¹⁸ Sometimes, they were responsible for several offices in the same royal monopoly or even managed different monopolies at the same time. The counts of mining and minting chambers also had to fulfil local jurisdictional tasks. In a few cases, members of the same family acted in one another's stead in the same office with royal permission, particularly in the case of the offices of salt chambers. Generally speaking, a restricted circle of leading officers of the salt and mining chambers replaced one another in the most important offices from year to year. This mobility also confirms that this replacement represented a shift in the top positions of the financial administration, and not new lease contracts.¹⁹ The only striking exceptions are the members of the Manini family, who focused almost exclusively on salt administration. This also limited their mobility, which remained confined geographically to Transylvania and the Maramureş region, where most of the salt mines were found. Transylvania seems distinctive as, at the moment, only one Florentine officer is known to have shifted offices between the salt administration and the mining and minting chambers found in that region.²⁰

14 MNL OL DF 269 226. Jan. 24, 1388. Quoted in Weisz, *Vásárok és lerakatok*, 91.

15 See also Arany, "Versatile profecto", forthcoming; Arany, "Florentine Families," Table 3.

16 Wenzel, *Ozorai Pipo*; Engel, "Ozorai Pipo," 53–89; on his offices see idem, *Magyarország világi archontológiája*, II/180. Recently see Prajda, "The Florentine Scolari Family," 513–33.

17 MNL OL DL 55 413. September 28, 1445.

18 Arany, "Florentine Families," Tables 2–4, 44–46, 48–50. Recently also Arany, "Versatile profecto," Appendix, Tables 1–3.

19 Arany, "Versatile profecto," 6.

20 See Antonio di Francesco Zati MNL OL DL 65 058. Feb. 14, 1444; MNL OL DL 36 407. Dec. 4, 1455. Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 126, 130.

Also, the theory of business competition between southern German and Italian, mainly Florentine businessmen in the royal monopoly of precious metal mining at the turn of the fifteenth century (a theory further reinforced by the events between 1402–1403, which led to the expulsion of the Italian inhabitants of Buda and the seizure of their properties) needs to be reconsidered.²¹ The image of strong conflicts of interests should be revisited, particularly for Buda, in the light of new findings.²² Buda had a considerable Florentine community at the time. Citizenship in the city of Buda was also necessary for the Florentines working for the Buda minting chamber and trading in the first half of the fifteenth century. Furthermore, after 1410 Buda became the center of the royal financial administration (chambers), following King Sigismund's centralizing reforms. The database also contains information on the appearance of southern Germans with Florentines in the royal administration, in particular on a count of the Buda minting chamber, Michael Nadler, a Buda burgher and judge and a member of the leading urban elite of southern German origin.²³ He shared this office with Giovanni Noffri.²⁴ In any case, King Sigismund's preference to employ Florentine and southern German financial experts was probably mainly motivated by his desire to make the existing administration more efficient and draw as much liquid assets as possible from the royal monopolies.

The Buda Partnerships

The evidence concerning trade practices of Florentines in Hungary is much less representative in Hungarian archival material than the information on financial administration. Thus, the set of data provided in the 1427 *Florentine Catasto* of three Florentine companies with Buda as their principal seat (for the Carnesecchi–Fronte, the Melanesi, and the Panciatichi firms) is essential to any effort to obtain a more complete image of their activity and also of Buda's position, at least in a regional context. Due to the array of information and the central position of the three partnerships in the business network of Florentines working in Hungary, social aspects and business forms are also addressed in

21 On the competition between Florentines and southern Germans see: von Stromer, *Oberdeutsche Hochfinanz 1350–1450*; idem, "Das Zusammenspiel Oberdeutscher und Florentiner Geldleute," 79–87; Mályusz, *Zsigmond király uralma Magyarországon*, 162–64; 175–79; in German see idem, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn*. On the 1402–1403 events in Buda, see Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 262.

22 Draskóczy, "Kamarai jóvedelem," 158–59; Arany, "Success and Failure," 101–23.

23 ASF, Catasto 1427, 46. Tomo I. fol. 654r.

24 Arany, "Versatile profecto," Appendix, Table 1.

detail. The members of the partnerships working in Hungary mostly ranked among the merchant-bankers of middling wealth in Florence. Although they worked in a less developed region, they continued involving external capital, as was general for Florentine partnerships. Their start-up and working capital rank them among the average-size partnerships in Florence.

The proportion of Hungarian and Florentine partners and clients and the volume of business could only be addressed in the case of the Carnesecchi–Fronte and Melanesi companies. Among the Florentines listed in their declarations, one most frequently comes across mention of their fellow countrymen working or investing in Buda and in Hungary in the period covered by the records. It is no surprise, of course, that the sums involved in Hungarian business by Florentines were decidedly higher than those sums, mostly debts, listed by the names of Hungarian partners. In fact, comparing the two latter Buda companies, the most striking difference seems to be with respect to the proportion of Hungarian partners and clients with the Florentines. The lists of the Melanesi brothers reveal fewer Hungarians compared to the Carnesecchi–Fronte company. The latter firm lists mainly members of the Hungarian lay aristocracy and prelates among their debtors and creditors, in some cases with larger sums, usually loans (3–400 fl), by their names. The debts and loans of the Melanesis’ Hungarian partners varied in their volume: from small loans up to 100–200 fl. The lists reveal extensive cooperation with some prominent burghers of Buda, among them Michael Nadler (144 fl) and Gregory Ferenci Gubacsi (136 fl), who was interested in cattle trade and also served as the town judge of Pest.²⁵ They also met the needs and accepted various commissions of the guests, diplomats, and members of the royal court.²⁶ Some of the foreigners staying at the court of Sigismund can be identified in the *Florentine Catasto* lists, including the Genoese Bartolomeo Mosca, legate of the duke of Milan, and Peter, the first duke of Coimbra (1392–1449), son of King John I of Portugal.²⁷

The most important client of the Florentine investors and partnerships, although quite often identified as the worst one in their tax declarations, was King Sigismund himself, though his wife, Queen Barbara, is also mentioned

25 Kubinyi, “Budapest története a későbbi középkorban,” 72–73; Draskóczy, “Kamarai jövedelem,” 159.

26 There is a list of foreign persons sojourning at the royal court of Buda from 1412. MNL OL DL 39 277. Published in *Zsigmondkori Oklevéltár* (hereafter ZsO) III/no. 2224. May 1412.

27 ASF, Catasto 1427, 46. Tomo I, fol. 654r.

a few times in the lists.²⁸ The constant need for liquidity is well-known and fairly comprehensible in the case of Sigismund of Luxemburg, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and king of Hungary. On the other hand, the ruler's support and his commissions were of utmost importance to these international merchant-bankers, though his changing political relations with Florence rendered circumstances unstable for them at times. The direct relation some of them (including representatives of the three stable Buda companies) managed to achieve by entering into the ruler's service as his noble retainers notably increased the business potential of the region for them. Not surprisingly, agents of the two Buda partnerships were granted royal support for their activity in the kingdom.²⁹ Nevertheless, as was the case among the Florentines in England prior to the bankruptcies, some of Sigismund's "bankers," like the Melanesi, faced serious losses against other Florentine investors involved in the Hungarian business, in all probability partly due to delayed or neglected rendering of the loans provided for the king.³⁰ The ruler seems to have compensated them for their losses in some way or another, but their legal situation back home was worsened by these circumstances. The rather negative, somewhat one-sided picture of him as a client in the *Florentine Catasto's* open accounts can probably be ascribed to these difficulties.³¹ However, some Hungarian archival records also preserved mentions of transactions in which the debts owed to the Florentines were settled by King Sigismund.³² According to these records, the payments were usually fulfilled by pledging royal revenues, like that of the yearly gift of royal free towns, to settle smaller loans, or salt was allocated for the settling

28 Teke, "Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok," 202. MNL OL DL 71 750. Sept. 30, 1413. Mentioned also in Draskóczy, "Kapy András," 161–62. See also Arany, "Generations," 133–40.

29 See the grant issued by King Sigismund in Buda, Oct. 30, 1423 to Filippo di Simone Capponi and Zanobi Panciatichi employed by the Panciatichi Company and Antonio di Piero Fronte for the Carnesecchi–Fronte company. See RI XI, 1 no. 5667, in *Regesta Imperii Online*.

30 Arany, "Florentine Families," 73.

31 See the quotations on King Sigismund's being a bad debtor in Arany, "Florentine Families," 82–83.

32 A 1413 record issued by Sigismund and preserved only in an eighteenth-century copy offers an interesting example of such transactions. Three Florentine merchants mentioned in the document, a certain "*Balzarth filius condam Iohannis Fresingii, Nicolaus Baldovinij, Philippus de Palacio*," provided a loan of eight thousand florins to the king, who, to settle the account, ordered Andreas Kapy, deputy count of the salt chamber, to consign the Florentines salt in payment. MNL OL DL 71 750. Sept. 30, 1413. Mentioned also in Draskóczy, "Kapy András," 161–62. For Florentine sources on the merchants mentioned in the record see Arany, "Florentine Families," 86.

of larger loans. In other cases possessions, sometimes including towns, were pledged with the restraint of redemption.³³

Among the Florentine investors present with their capital in Hungary, a few businessmen of medium or higher wealth were identified.³⁴ Their investments were distinctive, as they were present in Hungary with different investment forms at the same time: a common pattern is that, in addition to investing in the Buda companies, they apparently also employed their own agent in the kingdom.³⁵ As we saw above, the aim may have been to keep the proportion of long term and more liquid investments balanced.

The highest ranking Florentine investor entrepreneurs and partnerships in the Hungarian market disposed of sizeable amounts of capital.³⁶ They were investing in the Florentine companies of Buda, but their investments made in Hungary were not high compared to their funds in other, more developed geographical regions. Hungary attracted them with its stock of precious metals and salt, and may also have served as a secondary market to attenuate investment risks. In case of disputes abroad between Florentine citizens, they could turn for legal decision to the court of the Mercanzia of Florence.³⁷ This was also true for Florentine business partners in connection with their common business ventures in Hungary. The Florentines were also supported by their urban government. In cases involving business problems in foreign lands, Florentine diplomacy moved

33 Already in the fourteenth century, Louis of Bavaria and Charles IV followed the same financial path. On imperial finances and the pledge of towns etc., see Isenmann, “Reichsfinanzen und Reichssteuern,” 1–17. The same policy may be observed in Hungary during King Sigismund’s reign, see Ulrich, “Geldpolitik und Geldverkehr,” 121–22. See also Incze, “My Kingdom in Pledge”; Lederer, *A középkori pénzügytelek*.

34 Giovanni di messer Niccolò Falcucci, ASF, Catasto 1427, 53. fol.1094r–1097r; Giovanni di Iacopo Baldovini – Giovanni di Iacopo dal Borgo – Zanobi di Piero di Monte, ASF, Catasto 1427, 62. fol. 342r-v.

35 Antonio di Filippo di Piero Rinieri hired Bernardo di Sandro Talani, who brought and merchandized luxury goods in the kingdom on a regular basis. Antonio di Filippo di Piero Rinieri, ASF, Catasto 1427, 60. fol. 52r–58r. Tommaso Borghini’s employee was Filippo Frescobaldi, who on his turn worked together with Gianozzo di Vanni Cavalcanti, a fellow countryman active in Hungary too. From time to time, these investors sent cargoes also to the stable Florentine companies of Buda. Tommaso di Domenico Borghini, ASF, Catasto 1427, 29. fol. 666r; Filippo di Amerigo Frescobaldi, ASF, Catasto 1427, 17. fol. 577r, fol. 775r.

36 Domenico di Antonio Allegri, ASF, Catasto 1427, 46. fol. 453r–457r; Giovanni di Bicci di Medici, ASF, Catasto 1427, 49. fol. 1165r, fol. 1167r; Niccolò and Tommaso di Lorenzo Soderini ASF, Catasto 1427, 25. fol. 456r–458v; Ridolfo Peruzzi and compagni banchieri ASF, Catasto 1427, 35.1352r; Francesco and Simone Tornabuoni, ASF, Catasto 1427, 46. fol. 901v, fol. 905r, fol. 906r.

37 ASF, Archivio della Mercanzia (hereafter: ASF, Mercanzia). On the *Mercanzia* see Bonolis, *La giurisdizione della Mercanzia*; Astorri, *La Mercanzia a Firenze*.

on behalf of its citizens.³⁸ Of course, when the ruler was the debtor, these efforts were not always effective.

The participation of some medium and small-scale investors, mostly belonging to the kin group or neighborhood of other Florentine businessmen working in the kingdom, is a clear indication of solidarity within the kinship network, a strategy particularly characteristic in Florentine economic context explicitly in the cluster of medium and small-scale entrepreneurs.³⁹

Transaction Types and Volumes

Another question addressed by the research concerns the volume of these transactions, or more precisely, whether the rate of commercial and money credits is also reflected in their volume. Of course, Hungary lacked intensive circulation of money. As was observed in the analysis of the transaction types, commercial credit was more prevalent than money credit.⁴⁰ Both credit types were risky due to lack of necessary capital on the side of most of the potential local Hungarian or German business partners. Interests, however, were clearly higher than in Italy in the same period, which made such transactions favorable despite the relatively high risks they involved.⁴¹ The high number of Florentine crediting partners can mainly be ascribed to the general tendency of diminishing risks not really by contract enforcement, but mainly by making a greater number of lower investments in different companies working in different regions at the same time. Also, the fact that their clients were primarily members of the lay aristocracy or part of the royal court (including the ruler himself) implies

38 See the report by the Florentine legate to King Sigismund, Piero di Luigi Guicciardini, on the reprisals against Florentines in Buda, MNL OL DF 289 088. April 21, 1428, and on Guicciardini's efforts to mediate peace negotiations between Venice and King Sigismund, see RI XI,2 n. 7148, in *Regesta Imperii Online*. See also ASF, Signori–Carteggi, Missive, I. Cancelleria 33. fol. 116–17. Letter by King Sigismund to the Florentine Government on the detention of Florentines staying in Buda, denying that financial reasons lay behind the arrests and confiscation of goods. ZsO III/no. 3131. April 19. 1404. See the answer of the Florentine *Comune* to the king *ibid.* no. 3304. July 11, 1404; see also Dini, *Saggi su una economia-mondo*; Teke, "Firenze külpolitikája," 559–68.

39 Arany, "Apák, fiúk," 170–71. On cooperation among Florentines abroad see Bruscoli, "The Network of Florentine Merchant-Banking Companies." See also Tanzini and Tognetti, "Mercatura è arte".

40 Arany, "Magyarországi hitelezésre," 171.

41 Concerning credits, interest rates around 10% were generally adopted in Hungary, a rather high premium compared to the situation in Italy, where it only run to 5–7%, which probably made it attractive to invest in the region, but of course it involved major business risks. Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 438–39. Melis, *Documenti*, 77; on the interest rates of deposits see Spufford, *Money and its Use*, 261. For more on Hungary in that period see Lederer, *A középkori pénzügyletek*, 67.

that they needed to gather major capital, be it money credit or, in most cases, commercial credit, and thus a broader base of partners and external investors provided the required assets.

The number of transactions carried out between Florentine–Hungarian business partners compared to that of Florentine–Florentine partners participating in business in Hungary confirms at the outset the predominance of the latter (44 transactions versus 237). This can only partly be explained by the motivation of Florentines to hide the transactions that were difficult for the otherwise very thorough Florentine taxation authorities to verify. Clearly, references to Hungarian or local partners in Hungary could be easily avoided if the Florentines chose to do so, blaming differing regional uses of contracting business and the general lack of literacy in trade in Hungary.⁴² This is somewhat contested by information found in the correspondence of Florentine chamber officers among themselves in Hungary, because here one finds references to debtors and even mention of accountant books.⁴³ However, one must also take into account that the data used by the Florentine fiscal authorities were provided primarily by Florentine investors in Florence whose direct business partners were mainly Florentines working in Hungary and who, therefore, rarely had detailed information concerning their partners' local business contacts, nor presumably considered it worthwhile to enter these data into the tax returns. Only in a few cases, particularly in the tax returns of Florentine entrepreneurs who employed their own agents in the region, are names of Hungarian persons listed, although usually they are registered jointly as *Hungarian debtors*.⁴⁴

To sum up, I identified a rather restricted circle of local partners in the records. Clearly, the number of Florentine partners collaborating to meet the demand for luxury goods among a narrow circle of local clients (mainly members of the lay aristocracy and the ecclesiastical elite) was higher than that of the local partners. Also, transaction types need to be addressed, although again in a rather limited way, because details concerning transactions are sporadic in the source material. Altogether, the information on the Florentines' crediting activity found

42 Portata of Giovanni di Niccoló (Falcucci): ASF, Catasto, 53. fol. 1096v. See also Arany, "Florentine Families," 15.

43 Letter by Agnolo de Bardi to Papi Manini: MNL OL DL 44 496. Nov. 29, 1447: MNL OL DL 44 495. Dec. 26, 1447: "*e pero voi avete chosta il libro de debitori*." One of the few surviving records on Florentines' local crediting activity in Hungary, in addition to the Buda partnerships' lists, is the debtor lists of the Manini, compiled in 1463, see Draskóczy, "Adósjegyzék," 93–113.

44 Domenico di Antonio Allegri, ASF Catasto 1427, filza 46. Tomo I. fol. 457r. "*debitori levati dal libro h perduti i quali non stimo niente*."

in the Florentine tax returns provides hitherto unknown details both on the volume of cargo and the business and banking techniques applied among the Florentines to supply the Hungarian market. The general lack of references to bills of exchange in the Florentine sources (and a similar absence of references in the Hungarian records) and the extremely few banking operations also clearly indicate the limits to international trade and banking, given the lower level of development in the region.⁴⁵ At this point, however, one must also emphasize Venice's role as a banking center and seat of branches of Florentine banking houses, which basically covered the transfer of ecclesiastical revenues, a traditional business of Florentines in Europe.⁴⁶

Florentines and Southern Germans in Buda: A Comparative Analysis

The gradually developing database showed the clear regional geographical preferences of the Florentines in the Kingdom of Hungary and in Central Europe on a wider, regional scale, and thus led to the conclusion that the presence itself of the Florentines and also the shifts in the intensity of their presence in the regional hubs of Central Europe may be of interest and would yet position the Kingdom of Hungary, and especially Buda, within a regional context. For this reason, I examine the main features of Florentine diasporas in the region, with particular emphasis on Buda.⁴⁷

Italian merchants in Buda aimed to supply the demand for luxury goods for the whole Hungarian market in this period.⁴⁸ In Buda by the late fourteenth century, however, they confronted a new, fully integrated German elite (mainly coming from Nuremberg, although there were Buda burghers from Basel,

45 Arany, "Magyarországi hitelezésre," 175.

46 On the role of Venice and the Venetian branches of Florentine banking houses see de Roover, *The Rise and Decline of the Medici Bank*, 240–54; Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 193; Mueller and Lane, *The Venetian Money Market*.

47 Arany, "Firenzei-magyar," 291–96. On medieval Buda see Kubinyi, *Tanulmányok Budapest középkori történetéről*; Rady, *Medieval Buda*; Végh, *Buda város*; idem, "Buda: the Multiethnic Capital," 89–101. See recently Nagy, Rady, Szende and Vadas, ed. *Medieval Buda in Context*. For other Hungarian towns see Petrovics, "Foreign Ethnic Groups," 67–87; on the linguistic aspect of multiethnic Hungarian towns see Szende, "Integration," 205–33; Arany, "Buda mint uralkodói székhely," 153–70.

48 Kubinyi, "Budai kereskedők," 351; for an example of a Florentine *accomandita* partnership founded by Lorenzo and Filippo Strozzi and Piero Pitti, in its first phase operating only in Buda with a capital of 1900 fl, and then in a second phase extending the trading activity to the whole kingdom from Buda with a capital of 3000 fl. see Dini, "L'economia fiorentina," 639–40. See also recently Draskóczy, "Commercial Contacts," 278–99.

Passau, Vienna etc. in lesser numbers), which in the meantime took over the leadership of the town. They replaced the former, fourteenth-century urban elites, which had been rather passive in long-distance trade but were at the same time eager to integrate into the Hungarian nobility in the most important urban offices.⁴⁹

As shown above, the theory of conflict among German and Italian merchants in the town has been interpreted as the result of business competition. However, in the context of Buda, the ambitions and business targets of the two ethnic groups and the strategies they developed to meet them seem to have been complementary rather than contrasting when it came to trade.

From the information gathered so far, it seems that rather than competing with each other, the Italians and southern Germans of Buda divided the fields of operation among themselves. The Germans' activity mainly focused on the sale of lower-value wools, even those coming from northern Italy (Verona), whereas trade in luxury goods and prestigious textiles was "left" to the Italian businessmen with major financial potential. The Florentines were able to provide the necessary capital for such trade by involving homeland investors, using well-developed banking techniques, and, finally, taking advantage of the extensive business networks within which they operated. They were also active in providing large loans, not only to the ruler, but to the members of the Hungarian aristocracy and to foreigners visiting the Hungarian royal court, as one sees in the case of the Buda companies.⁵⁰ The sources on their business activity reveal the use of occasional banking services in the form of assignments and bills of exchange carried out mainly for prominent foreigners sojourning at the court.

Both Germans and Italians in Buda were interested in the operations related to royal monopolies.⁵¹ Here too, the sources indicate cooperation among members of the two ethnic groups in Buda. The Italians still focused closely on the business of the sale of copper and salt and on the lease of the Slavonian thirtieth customs. All the officials operating in this field were noble retainers, that is, servants of the king, assessed usually as a rather medieval feature of the financial administration,⁵² which implied a personal relationship to King

49 Kubinyi, "A budai német patriciátus," 492–98.

50 Arany, "Success and Failure," 114–17.

51 Kubinyi, "A budai német patriciátus," 492–98; Teke, "Firenzei üzletemberek," 135, 139; idem, "Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok," 195.

52 Kubinyi, "A kincstári személyzet," 26.

Sigismund of Luxemburg. Out of 12 noble retainers of Florentine origin, six certainly had Buda citizenship as well.

According to the Buda Town Law (*Ofner Stadtrecht*), retail trade or shop keeping in the territory of the town was only granted to the citizens of Buda, who also paid a tax for the right to sell merchandize.⁵³ This norm, which most probably existed in earlier decades, made urban citizenship essential for wealthy foreign merchants from the late fourteenth century onwards. Therefore, most of both the Italians and southern Germans in Buda acquired citizenship of the town. As citizenship required possession of real estate, many of them also had houses, gardens, vineyards etc. within the town walls. Looking only at the Florentines, in the 1420s, at least 30 businessmen (belonging to 25 families) were Buda citizens based on the prosopographic database.

For the German elite of Buda, however, real estate may also have played a notable role in trade transactions. As these families frequently lacked the necessary capital for long distance trade in wool or cattle, these possessions may have also served as mortgage items for business operations. Although the medieval archives of Buda were destroyed, the existence of so-called *Verbotbücher* seems to be plausible based on analogy with other towns in the region engaged in the same sort of trade.⁵⁴ Such operations were, in fact, inserted in the *Verbotbücher* of Pozsony (Pressburg, today Bratislava, Slovakia) and Vienna in order to cover the potential losses of the investors.⁵⁵

The Germans tended to integrate into the local urban community. However, even their integration seems to be somewhat odd, as they were not keen to marry into Buda's patrician families, whether they were from the former German elites of Regensburg origin or the developing Hungarian elites. In fact, the Germans preferred to establish family ties with members of the German elite in other Hungarian towns, particularly those involved in their business network, such as Pozsony, Vienna, Crakow, and especially Nuremberg, their hometown. In this respect, the southern Germans' presence and social network has a marked regional character in Central Europe.⁵⁶ As opposed to their marriage policies, the

53 Mollay, *Das Ofner Stadtrecht*, see also the Hungarian edition of the Town Law in Blazovich and Schmidt, *Buda város jogkönyve*. On the conditions of trade in the town see Mollay, *Ofner Stadtrecht* III. § 68, the paragraphs on retail sale *ibid.* §. 77, §. 80–8, §. 84.

54 Kenyeres, "The Fate of the Medieval Archives," 57.

55 Tózsá-Rigó, "A Pozsonyi Tiltáskönyv," 1135–86; *idem*, "A pozsonyi gazdasági elit," 329–48; Kubinyi, "A nürnbergi Hallerek," 705–42, see also in German, *idem*, "Die Nürnberger Haller in Ofen," 80–128; *idem*, "A Pemfflingerek Bécsben és Budán," 743–57.

56 Kubinyi, "Budai és pesti polgárok," 517–20; Szende, "Integration," 206–07.

members of the southern German elite in Buda were very active politically. In fact, they were present in the town council and almost “monopolized” the office of the town judge in 1403–39.⁵⁷

In the case of the southern Germans, not much changed over the course of the fifteenth century: their presence in Buda and in the economic life of the kingdom was continuous, with a greater number of newcomers observed in the 1470s. Later, the southern German trade houses, such as the Welser and Fugger from Augsburg, also established permanent agents in Buda.⁵⁸ These German firms with their substantial capital finally set up real competition for the Italians, first in the field of tithe collection, which they took over in the Habsburg territories from the Italians,⁵⁹ and then in Hungary particularly in the management of mining chambers.⁶⁰ The Germans of Buda also provided supplies for the royal court on some occasions, although still at a lower volume compared to the Italians according to András Kubinyi, who analyzed the average value of their shipments in the accountancy of the royal court.⁶¹

Italians, in contrast, even if they were wealthy merchants or their established agents living and working in Buda for decades, rarely married into the local urban community. Most of them had left their families in their homeland and did not settle permanently in Buda.⁶² Accordingly, they did not directly participate in Buda’s urban government either, but tried to maintain good relations with the leading German and, later, also Hungarian merchants of the town.⁶³ In the few cases of marriage alliances into local families, they mainly chose spouses from the nobility.

In any case, Buda seems to be the only Central European center which was targeted by flows of both the southern German and Florentine merchant diasporas from the last decades of the fourteenth century and throughout the fifteenth century. Therefore Buda can be perceived as a kind of borderline regional urban center, where direct contacts and on occasion even cooperation were documented between these two foreign merchant communities, which

57 Kubinyi, “A budai német patriciátus,” 490.

58 Buda burghers represented Nuremberg firms. Marcus of Nuremberg, for instance, represented the Flextorfer–Kegler–Kromer–Zenner firm as early as the end of fourteenth century. These firms, however, did not focus their investments on the area. Blanchard, “Egyptian Specie Markets,” 392.

59 Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 198.

60 Kubinyi, “Budai kereskedők,” 349; Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 324.

61 Kubinyi, “Budai kereskedők,” 338.

62 Arany, “Generations,” 133–40.

63 Kubinyi, “A nürnbergi Hallerek,” 714; Rady, *Medieval Buda*, 89.

dominated regional trade and which did not appear to have had direct contacts elsewhere, except for Venice.⁶⁴

Although Venice with its Fondaco dei Tedeschi and large Florentine community could and did function as such a trade hub, the *Serenissima*, as an intermediary center for long-distance trade, does not seem to have been considered sufficient to seek, find, and finally cover the increasing demands and possibilities provided by Central Europe during the reign of King Sigismund. One must also consider the city's serious conflicts of interest with King Sigismund. Buda, in my understanding, must have benefited greatly from this controversy. The Florentine diaspora in Venice (the only institutionalized Florentine colony in the region), therefore, played a crucial role in promoting the area's business possibilities, and the Venetian branches of Florentine banking houses provided the necessary banking facilities for trade in the region.⁶⁵

Florentines in Central Europe

At this point of my inquiry, I look at the social economic patterns of the presence of Florentines in Central Europe in a relatively broad time framework, lasting from the early fourteenth century up to the end of sixteenth century. Except for Venice, no institutionalized Florentine colony seems to have been established in the region in the period in question, and the records indicate very few cases of exogamy or integration.⁶⁶ Also, geographically Central Europe is considered here for the purposes of this investigation in a rather broad sense to include Ragusa (today Dubrovnik, Croatia) (which during most of fifteenth century was under nominal Hungarian overlordship and which had a significant Florentine community within its walls) to the south, Poland (primarily Crakow) to the north, and Wroclaw, Vienna, and Nuremberg to the west.⁶⁷

Ethnic provenance appearing in urban toponyms, like the *vicus latinorum*, *platea italicorum* etc., was present in several towns, although the case of Buda shows that this alone must not be overestimated as a crucial indicator for ethnic clustering of Italians and particularly Florentines in late medieval urban centers

64 Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 193; Mueller and Lane, *The Venetian Money Market*.

65 Mueller, "Mercanti e imprenditori fiorentini," 29–60; Tognetti, "I mercanti-banchieri fiorentini," 351–56; See also Clarke, "The Identity of the Expatriate," 384–408.

66 Masi, *Statuti delle colonie fiorentine*, XXII.

67 On Wroclaw see Weczerka, "Breslaus Zentralität," 245–62.

of Central Europe.⁶⁸ However, it does suggest a relatively dense presence of Italians in the given urban environment in a certain (probably early) phase of urban evolution. Therefore, other factors, like use of language, political representation in urban community etc., must be evaluated as possible indicators of a more precise assessment of the possible presence of Florentine or Italian diasporas in the regional centers.

In contrast with Buda, the Latin community of Zagreb (also an important hub for Italians along the main inland trade route), which had formed earlier (beginning at the end of the thirteenth century) and was made up primarily of Italians (mainly Florentines) disposing of lesser assets (and including many artisans), seems to have been clearly identified as an ethnic cluster within the urban community.⁶⁹ The Latins of Zagreb also aspired to acquire and acquired urban political representation as the town's *Latin nation* in a peak period, which lasted from the last decades of the fourteenth century to the first half of the fifteenth century. This may be interpreted as a conscious endeavor on their part to participate and also to integrate into the local urban community, which is further confirmed by the higher number of marriage alliances with local families from other ethnic clusters of the town. Of course, limits to a comparative analysis again are set by the available sources, which differ both in their quality and quantity from place to place.

The notion of the Florentine diaspora as a diaspora's diaspora based on geographical distance (Buda–Zagreb–and ultimately Venice) is an intriguing idea. However, one must take into consideration that in both Venice and Buda rather large-scale and medium-scale Florentine merchants were present, whereas Zagreb's Italian community hosted mainly Florentines of a lower social and economic standing, more keen on integrating, particularly compared to the Florentines of Buda. Of course, there was a number of Florentines who figured in both or all three of these urban centers. Thus, their mobility can also be understood as a distinctive feature of a diaspora within a diaspora, but this question needs further research.⁷⁰

Another point in favor of Buda's rise as a regional trade hub can be ascribed to King Sigismund and the royal court's definite establishment in the city. When addressing the factor played by the royal court in Buda, one must also emphasize Sigismund of Luxemburg's rise to the position of emperor. Thus, Buda

68 Végh, *Buda város*, I, 245–47.

69 Budak, "I fiorentini nella Slavonia," 683; Škreblić, "Ethnic Groups," 32–33.

70 Ember, Ember, and Skoggard, *Encyclopedia of Diasporas*, vol. 1, 559–60.

hosted the imperial aula from time to time and became a European political-representational center and thus must have generated an increasing presence of Florentines in the city. Neither Vienna, nor Prague, nor any other town in Central Europe assumed a position of such prominence in the fifteenth century. Buda also disposed of an international trade deposit and market hall, a *Nyder lag* as it was called in the *Ofner Stadtrecht*.⁷¹ The town's staple rights, however, were from time to time weakened by similar privileges acquired by neighboring towns along the main trade routes in the early fifteenth century. The information on the three Florentine partnerships with seats in Buda in the 1420s (analyzed at length in the previous paragraphs) makes Buda the only Central European trading center with such an intensive Florentine presence in this period. The next town to host a Florentine company was Nuremberg (the earliest reference to this dates back to 1512).⁷² The presence of Florentine partnerships in Crakow also dates to the sixteenth century.⁷³

Social and Economic Strategies of Florentine Families Working in Hungary

Eight families (Panciatichi, Buondelmonti, Manini, Attavanti, Melanesi, del Rosso, Lamberteschi, Capponi) were selected for the qualitative survey for a number of reasons. First, they represent a cross-section of Florentine merchant families from the perspectives of wealth and social standing.⁷⁴ The Panciatichi family was taxed as one of the wealthiest families in Florence at the time. The Buondelmonti family had a high social status but a somewhat weakened financial situation at the time of their stay in Hungary. The Manini and Attavanti families were the last families recorded in the *Florentine Catasto* of 1427 as *miserabile*, with no taxable wealth at all. I focused on the role that the closer and extended family played in the activity of the Florentine businessmen working in the Kingdom of Hungary in the first half of the fifteenth century. I also investigated the extent and characteristics of cooperation among the members of a family belonging to both the same and consecutive generations, and I compared these features

71 Mollay, *Ofner Stadtrecht*, vol 1, § 65; Benda, "A kereskedelem épületei," 33–40. See lately also Weisz, *Vásárok és lerakatok*; Skorka, "A bécsi lerakat," 1–16; Benda, "Merchants, Markets and Shops," 255–78.

72 Bruscoli, "Drappi di seta," 359–94; Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 198; Weissen, "Florentiner Kaufleute," 363–401; idem, "I mercanti italiani," 161–76; on Cologne see Gramulla, *Handelsbeziehungen*; Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 198.

73 Mazzei, *Itinera mercatorum*, 20–28. See also Johanek, "Vorwort," 11–12; Carter, *Trade and Urban Development*.

74 See Arany, "Generations," and idem, "Apák, fiúk."

to the business organization of Florentine merchant families operating in their homeland.

In families involved in trade and credit activity in the kingdom, very often members of two generations cooperated. The father was the commissioner and owner of the goods, while the sons played the roles of agents, travelers, or resident agents. This was true in the case of both the Lamberteschi and the Panciatichi families. In the case of the Panciatichi partnership, the extended family was represented by Filippo di Simone Capponi, Giovanni di Bartolomeo's Panciatichi's brother-in-law, who worked as a salaried agent settled in Buda.⁷⁵ Another example of members of a Florentine extended family jointly running a company in Hungary is provided by the Melanesi brothers, Simone and Tommaso. They resided in Buda, but were in partnership with their uncle, Filippo di Filippo, who remained in Florence. They also involved other members of the wider lineage, men like Melanese di Ridolfo Melanesi, in their business operations.⁷⁶

Altogether, the solidarity of the Florentine families was realized in different ways in Hungary compared to their homeland, where business competition was much more intense. As the case of the Attavanti family shows, the solidarity and cooperation of the family found manifestation in several different ways. The separate fiscal declarations of the brothers Cristofano and Leonardo suggest two separate households. However, the fact that the younger children and the widowed mother also moved to Hungary suggests that probably both brothers supported them, and that the two separate fiscal households still formed an integral economic unit.⁷⁷

The examples cited above show brothers staying together in a common household with their families and apparently running their business together and sharing the profit, the financial potential, and also the risks, regardless of their actual financial situation. This pattern is very different from the practice of merchant families operating in Florence. The few cases of integration, on the other hand, show full adaptation to the local community, be it urban or noble. In cases of integration into the nobility, there clearly was a tendency to give up previous activities, linked mainly to financial administration.

75 See footnote no. 29.

76 ASF, Catasto 1427, 175. fol. 273r.

77 ASF, Catasto 1427, 45. fol. 706r; ASF, Catasto 1427, 42. fol. 313v.

In the very few cases of ennoblement, the relationships of businessmen to the king and the types of services rendered to King Sigismund were crucial.⁷⁸ In the case of families acquiring nobility and estates, their joint possession also secured the perpetuation of the estate for subsequent generations of the kin group, even if one of the ennobled branches became extinct. The case study proposed on Niccoló Buondelmonti's settlement and integration into the Hungarian landed aristocracy in 1440, long after Scolari's death and also after King Sigismund's death, proves that the Buondelmonti kin group's success cannot be ascribed solely to their family ties to the Scolari. The Hungarian branch of the Florentine Buondelmonti family, however, became extinct after two generations, but the large estates in their possession from the Lévai and Treutel families were subject to long legal debates between the son of Peter Lévai Cseh on one side and Paul Herceg of Szekcső on the other.⁷⁹

On the basis of our present knowledge, the majority of Florentines who settled in the Kingdom of Hungary lived in urban society. Leaving aside Buda for the moment, other towns can be identified as permanent or temporary residences of Florentines in the first half of the fifteenth century, among them mostly mining, minting, and trade centers, particularly Transylvanian Saxon towns. The Transylvanian towns, particularly the Saxon towns, which enjoyed notable autonomy from the late fourteenth century onwards, seem to have offered a particularly favorable context for urban integration for Florentines in Hungary.⁸⁰ Thus, a few of them established themselves and integrated into local families of local leading elites through marriage in the Saxon communities of these towns. They had houses and estates in the most important local towns, and in a few cases we can trace the activity of their descendants in the area through the fifteenth century.⁸¹ Two of them, Cristoforo Italicus and Zanobi de Florentia, counts of the salt chambers at Vízakna (today Ocna Sibiului, Romania), were selected as examples of successful integration into urban community in Hungary. This time, the Hungarian source material served as the point of departure.⁸² These records at least revealed that they were brothers,

78 In addition to Scolari, also Noffri di Bardo's sons, the Noffri brothers, the Buondelmonti and the records on the Manini were explored. Engel, *Királyi hatalom*, 58–60; Engel, "Temetkezések," 627; Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 131.

79 MNL OL DL 16 001. June 5, 1464; MNL OL DL 15 025. May 18, 1464.

80 Gündisch, *Das Patriziat*.

81 Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 126–28.

82 MNL OL DL 36 403. 1451.

and they also mentioned another count of chamber called *Pero de Rasys*.⁸³ The identification of the family they belonged to was not possible exclusively on the basis of the Hungarian sources. Fortunately, the *Florentine Catasto* records provided necessary information to retrace them in Florence as members of the Del Rosso family. Their situation is somewhat similar to that of other Florentine families working in financial administration: more family members worked in Hungary due to the family's weakened economic situation back in Florence according to their tax return (which was submitted collectively), except for one brother, Guido. The del Rosso family ranked among the guild consular families in Florence. Rosso, the father, held consular office nine times, and was interested in building constructions in the Tuscan city and producing kiln products.⁸⁴ After his death, some of the altogether seven brothers sought business activity abroad, like Francesco di Rosso di Piero Rosso, the householder and eldest brother of all, who went to Rome and later to Naples. Another brother, whose name is not specified, was in Hungary working in the service of other Florentines in 1427.⁸⁵ Cristoforo appears in the Hungarian sources only in 1438 for the first time, as count of the chamber of salt of Vízakna in the service of Matko Tallóci.⁸⁶ In the Florentine records he is first mentioned to be in Hungary only in 1442.⁸⁷ Among Cristoforo's brothers, Zanobi appears in Hungary for the first time in 1442, while the earliest mention of his brother Giovanni having been in the city dates to 1469.⁸⁸ Back in Florence, he also held the office of Prior twice (1442, 1456), and he served as guild consul for six terms.⁸⁹ His apparent ambition to integrate notwithstanding, Cristoforo maintained contact with Florence to an extent that he even submitted his tax declaration in 1457, at least thirty years after his arrival to Hungary.⁹⁰ The same seems to be confirmed by the fact that he and his brothers kept a few possessions in Florence until at least 1480. Cristoforo's business interests were not restricted to his obligations of managing royal monopolies. In fact, he also had business activity in Venice, but he put it as a loss.

83 MNL OL DL 36 390. March 24, 1439; Gündisch, *Das Patriziat*, 244–45.

84 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, 279.

85 Francesco di Rosso di Piero di Rosso, *Catasto* 1427. 20. fol. 790v; Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, 279.

86 Draskóczy, "Olaszok," 126.

87 Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence*, 279.

88 *Ibid.*, 281.

89 *Ibid.*, 280.

90 *Ibid.*, 281.

His son Paul (*Pagolo*) appears in the family tree drawn by Goldthwaite.⁹¹ Zanolí's wife Anna was daughter to Nicholas son of Ivan of Rakovica, a nobleman and estate owner in the neighborhood of Nagyszeben (Hermannstadt, today Sibiu, Romania). The family, known also as Zanolii in Nagyszeben, definitely settled in the city and was the forebear of the prominent Proll family, among them the renowned Nicholas Proll of Nagyszeben, who controlled the Transylvanian mint and in the 1490s also the salt chambers.⁹²

Excursion: An Unrevealed Aspect of Florentine–Hungarian Economic Relations

Finally, my research on Florentine–Hungarian economic relations quite unexpectedly also shed light on the migration of skilled and unskilled craftsmen from Central Europe towards the Tuscan city. This was surprising, since it is only rarely documented and not in much detail.⁹³ From the very isolated information, however, vague evidence of solidarity and cooperation among the Hungarians in Florence can be assumed, although it never matched the extent of solidarity among Germans, with its sophisticated organizational forms around lay confraternities. In fact, in a subsequent period, apparently the German speaking immigrants coming from Hungary tended to join the institutions of Germans in the Tuscan city, and this leads to the conclusion that German speaking persons from Hungary may be hidden among the householders identified as Germans in the *Florentine Catasto* of 1427. This phenomenon also led to another, completely new point, namely the question of levels of self-identification of members of the multiethnic and multilingual communities of Central Europe. This question is particularly interesting considering the foreign environment in which these Central European immigrants defined themselves, because this foreign context lacked an important aspect, namely the points of reference which the homeland multiethnic community provided to establish clearly the position of the people in the local context. Thus, in Florence these immigrants used a whole range of levels of self-identification, from the wider-closer geographical provenance, be it the home town or the wider geo-political unit, namely the Kingdom of Hungary, to ethnic affiliation and spoken language. The identification sometimes seems vague, although the sparse related information in the *Florentine Catasto* shows

91 Ibid., 280.

92 Gündisch, *Das Patriziat*, 244–45.

93 Arany, “The Shoemaker.” See also idem, “A cipész,” 493–514.

the prevailing use of geographical affiliation, whereas in other, later cases found in recent scholarly literature it seems to be clearly driven by conscious use of possibilities provided by Florentine urban organizations for foreign artisans. This may not be closely connected to the main research question, but it could be perceived as a starting point for a future inquiry to identify the main features of the other extremes (be it both the destination and the social cluster involved in it) of diasporas in late medieval Europe.

Conclusion

Altogether, both the quantitative data set and the case studies confirm that a large number of Florentines targeted the Kingdom of Hungary during the reign of King and Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg. Most of them were keen on working in the royal financial administration, as their fellow countrymen did in other regions of contemporary Europe. Sigismund's constant need for liquid assets certainly played a crucial role in the decision to employ them. However, when taking a closer look at these Florentines' financial backgrounds in Florence, one finds that most of them did not belong to the social cluster of the wealthiest merchants in the Tuscan city. Some of them disposed of rather humble financial assets but still operated within a large and efficient business network created by the Florentines in general. Thus, they could involve external investors to gather larger amounts of capital for their transactions when needed. Also, the Florentine officers' vast knowledge of financial operations, their ability to adapt to various local socio-economic contexts, and their mobility rendered their services useful to the ruler, who himself gradually fulfilled his high aspirations by finally being crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 1433.

Florentine archival records also confirm the existence of extensive trading activity on the part of Florentines in Hungary, at least in the case of some better documented Florentine officers working for the Buda companies. The information on the volume and forms of their activity in Hungary is not preserved in Hungarian documents. Due to the comparative backwardness of the region, other classical fields of operation, particularly banking, were not present among their operations in Hungary. The Venice branches of Florentine banking houses mostly covered such transactions for the region. However, three major trading partnerships formed by middle and even large-scale merchants were active in Buda in the 1420s, a presence not yet verified for any other urban center of Central Europe. Also, the members of companies had close ties to

the royal and even imperial court of the ruler, whose court rendered Buda an urban center of utmost importance. In fact, in one case the company's apparent bankruptcy is clearly linked to their loans provided to the ruler, and this is a clear sign of the higher business risks in the region. The Florentines, however, were compensated with higher interest rates for the risks they ran in Hungary. When considering the major forms of loans, commercial credit prevailed, and during the analysis of business partners of Florentines related to transactions in Hungary, the number of Florentine partners is higher, whereas the circle of local partners is much more limited. This suggests business operations involving several Florentine investors with a small number of Hungarian clients.

Buda's two major trading diasporas, the southern German and the Italian, cooperated in the royal financial administration, and when it came to trade they met differing demands, the Italians mainly shipping luxury goods, while southern Germans merchandized lower-value cloth, primarily for urban customers. This difference in the fields of interest shaped their relations with the local urban community and their ways of integration, but their presence rendered Buda the only Central European urban center that functioned as a long-term direct meeting point for the two trading ethnic clusters most active in long-distance trade in the region. Finally, the migration of artisans from the Kingdom of Hungary to Florence reveals unexpected aspects of migration of humbler clusters, like the complexity of layers of self-identification and identification of artisans coming from the colorful Central European region to the Tuscan city.

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Florentines' Trade in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: Trade Routes, Networks, and Commodities*

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The article proposes to analyze some general characteristics of Florentine merchants' trade in the Kingdom of Hungary in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries on the basis of written sources housed predominantly by various Italian archives. It opens with a new evaluation of the importance of Florentine merchants in long-distance trade by examining examples of the organizational framework of their enterprises in the town of Buda during the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg (1387–1437). It also looks at the well-known cases of the families that were engaged in trade in Hungary, beginning with the period of Louis I (1342–82) and ending with the reign of Matthias Corvinus (1458–90). The second subchapter concentrates on the commodities transported by Florentines between the two states by describing their nature and their quantitative and qualitative features mentioned in the documents. Among the commercial goods, the article considers the import and export of metals like gold, silver, and copper, as well as Florentine silk and wool. It also mentions exotic animals and spices transported from extra-European territories. The third part of the article offers a reconstruction of the outreach of the Florentine network operating in Hungary, with particular consideration of its most important markets for raw materials and luxury goods. The fourth subchapter discusses the commercial routes used by Florentines when transporting their goods between the towns of Buda and Florence, emphasizing the importance of Venice as a major trading hub along the route. The conclusion puts the Florentines' trade in Hungary into a broader picture of international trade, and it draws connections between the development of the Florentine silk industry, for which the city became famous, and the marketing of its finished products in Hungary.

Keywords: Buda, Florence, Hungary, Venice, commercial routes, merchant, textiles, silk, precious metals, merchant company, trade, network

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The Florentine Community

Studies have already traced the existence of a Florentine trading community in the Kingdom of Hungary as far back as the reign of Louis I.¹ Since Hungarian sources regarding commerce are very fragmented in nature, researchers mostly rely on Florentine documents, which started to be produced from the late fourteenth century. Recently found new written evidence have revealed the existence of a Latin consul in the town of Buda as early as 1392. The consul acted as a judge in cases involving the Florentines, and he was also the person in charge of mediating between the merchants and local Hungarian society. They occasionally appear also as royal relators when Florentine merchants were involved in court cases in Hungary. The Latin consulate in Buda, one of the earliest such organizations including Florentine merchants outside their homeland, functioned throughout the entire period of Sigismund of Luxemburg's reign in Hungary (1387–1437).² The first consul known by name, Giovanni Saracino, an important member of the royal administration, was of Paduan origins. Later, in the early 1430s, a Florentine (also a royal officer) occupied the position. In his absence, which might only have lasted for a relatively short period of time, a Sienese was elected to serve as deputy Latin judge.³ This information suggests that the judge or consul, indeed, was common for all merchants from the Italian Peninsula. No indications have been found so far suggesting that this form of organization survived even in the subsequent period. One can only suspect that, because of the general decadence of the relations between Florence and Hungary on the state level, Florentine merchants may have lost their representation in the region.⁴ Furthermore, King Sigismund's order, issued sometime before 1428, authorized the town judge of Buda to act in cases involving foreign merchants who were trading within the territory of the town.⁵ This may have considerably

1 For earlier scholarship on Florentine–Hungarian trade contacts see: Prajda, “Florentine merchant companies.”

2 For a detailed analysis of the sources regarding the Latin consulate see: Prajda, “Justice in the Florentine Trading Community.”

3 “...*dinanzi a voi Sano degli Ugorgieri da Siena vice giudice de latini in luogo di messer Lionardo di messer Giovanni di Nofri da Boymoy...*” Archivio di Stato di Firenze (thereafter: ASF), Mercanzia 4379. 98v. In reality, the document concerns the brothers, Leonardo and Giovanni di Nofri de’Bardi.

4 For the diplomacy between Florence and Hungary during the reign of Louis I and Sigismund of Luxembourg see: Prajda, “Trade and Diplomacy in pre-Medici Florence,” 85–106.

5 Skorka, “Levél a városháza tornyából.”

weakened the role played by the Latin consul in the resolution of business conflicts between local and Florentine merchants.

Given the nature of the sources, we have no exact statistics regarding the population of the Florentine trading community in Buda or in other parts of the kingdom. All we know is that the community was well-connected to Florence and other European commercial centers. There must also have been a continuous flow of Florentine merchants between the two states. The resident Florentine community in Buda during the reign of Sigismund was seemingly more numerous than in the preceding and subsequent periods, including the reign of Matthias Corvinus (1458–90). The vivid life of the trading community in the Kingdom of Hungary probably came to an end when Sigismund's attitude toward Florentine merchants changed, a shift that culminated in 1432 by his order to arrest all of them on Hungarian territory.⁶

The importance of the Florentine community is also illustrated by the fact that at least twelve Florentine trading companies were established in Buda during the first three decades of the fifteenth century. As far as we can tell, they were medium-size companies, mainly set up for the export of Florentine textiles to Hungary in exchange for precious metals from the local mines. The senior partners of these companies were important actors in long-distance Florentine trade, and they played a significant role in the textile industry of their homeland. Some of them were also leading investors in the Florentine silk industry, both in terms of domestic production and marketing abroad. In addition to the resident Florentine companies and autonomous partnerships, other merchants relied on their business networks or on independent agents when marketing their textiles in Hungary. The “*accomanda*” system, involving limited liability contracts, was also used in dealings between Buda-based companies and silk companies or silk firms and local agents.⁷

Meanwhile, the Florentine community during the reign of Louis I (1342–82), and even until about the turn of the century, was characterized by the strong presence of a small business group constituted by the business partners of Vieri di Cambio de' Medici and the Panciatici family, the earliest documented companies operating in the region. By the first years of the fifteenth century, however, the business circle of the Scolari family had acquired a position of dominance in the Hungarian–Florentine long-distance trade. The years immediately following

6 Teke, “*Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok*,” 195–214.

7 For the history of Florentine companies during Sigismund's reign see: Prajda, “Florentine merchant companies.”

the deaths of the Scolari brothers in 1426 saw a power play between the Scolari nephews and the Bardi brothers, old *familiars* of the Scolari. Following these conflicts, the leading position of the Bardi brothers as well as other internal dynamics in Florence led probably to the reorganization of key positions in the royal administration and the network of long-distance trade.

1434 witnessed considerable changes in the history of Florence as well with the rise of the new regime headed by Cosimo de' Medici. Several families, which once had been important in long-distance trade with Hungary, lost their political influence and were exiled. Thus, their ties to domestic and international commercial networks loosened considerably. Among them, we find the Albizzi, Guadagni, and Infangati families, old friends, close relatives, and once political allies to the Scolari brothers.⁸

In the 1430s, this may have given rise to a new influx of Southern German businessmen to the royal administration and trade network in Hungary. Already in the 1390s, local Germans in Buda cooperated with Florentine and Venetian businessmen who sought to sell their goods in the city. Michael Nadler, a respected citizen of Buda of Southern German origins, acted as a dealer in Venetian merchants' silk textiles with his partners, including his father, Michael Nadler senior.⁹ In 1427, he was among the debtors of the Melanesi di Buda, most probably because he was selling textiles for them as well.¹⁰ In the same year, he also acted as judge for the city.¹¹ Nadler, who worked in the royal administration of mines, may have had other ties to the Melanesi, since Tommaso di Piero, a member of Sigismund's *familia* and a citizen of Buda, managed copper mines in the kingdom. Nadler also established close business ties with the more influential Leonardo di Nofri de' Bardi, with whom he held royal offices.¹² In the early 1430s, Leonardo and his brother Giovanni, both of whom were already Hungarian noblemen, figured in the role of Latin consul. In other words, they

8 For the various forms of ties between the aforementioned families see: Prajda, "Unions of Interest," 147–66.

9 "...*quod assignare debeat dicto per Michael Nodoler et sotiis dictos pannos serici...*" Archivio di Stato di Venezia (thereafter: ASV), Giudici di Petizion 22. 77r.

10 The hypothesis concerning possible cooperation between Florentine and southern German businessmen has already been advanced but not proven. See: Arany, "Buda mint uralkodói székhely," 153–70.

11 Nadler was mentioned as judge of Buda in the years of 1419, 1425–27, 1433–34. Pataki, "A budai vár középkori helyrajza," 271; Kubinyi, "A budai német patriciátus," 264.

12 Nadler and Giovanni di Nofri de' Bardi worked together in the Buda mint. Draskóczy, "Kamarai jövedelem és urbura," 147–66.

served as judges for the Florentines residing in Buda.¹³ In 1431, Leonardo Bardi was staying in Nuremberg, probably for a longer period of time, which may suggest that he actually had begun to cooperate in some way with local German merchants.¹⁴ Leonardo was probably away from Buda frequently for business purposes; another source mentions that he was staying in Bohemia for a certain time. The involvement of the Melanesi and the Bardi brothers, key figures of the local Florentine community, in business activity with some German businessmen, therefore, must have had long-term consequences.

Following King Sigismund's death in 1437, very few of the Florentine families which had had an interest in the region as early as the turn of the fifteenth century continued to work in long-distance trade in the kingdom. Among them, we find members of the Del Bene and the Zati families, who thanks to their contacts in Buda, Florence and Venice managed to maintain their economic activity until around the middle of the fifteenth century.¹⁵ During the reign of Matthias Corvinus, however, the allies of the Medici dominated the Florentine-Hungarian relations; among them, members of the Attavanti and Gondi families became important distributors of Florentine goods in the royal court.¹⁶

13 “...per la quale ragione messer Lionardo di Nofri giudice, per conto del re scrisse da Neurimbergo...” ASF, Notarile Antecosimiano 1876. (1431); Mercanzia 271. 118v-119r. (1436). I am indebted to Lorenz Böninger for drawing my attention to the documents. The Bardi received nobility from King Sigismund and appear in the Hungarian sources as Noffry de Bajmócz or Noffry de Pölöske. The brothers' role as Latin consuls may also explain why Leonardo acted as relator in the case of the Florentines who were imprisoned in Hungary at the king's order. See the case of Gianozzo di Giovanni Cavalcanti. For the original document see: ASF, Diplomatico, Normali, Firenze, Santa Maria della Badia 12/04/1428. For other related sources see: Prajda, “Justice in the Florentine Trading Community,” n. 59.

14 In Leonardo's absence, a deputy judge was elected to serve. This suggests that he was away for a longer period of time in Nuremberg. ASF, Mercanzia 4379. 98v; 114v-115r (the source cited here is one of the copies of the original source referred to in footnote n.10.).

15 For the inheritance of Uberto d'Amerigo Zati, who died in 1445, see the letters of the Florentine chancellery: ASF, Signori, Missive, Cancelleria, I. 36. 103r, 106r-v. For the heirs of Niccolò d'Amerigo Zati in Hungary see: Cancelleria I. 42. 164v. For Filippo di Jacopo del Bene in Hungary see: Cancelleria I. 36. 59r, Cancelleria I. 42. 43v.

16 For Alessandro Attavanti and Simone Gondi see: Cancelleria I. 48. 85r. See the privilege issued by King Matthias in favor of Florentine merchants. ASF, Signori, Dieci di Balia, Otto di Pratica, Legazioni e Commissarie, Missive e Responsive 77. 129r. For some general characteristics of Florentines' trade in Hungary during the reign of Matthias Corvinus see: Teke, “Economia e politica,” 68–75.

Commodities

From its outset, the Florentine trading community in the Kingdom of Hungary was built upon the export of wool textiles from Florence and the import of precious metal coins/bullions to the Italian Peninsula. By the end of the fourteenth century, by which time some investors had begun to produce high quality silk fabrics in the city for the international market, Florentine merchants had already started to export silks to Hungary, among other places. Along with these goods, Florentines were occasionally involved in the administration and probably also in the marketing of salt, which was extracted in various parts of Hungary.¹⁷ Furthermore, exotic spices and animals are also mentioned in the sources. Few of the resident companies in Buda provided banking services, but a considerable share of money exchange and safe-keeping, as well as the purchase of trade insurance, may well have gone through the Florentine companies that operated in Florence and Venice. From this point of view, the Medici of Venice seem to have been especially important. Since, to our best knowledge, account books of Florentine companies based in Buda have not survived, we have only fragmented information at our disposal regarding the quantity and the quality of these commercial goods, as well as their transportation and marketing.

By the mid-fourteenth century, Florence was already considered an important producer of wool textiles; her goods had already reached the international market. There were two general types of wool textiles manufactured in the city: the high-quality San Martino cloths and the lower-quality Garbo cloths. The areas in which they were brought to market were decisively different. The high-quality cloths were sold mostly in the Italian and Iberian Peninsula, while the low-quality cloths were sold in the Levant.¹⁸ Though differences between the two were considerable, probably due to the absence of corresponding account books, Florentine sources do not refer to the type of wool textiles transported to the Kingdom of Hungary. They were generally labelled *panni*, a term which clearly distinguished them in the Florentine dialect from the silk *drappi*. Given the considerable distance between Florence and Buda, one can presume that profit-oriented Florentine businessmen sold mainly high-quality San Martino cloth in Hungary. This hypothesis is also supported by the activity of some of the merchant-entrepreneurs who had an interest in selling their goods in

17 For Florentines' involvement in salt mining see: Draskóczy, "Italiener in Siebenbürgen," 61–75.

18 Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 273.

Hungary. In the fourteenth century, the Del Bene were among the most important entrepreneurs in the wool industry, and members of the family had already developed business connections in Hungary during the reign of Louis I.¹⁹ Similarly, around the turn of the fifteenth century, the Borghini brothers ran a wool workshop in the convent of San Martino, and they appear later as suppliers of textiles in the royal court. At that time, the Lamberteschi were also considered important producers of high-quality wool; they imported raw material directly from Flanders and sold some of their finished cloth in Hungary. They distributed wool textiles in Hungary, also by relying on other companies, like the Melanesi of Buda.²⁰ The Melanesi brothers seem often to have acted as dealers in textiles produced by the workshops of other Florentine businessmen; they sold both finished and semi-finished cloth in Hungary.²¹ In most cases, the provenience of wool textiles sold in Hungary is not mentioned in the sources. Probably the earliest information on Florentine wool sold in Hungary dates back to 1387, when Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi sent four and a half pieces of textile to Zagreb.²²

In addition to wool textiles, which definitely had a vast circle of customers, silk textiles became the other important item of Florentine trade. Richard Goldthwaite contends that silk textile was the first product manufactured in Florence which Florentine merchants sold all over Western Europe. The local silk industry underwent the earliest phase of its evolution in the first part of the fourteenth century.²³ By that time, in addition to Lucca (the first major site of silk production in Italy), Bologna, Genoa, and Venice also emerged as centers of silk production. However, in the case of Florence, the manufacturers in the city only started to produce silk fabrics for the international market in the late fourteenth century. The first investments of considerable size into the sector arrived in the 1380s when maybe a handful of entrepreneurs and silk manufacturers began to

19 For the participation of the Del Bene in the wool industry see: Hidetoshi, *L'Arte della Lana*, 153–229.

20 “*Simone Melanesi e compagni di Buda venderono più anni fa panni, mandava in Ungheria...*” ASF Catasto 27. 202r.

21 We find him among the debtors of Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci: “*Panni mandati a Buda per le mani di Tommaso Melanesi; furono otto panni de fecondi e de fini fi. 392 s. 11*” ASF, Catasto 52. 1096v.

22 “*Dinanzi a voi signori consoli dell'Arte della Lana, io Gabriello di messer Bartolomeo Panciatichi lanaiuolo mi richiamo di Giovanni e Michele di Benedetto di Carmignano di fiorini centoquarantadue di soldi Lxxv i a fior di buona moneta d'Ungheria... i quali denari me deono dare per resto di peze quatro e mezzo di panni fiorentini e due coltri che vende de mia ragione in Sagabria d'Ungheria Maruccio di Pagolo Marucci di Firenze per me, insino a di xvi di giugno MCCCXXXVII...*” ASF, Arte della Lana 542. 28v.

23 Tognetti, “The Development,” 55–69.

invest their financial and human capital into the foundation of silk manufacturing companies.²⁴

This important moment in the history of the domestic silk industry coincides with the earliest report about silk fabrics being sent to the royal court in Hungary. In 1376, the politician and wool manufacturer Giovanni di Amerigo del Bene advised the government to have the Florentine ambassadors heading to Hungary carry as gifts three pieces of velvet and three pieces of silk, decorated with gold.²⁵ Though Giovanni did not specify whether or not the silk textiles should be domestic products, one can reasonably hypothesize that the gifts were intended to represent the city and therefore the domestic industry. In that particular case, however, we have no information at our disposal concerning whether these diplomatic gifts actually reached the royal court. Ten years later, in 1386, another document informs us that the count palatine of Hungary had purchased silk textiles of considerable value from a Florentine company.²⁶ The provenience, even in this source, was unspecified. It might just as well have been Florence as Venice. However, both of the documents indicate the rise of a certain demand for silk textiles in the various courts of the kingdom.

It seems logical to assume that as soon as the volume and quality of domestic production permitted, Florentine silk companies, well-connected to the local Florentine network, tried to sell their products in Hungary too. The silk manufacturers who sent silk fabrics to the region included several pioneer businessmen of the domestic industry, such as the workshop-company of Bartolomeo di Luca Rinieri and Antonio di Giovanni Panciatichi and the workshop of Parente di Michele di ser Parente. They probably marketed their textiles in Hungary, using other Florentine companies operating in the region as agents. These silk fabrics may have consisted, for example, of red damask, the so-called “chermusi.”²⁷ Others, like the merchant Bernardo di Sandro Talani, who

24 For an overview of the development of the Florentine silk industry see: Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 282–95.

25 “Johannes Amerigi pro gonfalonariis dixit quod nota ambaxiatores Hungarie videatur per duos per collegium et de octo et corrigatur... Et quod portent ad filius regis tres petias velluti et tres drappi ad auri.” ASF, Consulte e Pratiche 14. 38r.

26 “Ardingho e compagni dicono che la promessa solo di fior mille e non più e di quali mille dicono il granconte ebbe per la sua donna di settembre e d'ottobre 1386 in panni di seta, spezerie e confetti per fior cento sedici d'oro. ... Di più ebbe secondo si dice dal decto Maffio per se e per la donna sua spuole d'oro e panni di seta e speziere...” ASF, Mercanzia 11310. 34r. I am indebted to Cédric Quertier for calling my attention to the corresponding volume of the Merchant Court.

27 See Bartolomeo di Luca Rinieri's tax declaration of 1433: “Antonio di Giovanni Panciatichi per drappi a tempo di 18 mesi fi. 254 s. 5 d. 5. Drapperie che sono in Ungheria che tengo anni sei perduti fi. 202 s. 1 d. 0. ASF, Catasto 484. 369v. See the declaration of Antonio di Giovanni Panciatichi in the same year: “Peze nove di drappi

maintained a very diverse business profile, purchased silk textiles in Florence in order to sell them in Hungary.²⁸

The triple-rooted Zati family, whose members developed business and social ties simultaneously in Florence, Venice, and Hungary, had an important interest in the marketing of silk in the kingdom.²⁹ In the 1430s, they traded in silver brocades, among other things.³⁰ Also, the company of Zanobi Panciatichi exported silk fabrics of various colors to Hungary; velvet of black, green, blue, and red colors, green and brown silk and damask cloths.³¹ But they also sold “zetani,” i.e. very heavy silk fabrics, using the Melanesi of Buda as dealers.³²

The Melanesi seem to have maintained a vast circle of suppliers among the producers of silk and wool textiles who used their services to bring their fabrics to market in Buda.³³ The Melanesi brothers themselves also invested capital into a silk manufacturing company with the Davizi and the Corsi brothers, whose families had been engaged in silk production since the 1380s.³⁴ Presumably, some of the silk fabrics sold by the Melanesi in Buda should have come directly from their own workshop.³⁵ The same workshop might have provided silk fabrics for

mandamo a chomune tra Bartolomeo di Lucha Rinieri e io a Buda nelle mani di Antonio Popoleschi...delle quali retrassi un taglio di domaschino chermusi articho per mio vestire de braccia 17 3/4 e resto mandamo a Buda sino l'anno 1431...” ASF, Catasto 474. 878r; “...Antonio di Agbinolfo Panciatichi di Buda de avere fiorini ottanta cinque d'oro per le spese m'asegna avere fatte a drappi mandati a compagnia tra me e Bartolomeo Rinieri...” ASF, Catasto 474. 879r. Parente di Michele di ser Parente's debtors: “Pagolo di Berto e Antonio di Piero di Fronte per una ragione di drappi mandavo in Ungheria più tenpo fa per loro e per noi...” ASF, Catasto 483. 345r.

28 “Fecci una chonpera di drappi di fiorini 512 i quali mandai a finire in Ungheria più tenpo fa...” ASF, Catasto 450. 254r.

29 In the tax declaration of Uberto, Giuliano and Niccolò d'Amerigo Zati, submitted in 1433, we read about “*merchatantie e drapperie abbiamo in Ungheria.*” ASF, Catasto 453. 824v. “*Niccolò Zati in Ungheria si truova nelle mani d'Uberto nostro i peze di drappi e schampoli ch'abbiamo dal detto poi di un anno fa gli avea venduti a baroni per fi 120. Uberto Zati si truova in Ungheria, aver portato seco di suo proprio più drappi di seta...*” ASF, Catasto 453. 825r. “*Troviamo in Ungheria e in Rascia in mano di'Uberto Zati nostro, drappi di seta e altre chose della compagnia...Più troviamo in Ungheria in dette mani di Berto della ragione di Firenze per lo simile modo in sopra in drapperie di seta di fi 763 s. 27 d 6.*” ASF, Catasto 453. 827v.

30 “*à il detto in Ungheria uno panno di brochato d'ariento...*” ASF, Catasto 453. 824v.

31 Prajda, “Florentine merchant companies.”

32 “...una balla di panni e una pezza di zetani” which Tommaso di Piero Melanesi sold for the company of Zanobi Panciatichi of Florence to the king. ASF, Mercanzia 4379. 100v.

33 Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci also sent silk textiles by the Melanesi to Buda: “*Drappiera di seta dati a Melanesi detti per mandare a Buda la somma di fi. 1020...*” ASF, Catasto 52. 1096v.

34 For their company see: ASF, Catasto 447. 528r.

35 See the Melanesi' tax declaration of 1427: “...*Drappi di seta di mandare in Ungheria fi. 3944*” ASF, Catasto 46. 652v.

the funeral of Andrea and Matteo Scolari in Hungary, which were displayed as flags and other textiles of liturgical use during the ceremony.³⁶

One of the leading figures of the Florentine silk industry, Tommaso di Domenico Borghini, also sold the products of his own workshop-warehouse in Hungary using his own merchant company, which he had set up with Matteo di Stefano Scolari.³⁷ In 1424, for example, Tommaso and Matteo imported twenty *braccia* of heavy black silk fabrics to Buda.³⁸ The frequent mention of Hungarian golden florins of considerable quantity in the account book of a Florentine silk manufacturing company also indicates that the royal and baronial courts in Hungary were considered important buyers of Florentine silk textiles.³⁹ However, due to the lack of detailed references in documents closely related to the transportation and marketing of textiles in Hungary, we have only fragmented information at our disposal on the kind of silk fabrics the Florentines sold in the kingdom.

In addition to textiles, other luxury items like spices and exotic animals also appear occasionally in the sources. In 1386, István Lackfi bought spices from the Panciaticchi company.⁴⁰ In his chronicle, Bonaccorso di Neri Pitti notes that he, as an apprentice, took a load of saffron with his master, Matteo di Scelto Tinghi, to Buda.⁴¹ In 1422, Matteo Scolari mentions in his letters spices as well as exotic animals like Arabian horses, falcons, ostriches, and monkeys, which his agent imported from Tunis, probably in the intention of taking them to the royal court in Hungary and to his brother, Pippo Scolari.⁴²

The most important import items transported to the Italian Peninsula by the Florentines were the precious metals: gold, silver, and copper. In 1429, for

36 See the letter of Simone di Lapo Corsi to Lodovico di ser Viviano (04/07/1426): "...noi avendo a fornire le bandiere e drapoloni de mortorio di messer Matteo Scolari e del veschovo di Varadino..." ASF, Carte Stroziane I. 229. 55r.

37 Prajda, "Goldsmiths," 197–221.

38 "...braccia venti di zetani nero raso..." ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. 63v. "Si prevede e dice Tomaso di Domenico Borghini per se e in nome di suoi compagni setaiuoli che heredi di Matteo Scolari sono loro debitori in scripta di fi. 730 s. 8 d. 3 per più pezze di drappi e altre cose auti e ricevuti dalla loro bottega e fondaco e per lui come volle decto messer Matteo mandate a Buda in Ungheria..." ASF, Mercanzia 7114bis. 135r.

39 See the "libro mastro" of the company of Andrea della Casa, in 1427: "Conto di chassa tenuto per me Antonio della Casa...in un sacchetto fiorini ungheri nuovi fiorini iii mille fiorini 3000 soldi." Archivio dell'Ospedale degli Innocenti, Estranei 12744. 30v.

40 See footnote n. 27.

41 Pitti, "Ricordi," 366–67.

42 "...Magiori miei qui vi dirò apunto quello mi à rubato due chavalli barbereschi, 18 sparveri, 2 sori, 216 mudati, 2 bertuocce, 2 struzoli...uno anno ch'io tenuto un fante per mandare queste frasche, salvo le sparveri alla reina a messer Filippo..." ASF, Mediceo avanti il Principato (thereafter: MAP), 1.44r.

example, Tommaso di Piero Melanesi imported copper to Venice in the amount of 1,000 Venetian ducats.⁴³ In 1435, Tommaso was in charge of copper mines, which suggests that he may have traded in copper bullions on a regular basis. Other Florentine merchants were engaged in the silver trade. Among them we find Bernardo di Sandro Talani, from whom King Sigismund confiscated textiles, money, and silver in 1427.⁴⁴ Another Florentine, Giovanni del maestro Niccolò Falcucci, was probably also interested in the trade in silver and gold.⁴⁵ In one case, Giovanni, at the demand of Andrea Scolari, sold a piece of gold in Italy (6 pesetti di Buda, 18 carats) for 522 florins, 66 denari and 100 solidi.⁴⁶ Interestingly, the precious metal trade to Italy was not monopolized by Florentine businessmen. A few sources indicate that a business group from Arezzo may have cooperated with the Florentines, including the nobleman Mariotto di Biagio Griffolini, his grandson, and a couple of other businessmen, who occasionally traveled to various parts of Hungary.⁴⁷ Furthermore, we have some fragmented information concerning the import of Hungarian leather to Italy.⁴⁸

The Geographical Outreach of the Network

Thanks to their continuous travels and their cooperative enterprises with a number of businessmen coming from other Tuscan towns like Arezzo, Prato, and Siena, Florentine merchants operating in the Kingdom of Hungary maintained a vast business network outside their homeland. This network extended from Flanders to Tunis and from Catalonia to Alessandria. One of the most important trade hubs for Florentine merchants operating in the Italian

43 See the correspondence between Giambonino and Filippo di Rinieri Scolari: ASF, Corporazioni Religiose Soppresses dal Governo Francese (thereafter: Corp. Rel. Sopp.), 78. 326. 332r, 355r, 348r.

44 See the Signoria's letter to Piero di messer Luigi Guicciardini and Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi, ambassadors to King Sigismund: "*Bernardo di Sandro Talani nostro cittadino alla supremetia del re raccomandere... gli sono stati sequestrati molti denari, ariento, drappi et altre mercatantie...*" ASF, Signori, Legazioni e Commissarie 7. 80v. (1427)

45 Falcucci writes to the bishop: "*...ci voresti mandare scodella d'argiento...e vi rispondo, prego, se possibile a mandare fiorini d'oro perché a madare argento poi fatica a trovare della moneta fiorini d'oro...*" ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326.277r.

46 "*...La chagione di questa sia che chosti mando a una merchatantia, un pezzo d'oro per fi. 522 d. 66 di s. 100 pesa ...5 pesetti di Buda di carati xviii...*" ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78.326. 388r-v.

47 For the trade of the Griffolini family in Hungary see: Black, *Benedetto Accolti*, 7. "*...Agnolo d'Arezzo dimora in Buda, per retratto di suo rame...*" ASF, Catasto 46. 254v. For further information on Aretine businessmen in Hungary see: Prajda, "Representations."

48 Teke, "Firenzei kereskedőtársaságok," 195–214.

Peninsula was Venice, which, by the late fourteenth century, was already filled with Florentines. Similarly, Ancona may have served as a port city for Florentines' goods to be transported to Dalmatia. However fragmented, its archives may shed some light on the commercial activity of the city with the other side of the Adriatic Sea.⁴⁹ Another major transit point was Genoa, which was used by Florentines who imported various luxury items from North Africa to Florence. Merchants like Matteo Scolari, the Zati brothers, and the Lamberteschi used the services of Genoese captains.⁵⁰ In addition to Tunis, Florentine merchants operating in Hungary were well-connected through their networks to other extra-European markets as well. Matteo Scolari, for example, invested money into overseas ventures several times; he ordered goods with the first galley to Alessandria.⁵¹ Bernardo Lamberteschi also purchased goods in Alessandria, but his agents were mostly traveling to destinations like Flanders and Catalonia to ensure the supply of raw wool.⁵² In the 1430s, they relied on the services of the Florentine galleys, which departed from Pisa.

In Rome, the papal court also offered business opportunities for Florentine merchants. For instance, in cooperation with another churchman Currado di Piero Cardini, Andrea Scolari, the bishop of Várad (today Oradea, Romania), traded in textiles there.⁵³ Matteo Scolari's in-law, the banker Vieri di Vieri Guadagni, may have offered banking services in the papal court instead.⁵⁴ Other merchants, like Filippo di Giovanni del Bene and the aforementioned Currado, became papal collectors in Hungary.

49 Spallacci, *I rapporti commerciali*.

50 For Andrea Lamberteschi's declaration see: ASF, Catasto 27. 203r, Giuliano d'Amerigo Zati's letters from Genoa: MAP, 139. 194; 1.53 (1422); Matteo Scolari's letters from Genoa: MAP, 1.44; 1.50; 68.410; 1.42.

51 See the summary of the payments made to Francesco di Vieri Guadagni for Matteo Scolari following his death: "*da una achomanda in sulle prime ghalee da Giorgio del maestro Christofano fi. 180*" ASF, MAP 150. 17r.

52 See the Lamberteschis' tax returns in 1427, in 1431 and in 1433: ASF, Catasto 27. 92r, 202r; 348. 35r; 445. 27; 445. 116v.

53 See the agreement between the bishop and Currado, dated to 1423, regarding the businesses they were running together: "*Già manifesto a ciaschuna persona che legierà o vidirà legiere la presente scritta chome messer Andrea Scholari, vescovo di Varadino d'una parte e messer Churado Chardini, preposto di Varadino dal altra parte amendue dachordo ànno fatto ragione e saldo insieme di più diverse cose ànno auto a ffare insieme chosi di danari chontanti chome di panni o d'altro o di promessi o pagamenti o chomesioni o lettere di cambio fatte l'uno al altro o l'altro al uno chome per lo passato achaduto e piaciuto a ciaschuno dessi chosi ne reame d'Ungheria chome fuori de reame in Italia o altrove a Firenze, Roma o qualunque altro luogho...*" ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. 332r.

54 For the business activity of the Guadagni-Cambini bank see: Tognetti, *Il banco Cambini*.

Commercial Routes between Florence and Buda

In spite of the considerable distance between the two cities, Florence and Buda became closely connected by commercial routes. The most important documents in this regard are the accounts of the brothers Rinaldo and Luca di messer Maso degli Albizzi, who traveled to the Kingdom of Hungary in 1426 and 1427.⁵⁵ The two distinct collections reveal more than any other source about the itineraries and the difficulties of the most frequently used land and sea routes, on which Florentine merchants traveled for business purposes. Even though the Albizzi brothers were heading for Buda as members of diplomatic contingents, the reference to itinerant Florentine merchants in their travel accounts proves that businessmen used the very same routes.⁵⁶

Both of the embassies used the commercial route leading north from Florence to Bologna through the Apennines. In Rinaldo's case, the first segment of the trip after Bologna included Ferrara and Padua. Luca went through Corticella, Torre della Fossa, Francolino, Crespino, Loreo, and Chioggia.⁵⁷ Generally, transport from Florence to Bologna was by pack animals over the Apennines. Travelers then went from Bologna to the region of Ferrara overland or by canal and river and from Ferrara to Venice by river and by sea. According to Luca's diary, he was traveling by land until Corticella, located north of Bologna, from there he continued his trip by river to Ferrara. He then continued his journey on horseback again from Ferrara to nearby Francolino, a port on the Po River, where he boarded a boat. Turning to the north at Loreo, he left behind the Po River and arrived in Chioggia, probably by river, from where he took another boat to Venice. Including the several compulsory stops during their trip, which were made both for relaxation and networking, the travel from Florence to Venice took approximately one week.

As the main hub for the redistribution of commercial goods along the route, Venice played a crucial role in the transportation of the Florentines' merchandise. They typically stopped there for several days to purchase goods, socialize with their fellow-citizens, and arrange shipping. After having arrived

55 For the documents produced by Rinaldo during his trip see Guasti, *Commissioni*. For the complete edition of Luca's diary written during his trip to Hungary see: Prajda, "Egy firenzei követjárás," 7–16.

56 Also Luca degli Albizzi's diary mentions three Florentine merchants who were traveling at that time from Venice through Segna (Senj, Croatia) to the Kingdom of Hungary; two of them lived permanently in Buda. The names of the three merchants were Tommaso di Piero Melanesi, Filippo di Giovanni del Bene, and Tommaso di Jacopo Schiattesi.

57 *Commissioni di Rinaldo degli Albizzi*, 607–08.

in Venice, Rinaldo continued his travels overland to the north, through Villach and Vienna, reaching Buda after 40 days of travel and diplomatic visits. At the same time, Luca took a ship in Venice and followed the coastline through Livenza (today Caorle, Italy), Daira (today Dajla, Croatia), Parenzo (today Poreč, Croatia), Fagiana (today Fažana, Croatia), Vegli (today Veli Brijuni, Croatia), Pola (today Pula, Croatia), Medulino (today Medulin, Croatia), and Ossero (today Osor, Croatia), arriving at the port of Segna after 8 days.⁵⁸ Maritime navigation depended a great deal upon weather conditions, which might shorten or lengthen a trip. Because of an illness caused probably by the harsh weather at sea, Luca felt sick during their trip and was forced, after a long stay in Segna, to return to Florence, without ever reaching the royal court in Hungary. On the way back, Luca used the same sea route with smaller modifications. Having arrived from the Northwest to Hungary, Rinaldo left the kingdom in a southwestern direction, following another overland route past the Mura river, reaching Venice by following the road from Vienna.⁵⁹

Given the fact that Florence was not a major transit center for commercial goods, it was the Florentine merchants who, by operating in the most important trade hubs, built up an international transport system for their goods.⁶⁰ Therefore, in the travel of the Florentine ambassadors, the transportation of commercial goods, and the movement of Florentine merchants, a crucial role was given to cooperation between Florentine businessmen living in the cities situated along the commercial routes. Florentines offered each other hospitality in their foreign home, as well as shelter and supplies for their horses and sometimes even accompanying servants. Their reliable and experienced men carried messages and goods, and occasionally they offered traveling Florentines protection as well. The social network used by itinerant Florentine merchants was a business network of fellow-citizens who were active far from their homeland. Members of these networks very often maintained not only business but social ties as well with one another, thus ensuring the circulation of goods, messages, and people. Their primary concerns were weather conditions, health issues arising during their travels, and the security of their goods and people. Given this, merchants may well have often traveled together in order to guarantee their own safety and defray the otherwise elevated costs of toll and travel.⁶¹ For the safety

58 Prajda, "Egy firenzei követjárás," 10–11.

59 Guasti, *Commissioni*, 590–91.

60 Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 119.

61 See the case of the travel of Gianozzo Cavalcanti, Filippo Frescobaldi, and Matteo Scolari: "Tomaso Borghini mandò in Ungheria drappi in sino di marzo 1425 e mandò chon essi Gianozzo Chavalcanti e Filippo Frescobaldi

of their goods, they might even have signed an insurance contract with one of the Florentine banks operating either in Florence or in Venice.⁶² Safe-conducts, obtained from the Florentine or the Venetian Signoria or from King Sigismund himself, may also have given traveling Florentine merchants a major sense of security.⁶³

Venice as Major Trade Hub

There is no question that Venice played a crucial role in the redistribution of commercial goods transported by Florentine merchants and in their networking and business activity. The supply of raw wool in Florence and the circulation of finished Florentine textiles in the eastern Mediterranean and the eastern part of the continent depended a great deal upon the work of Florentines living in Venice. To a large extent, local and international banking, the trade of bills of exchange going through Venice, and the insurance business were in their hands.⁶⁴ Thanks to its importance, Venice probably had the most sizeable Florentine business community living outside of their home city. Reinhold Mueller claims that Florentines settled in the city in high numbers as soon as the first part of the fourteenth century.⁶⁵ However, in spite of the importance of the Florentines in Venetian trade and economy, Mueller's study is the most detailed analysis of their economic activity in the city so far. Apart from the scholarship on the well-known cases of the Venetian branch of the Medici company and the settlement of members of the Gaddi family, no in-depth research has been done on Florentine merchant families who were engaged in trade around the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Earlier, Zsuzsa Teke suggested that some

e mandogli insieme e in compagnia chon messer Matteo Scholari che allora andò inbasadore in Ungheria. E questo fu perché andassino più salvi anche per non pagare ghabelle e passaggi." ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 321. 98r.

62 The company of Nicholò Baldovini and Giovanni di Antonio di Santi of Buda, for example, appear in the insurance book of Piero di Gabriello Panciatichi's company. See the copy of the document in the tax declaration of the Panciatichi, in 1433: ASF, Catasto 477. 471r.

63 See the safe-conduct of the Florentine Signoria for Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari. ASF, Corp. Rel. Sopp. 78. 326. 318r. Antonio di Giovanni Panicatichi wished to obtain safe-conduct from King Sigismund. See Antonio's declaration in 1433: "...e itò dietro al'onperadore più tenpo fa per avere salvo chondoto per potermi stare e tornare..." ASF, Catasto 474. 881r.

64 Goldthwaite, *The Economy*, 180–81.

65 The main focus of his work was the question of citizenship obtained by Florentine merchants in the Venetian Republic and the activity of merchant-bankers and artisan-entrepreneurs in the city. Mueller, "Mercanti e imprenditori," 8. According to his studies, between the mid-fourteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries, more than one hundred fifty Florentines received citizenship. See "Civesveneciarum". For the original sources see: ASV, Cassiere della bolla ducale, Grazie, 12–25; Mueller, ed., *Immigrazione e cittadinanza nella Venezia medievale*.

Florentines living in the Venetian Republic seem to have developed business connections in the Kingdom of Hungary as well.⁶⁶ Her hypothesis has not been put to the test so far. Only the involvement of the Medici in the Hungarian copper trade in the 1380s has been studied.

In 1433, at the time of the second general census in the city of Florence, nine companies were recorded which had been established by Florentine merchants in Venice.⁶⁷ Among them, at least five cooperated with the Florentines who worked in the Kingdom of Hungary: the Panciatichi&Portinari, the Medici&Portinari, the Gaddi, the Zati, and the Ugolini.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the scarcity of documents regarding commercial activity in Venice leaves little room for analysis of their trade connections or their involvement in the redistribution of goods directed to and from Hungary. As has been suggested, in the first decades of the fifteenth century the Medici did not completely lose their interest in the region and may have continued to play an intermediary role, offering banking services in Venice and in Florence for the merchants working in Hungary. The possible role of the Medici of Venice in providing credit for Florentine merchants operating in the kingdom is underlined by its fragmented account book, dated to 1436. It lists among its clients several Florentine businessmen who traded simultaneously in Venice, Florence and Hungary, including for instance members of the Borghini, Scolari and Zati families.⁶⁹

By the first decade of the century, Branca di Rinieri Scolari, a nephew of Andrea Scolari, had already settled in Treviso. He was followed by his brother, Giambonino di Rinieri Scolari. Their third brother, Filippo, returned to Florence in order to manage the family business and properties there. They had also a fourth brother, Lorenzo, who may have served as a kind of travel agent for the family, since he was occasionally in the Kingdom of Hungary. Unlike Lorenzo, Giambonino never returned to Florence. His heirs obtained Venetian citizenship,

66 Teke, *Velencei-magyar*, 86.

67 I have systematically looked through all of the corresponding volumes of the catasto 1433, which contain the original declarations of Florentine citizens. The database encloses the companies that were included into the tax declaration of one of their partners. ASF, Catasto vols. 487–500 (campioni) and 454 (Santa Maria Novella, Vipera, portate since the campioni did not survive).

68 For mentions of these companies by one of the partners see: the Gaddi: ASF, Catasto 474. 5v; the Zati: Catasto 453.825r; the Ugolini: Catasto 437. 745r; the Panciatichi&Portinari: Catasto 484. 650r, the Medici& Portinari: Catasto 482. 371v.

69 See fragments of the account book of the Medici of Venice, in 1436: ASF, MAP 134. Filza 1. Among the business partners of the Medici of Venice were: Giuliano, Niccolò and Uberto d'Amerigo Zati, Giambonino and Lorenzo di Rinieri Scolari, Agnolo di Taddeo Gaddi.

and their families lived in Treviso for two more centuries.⁷⁰ The Scolari brothers' careers could be said to exemplify the successes of the triple-rooted Florentine merchant families who developed commercial and social ties in the three states. This model was adopted by other families, for instance the Del Bene family and the Zati family. Their cooperative enterprises with other Florentine kinship networks active outside their homeland may also be called typical, like the Scolari, Borghini, and Melanesi families, each of which was an active participant in international trade in the three states.⁷¹

The Melanesi company and the Scolari family were also closely linked to the firm of Andrea Lamberteschi, a Florentine wool manufacturer and merchant. Lamberteschi himself managed the production of San Martino cloth in Florence, together with his eldest son, Tommaso. Meanwhile, his agent, Giovanni di Cenni Ugolini, ran the Venetian branch.⁷² Three other sons of his lived in Hungary. They traded in the textiles produced in their father's workshop and also worked as employees of the Scolari family. Andrea's fifth son was in charge of the import of raw wool from Flanders to Venice.⁷³ In fact, Andrea is mentioned only rarely in the Venetian documents, while his branch manager and partner may have been the key figure of their activity in Venice. Ugolini, who settled for life in the *Stato da Mar*, is mentioned several times in documents of Venetian court cases.⁷⁴

Giovanni Ugolini and the other aforementioned merchants maintained strong economic connections to Filippo di Giovanni del Bene as well.⁷⁵ By the turn of the fifteenth century, Filippo had moved to Hungary, while his cousin, Jacopo di Francesco, with whom he had many business ventures, was exiled to Venice in the 1390s. Jacopo had been involved in business with Andrea Lamberteschi.⁷⁶ Meanwhile, the Del Bene back home turned into important wool manufacturers by the first part of the fourteenth century. In Hungary,

70 See the earliest surviving tax declaration of Giambonino Scolari's heirs, dated to 1462. Archivio di Stato di Treviso, Estimi, busta 70.

71 For their correspondence see: Prajda, "Levelező üzletemberek," 301–34.

72 Sources mention him as "socio" of Andrea Lamberteschi. ASV, Giudici di Petizion, Sentenze a giustizia 20.12v-15r., "*Dinanzzi a voi messer ufficiali s'pone e dice Andrea di Tomaso Lamberteschi lanaiolo cittadino e mercatante fiorentino Jobanni di Cenni Ugolini per adietro factore del decto Andrea in Vinegia...*" ASF, Mercanzia 7114 bis. 73r. (1427).

73 For the activity of the Lamberteschi see: Prajda, "Florentine merchant companies."

74 ASV, Giudici di petizion, Sentenze a giustizia, 36. 88v (1424), Sentenze a giustizia 21. 104v (1410)

75 See Giovanni's tax declaration in 1433: ASF, Catasto 437. 745r. For the genealogy and history of the Del Bene in Hungary see: Prajda, "Egy firenzei sírköve," 29–35.

76 See his correspondence: ASF Del Bene 49.

however, they were employed in various administrative positions, and they also became papal collectors.

Similarly, members of the Zati family developed this triple-rooted social and business profile. Close cooperation between the Zati siblings and cousins and the geographical spread of members of the family guaranteed the efficiency of their business network. The six brothers, Bartolomeo, Francesco, Niccolò, Simone, Giuliano, and Uberto d'Amerigo, kept merchant companies and businesses simultaneously in Buda, Florence, and Venice. They also cooperated closely with the Medici of Venice as agnatic kin to Lipaccio di Bindo Bardi, a partner of the company.⁷⁷ The Zati acquired a reputation in Florence in the fourteenth century thanks to their participation in the wool-business. Their father was a wool manufacturer in Florence, and he was still active in the second decade of the fifteenth century.⁷⁸ Into the 1420s, the six brothers maintained their Florentine citizenship and continued to pay taxes there, in spite of the fact that they used Venice as the base for their activity. For their businesses, they made use of Genoa as well, the other main maritime trade hub alongside Venice.⁷⁹ Some of their commercial goods came directly from the workshops they maintained in Florence. In the mid-1410s, there was a wool manufacturing company registered under Uberto's and Niccolò's names which was still operating in 1433.⁸⁰ It seems likely to me that one of them, Giuliano, who clearly lived in Venice, was running another workshop in Florence. The Venetian company, instead, was operating under Giuliano's and Niccolò's names, and they were the ones who formally operated the Buda branch in the 1430s.⁸¹ Meanwhile, Uberto played the role of travel agent in Buda. Their business in Hungary lasted at least until the 1440s, when Uberto died and his brothers petitioned to the Florentine chancery as heirs to help them recuperate his credits and other belongings in the Kingdom of Hungary. In addition to wool, which was also the most common item for the Lamberteschi-Ugolini company, the Zati sold silk textiles in the Kingdom of

77 The mother of the Zati brothers was Lipaccio de' Bardi's niece Margherita, the daughter of Giovanni di messer Bindo de Bardi. See the declaration of Margherita in 1433: ASF, Catasto 450. 620r. In 1433, one member of the extended family, Andrea di Francesco di Giovanni, married Sandra di Piero della Rena, Matteo Scolari's adopted daughter. Prajda, "Unions of Interest," 152.

78 In 1410, Amerigo di Bartolo Zati deposited money for Betto di Giovanni Busini. ASF, Mercanzia 11775. 74r.

79 Giuliano had business interests in Genoa. See his letters sent from the city, in 1422. ASF, MAP 1.53r.

80 For mentions of the workshop see: ASF, Arte della Lana 319.130r, ASF, Catasto 453. 824r, 825r. We find among the partners his brother, Niccolò, and Bernardo del maestro Francesco. ASF, Catasto 450. 273v.

81 See the tax declaration of the brothers in 1433: ASF, Catasto 453. 824r, 825r.

Hungary. As far as one can tell on the basis of the available sources, the supply of silk textiles in the royal court provided by the Zati brothers did not overlap chronologically with the Scolari's trade in silk fabrics in Hungary. There is no direct evidence indicating that the two families obtained, in the 1420s and 1430s, a monopoly in trading with silk textiles in the royal court. However, the lack of references to other merchants selling silk to King Sigismund suggests that the two families may have managed to secure an exclusive agreement with the sovereign.

Venice, as the major producer of wool and silk fabrics, exercised a protectionist policy aimed at strengthening the domestic industry throughout the period. In spite of this, Florentine textiles made their way to the city, and from there to the international market.⁸² Their trade may well have been facilitated by the Florentines who received citizenship in Venice, which made it easier for their fellow-citizens to obtain permissions for the transiting of domestic products.

Conclusion

By the second part of the reign of Louis I, the continuous trade contacts between the Florentine Republic and the Kingdom of Hungary gave rise to a lively Florentine community in Buda, which probably reached its peak in terms of political influence and economic activity during the reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg. After a depression of two or three decades following King Sigismund's death, the period of Matthias Corvinus again saw the arrival of a considerable number of Florentine tradesmen to Hungary, who provided the royal and baronial courts with their goods. Because of the considerable distance between Florence and Buda, as well as her importance as a major trading hub and producer of wool and silk textiles, Venice played a leading role in the transportation and the redistribution of the Florentines' goods. The commercial triangle formed between Florence, Venice, and Buda was built first and foremost upon the network of Florentine merchants. Venetians seem to have had only a minor share in this commerce. Throughout the period, the Florentines ensured the continuous distribution of their domestic products: wool textiles, initially, and later, from the 1380s onwards, also their high-quality silk fabrics. The appearance of Florentine silk textiles at this early phase of domestic production may testify to the simultaneous development of the Florentine silk industry and

82 Information on Florentine textiles sold in or through Venice is found in the documents concerning several court cases: ASV, Giudici di Petizion, Sentenze e interdetti 8. 53r; Sentenze e interdetti 9. 19r; Sentenze a giustizia 12.21v.

its marketing in the courts of Hungary. At the time, silk in the Kingdom of Hungary was often sold by the manufacturers themselves. Meanwhile, silk, which back then may have been a highly individualized item, became very popular and widespread by the reign of Matthias Corvinus, thanks to the development of the domestic industry, which made possible its continuous distribution by Florentine merchants even in the eastern part of the continent. The marketing of Florentine silk textiles, as luxury items, shaped the tastes of the local population. Imitations of silk, which were common in Florentine wall- and table-paintings, became part of the visual landscape.

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Austrian Salt in Pozsony in the Mid-Fifteenth Century

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In this essay, I explore how the city of Pozsony (Preßburg, today Bratislava, Slovakia), which lies in the valley of the Danube River on what was once the most important trade route connecting the Kingdom of Hungary with Western Europe, managed to acquire Austrian salt, an import that, in general, was forbidden by the rulers. The city facilitated this not only by obtaining a number of privileges, but also by farming the tax collected in the city on foreign trade, the so-called “thirtieth” (*tricesima*). In practice, however, this could only be done in varying ways. In the course of my research, it also became clear that Pozsony needed Austrian salt for a variety of reasons. The city was distant from the salt mines, so the Transylvanian salt that was brought to the borderlands in the west was already very expensive. In many cases, however, none of the salt that was produced in the country even made it to Pozsony because of the complications posed by transportation, the deficiencies of the fiscal system, and fluctuations in production. The Austrian salt mines, in contrast, were relatively nearby, the cooked salt that was produced at these mines was essentially consistent in its quality, and it was also less expensive. In this essay, I also examine how the quantities of salt that were imported from Austria changed in various periods and how the city marketed excess salt in other parts of the country. Naturally, the people of Pozsony were not able to sell the salt in the entire territory of Hungary. My analysis indicates that the market for this salt was limited to the County of Pozsony itself, part of Nyitra County, the part of Komárom County to the north of the Danube River, and parts of Győr and Moson Counties.

Keywords: Pozsony, Austrian salt, royal salt chambers, volume of salt imports, fifteenth century

Introduction

In the first half of the fifteenth century, Pozsony became the most important trading city in the Kingdom of Hungary, in no small part because in 1402 King Sigismund granted the city the staple right and in 1430 he gave it the right of coinage. The burghers of the city played important roles in commerce in

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Hungary in cloth and other manufactured goods from Western Europe, and they had ties to merchants in cities like Vienna, Cologne, and Nuremberg.¹ The various textiles constituted wares of particular importance in the large-scale trade of imports because of their value and their significance in international commerce,² and Austrian salt was, in comparison, less important. However, the fact that, despite a royal ban repeatedly put on the import of salt, Austrian salt made its way to Pozsony time and again, indicates that it was an item that merits the attention of historians.³

In Hungary, salt was mined in Transylvania and Máramaros (today Maramureș, a region most of which now lies in Romania), and the mines in these two regions provided salt for the entire country. By the beginning of the fourteenth century at the latest, the mining and sale of salt had become a royal monopoly.⁴ In 1397, King Sigismund issued detailed regulations concerning commerce in salt. Salt was transported from the mines in Transylvania and Máramaros to other parts of the country by boat or in carts (territories to the south of the Sava River used sea salt). In several places, new royal chambers were created (or old chambers were revived), which sold the salt at prices established by the king.⁵ The chambers were also entrusted with the task of ensuring that the royal court maintained its monopoly on salt and preventing unauthorized foreign salt from reaching the markets in Hungary. One of these revived chamber centers was established precisely in Pozsony. While, in the terms of the regulations issued in 1397, the price of 100 pieces of rock salt in the mining regions was one golden florin, by the time such a unit reached Pozsony, Nagyszombat (today Trnava, Slovakia), or Sopron, the royal officials already sold it for five golden florins. According to the available sources, the chamber prices then established by the ruler remained in effect until the early sixteenth century. King Sigismund

1 See for instance Kubinyi, “Pest szerepe,” 4–5; Skorka, “Pozsony gazdasági,” 434–63; Szende, *Ottthon a városban*, 20–47.

2 Kováts, *Nyugat-Magyarország*, passim.

3 Hocquet, *Le sel et le Pouvoir*, 369–91.

4 Kubinyi, “Königliches”; Weisz, “Megjegyzések,” 46, 50; Draskóczy, “Sóbányászat,” 56–67. The rulers earned considerable revenues thanks to their monopoly. Sigismund brought in 100,000 golden florins (a third of his entire revenues) a year, and Matthias Corvinus brought in between 80,000 and 100,000. Revenues decreased under the rule of the Jagiellonian dynasty because of mismanagement, corruption, and the fact that more and more rock salt made its way to the markets without having caught the attention of the chambers. According to an Italian report, Louis II earned only 16,000 golden florins a year off salt duties. The treasury, however, made significantly more, possibly even as much as 30,000 golden florins. Draskóczy, “Sóbányászat,” 58.

5 These offices continued to grow in number in the fifteenth century.

also issued regulations specifying the respective marketing areas of salt from Máramaros and Transylvania. Rock salt from Máramaros could be sold on the markets in the part of the country between the Tisza River and the Zagyva River.⁶ Accordingly, Pozsony was one of the markets for the distant mines of Transylvania, a distance which, as mentioned above, resulted in a huge increase in the price of rock salt in Pozsony and its region.

In the fourteenth century, salt production in the Austrian provinces neighboring Hungary began to grow. Because of the geological conditions, salt was found there in different kinds of stone, from which it could be dissolved by water and then cooked. This cooked salt was taken to the markets in Hungary. The records concerning salt were kept according to “Fuder,” or wooden tubs (into which the salt was originally packed), the precise size of which actually varied depending on the mine from which the salt came (one Fuder from Aussee was 125 pounds or 70 kilograms,⁷ whereas a Fuder from Hallstatt was between 100 and 115 pounds, or 56 and 64,4 kilograms). After drying, the salt was put in smaller drums called “Küfel,” or “cupa” in Latin, which made it easier to transport. A Küfel weighed roughly 7 kilograms.⁸ The salt that made it to the markets in and around Pozsony and Sopron came primarily from Hallstatt. In Hungary, it was already referred to as Gmunden salt (in 1453, King Ladislaus V of Hungary called it “unser Gmundisch Salz”), after the town of Gmunden in Upper Austria, where the ducal salt office was located. In Gmunden, the salt was packaged into “Küfel” and sent on its way (by boat) to market destinations. Some salt was even transported to Gmunden from Aussee. Lower Austria (first and foremost the areas lying to the south of the Danube River) constituted a natural market for the mining wares shipped from Gmunden, but some of these mining wares were also taken to the southern territories of Bohemia. In Bohemia and the areas to the north of the Danube, however, Hallein and the

6 Kubinyi, “Die königlich-ungarischen,” 263–64; Draskóczy, “A sóigazgatás,” 285–93; Weisz, “Az erdélyi sókamarák,” 243–44.

7 A Viennese pound weighed 0.56 kilograms.

8 *Materialien zur Geschichte*, 781. According to a test done in Hallstatt in 1710, a Küfel weighed 13 pounds (7.28 kilograms) and the salt it contained weighed 11.9 pounds (6.67 kilograms), or 12 pounds if rounded up (6.72 kilograms). Schraml, *Das oberösterreichische*, 219–20. In Gmunden, the salt from a Hallstatt Fuder filled some 9 Küfel, while a Fuder from Aussee filled 10 Küfel. Palme, *Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, 134, 386. A Küfel was called “kúf” or “kúp” in Hungarian. See Mollay, *Német–magyar*, 375–77.

mines in Bavaria offered some competition, so the merchants were only too happy to be able to take salt to the markets in Hungary as well.⁹

Austrian Salt in Pozsony

The earliest data concerning the importation of Austrian salt into Pozsony dates to the fourteenth century. The available sources suggest that in the middle of the century, there were problems with the supply of salt in the country, and the territories on the periphery had difficulty obtaining adequate amounts. In 1354, King Louis I of Hungary permitted the northern territories of the kingdom to use rock salt from Poland and Sopron to use Austrian cooked salt. A charter issued in 1355 indicates that salt from Austria was already being imported into Pozsony as well. Indeed, the burghers of the city had been using Austrian salt even earlier than this. The permission that was issued by the ruler in 1356 specified that German (i.e. Austrian) salt had already been used in the area earlier.¹⁰ Later, the import of salt from Austria was forbidden, but in 1362 the ruler again had to grant a concession permitting it. A new prohibition was issued later, which again had to be withdrawn in 1381, though the royal salt chamber was active in the city. These measures indicate that the royal chamber system was not able to provide enough salt for the peripheral regions in the west.¹¹ Nor was King Sigismund able to prevent the import of salt from Austria and Poland. While the 1405 law prohibited the use of salt from abroad, in 1407 the city of Pozsony itself purchased salt from Vienna. In the 1430s, the importation of salt must have been quite regular.¹²

Following the death of King Albert of Habsburg, Hungary fell into a state of civil war. István and György Rozgonyi, who were serving as the *ispáns* of Pozsony County, supported Wladislas III of Poland, while the city stood behind Queen Elisabeth until her death in December 1442 and then supported Ladislaus V.¹³ The salt mines were in the hands of János Hunyadi and Miklós Újlaki, who supported Wladislas III. When János Hunyadi was elected as regent

9 MNL OL DF 240 246 (AMB 2426); Csendes, “Die Wiener Salzändler,” 8–10; Palme, *Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, 395–402.

10 Draskóczy, “A lengyel só,” 111–28; Draskóczy, “A sóigazgatás,” 291–93.

11 MNL OL DF 238 744, DF 238 803, DF 238 978, DF 238 998 (AMB 126, 183, 358, 378).

12 MNL OL DL 43 989, DF 239 292, DF 239 664 (AMB 667, 1041); Iványi, “Két középkori,” 187–88; Draskóczy, “A sóigazgatás,” 292.

13 Knausz, *Az országos tanács*, 4–5; Pálósfalvi, “A Rozgonyiak,” 897–928. In 1442, *denarii* and *obuli* were struck here for Elisabeth, but by 1443–1444 coins were already being minted in the name of King Wladislas.

in 1446, he also assumed the administration of the royal revenues. Hunyadi remained in control of the royal incomes even after Ladislaus V had effectively come to the throne in 1453. He devoted particular attention to the salt mines and salt chambers, and as a consequence of the measures he introduced, the income from the salt monopoly increased.¹⁴ His allies, György and Sebestyén Rozgonyi as ispáns of Pozsony (the latter taking the place of his deceased father István), royal treasurer Mihály Ország, who was also captain of Nagyszombat, Pongrác Szentmiklósi and Miklós Újlaki exerted close control over the counties of Pozsony and Nyitra. Hunyadi only extended his direct influence to Pozsony in 1450, when he took control of the royal castle there.¹⁵ Because of the uncertain political circumstances, Hungarian rock salt hardly made it to the borderlands in the west until 1450. Thus, the people of Pozsony were able to purchase and sell salt from the mines in the neighboring lands of Austria without hindrance (see the import volumes for 1444–1464 and 1496–1499 in Tables 1 and 2 in the Appendix). At the end of 1439 or the beginning of 1440, the city farmed the local office that administered the collection the thirtieth by charter from the dowager Queen Elisabeth. Pozsony used this opportunity to support the trade interests of its burghers.¹⁶ By establishing control over the administration of the thirtieth, the city further eased the import of Austrian salt.¹⁷ The sources suggest that at the time no royal salt chamber operated in the city. After Hunyadi took power, he seized the chance to establish a salt chamber in Pozsony and prohibit the import of Austrian salt. He provided compensation for the city by leasing the salt chamber to the city for a year at the end of 1450. According to the charter, Hunyadi gave the city every *tyminum* (10,000 pieces) of Hungarian rock salt for 410 golden florins (to be paid half in Hungarian golden florins, half in Viennese coins). The chamber provided for the territories between Nagyszombat, Galgóc (today Hlohovec, Slovakia), and Komárom.¹⁸ A charter issued in April 1451 indicates that Stefan Gmaitl, a burgher of Pozsony, became a special *familiaris* of

In 1447, Hunyadi had the mint issue *obuli*. Pohl, "Die Münzstätte," 90, 102; Gyöngyössi, *Magyar pénztörténet*, 113.

14 Draskóczy, "Das königliche," 141–42.

15 On the shifts that took place in the political relations in the region see Pálosfalvi, "A pozsonyi," 197–213; Neumann, *A Korlátkövek*, 20–29.

16 Kováts, "A magyar arany," 120.

17 Like all other products, salt was brought into Hungary not only through the chief thirtieth office in Pozsony, but also through its branch offices. MNL OL DF 240 227 (AMB 1598).

18 MNL OL DF 240 075 (AMB 1447); Lederer, *A középkori pénzügyletek*, 223–24. Providing salt for the Csallóköz district, however, did not become the responsibility of the city.

Hunyadi, and assumed the office of salt chamberer in his service. Regrettably, the document does not reveal whether or not he held this office in Pozsony, though one can assume he probably did. In any case, the relationship between Gmaitl and his native city was not always smooth, for the city council demanded that he pay the thirtieth after his wares, though in principle he was exempt from the tax.¹⁹ After the lease had expired, Hunyadi took direct control over the chamber, and he put István Sasvári, another *familiaris* in his service, at the head of the two chambers in Pozsony and Nyitra. In March of 1452, Sasvári transferred 400 golden florins-worth of rock salt to the city of Pozsony on the regent's account. However, Pozsony still had control of the royal salt, which was not under the jurisdiction of the chamber, and at the instructions of the regent it could make drafts on this salt. At the beginning of 1453, Sasvári was still in this position, and the salt chamber continued to function in the city that year.²⁰

After Ladislaus V finally started his personal rule in 1453, the burghers of Pozsony rushed to have him affirm their old privileges. In July of 1453, the king once again granted the city permission to import salt from Austria. As the royal charter reveals, salt from Hungarian territories was also sold in Pozsony. Before a month had passed, however, the king issued a general ban on the use of foreign salt in the Kingdom of Hungary. Thus, it is hardly surprising that in July 1454 Pozsony again managed to prevail on the king to grant a concession and allow the city to import salt. True, the royal charter (which refers to the concession granted by King Louis I of Hungary) specified that the “German” salt that was brought into the city could only be used by the people of Pozsony.²¹ The available sources clearly indicate that in the spring of 1455 the royal chamber was functioning again. At the time, it was managed by the city of Pozsony, in all likelihood on Hunyadi's behalf. According to the accounts from this year, Hungarian rock salt was sold there.²² Yet the accounts of Pozsony also attest

19 MNL OL DF 240 084, DF 240 098, DF 240 099, DF 240 108, DF 240 113, DF 240 305 (AMB 1456, 1470, 1471, 1480, 1485, 4302).

20 MNL OL DF 240 145, DF 240 150, DF 240 217 (AMB 1517, 1521, 1588).

21 MNL OL DF 240 246, DF 240 260, DF 240 305 (AMB 1617, 1631, 1676). In June 1454, the burghers of Pozsony had the local chapter transcribe the charter issued by Louis I in 1356, in which he had authorized the import of salt. DF 240 300 (AMB 1671).

22 MNL OL DF 241 323, DF 240 327, DF 240 328 (AMB 1694, 1698, 1699). AMB Kammerrechnungen K-22/a. 25v.-26r. (DF 277 078). In the autumn of 1453, count Ulrich of Cilli and later Andreas Baumkircher, both of whom were supporters of Ladislaus V, acquired control of the castle of Pozsony. This was a clear indication that the former regent had lost influence in the county. Engel, *Magyarország világi*, vol. 1, 169, 393–94, II. 26. Yet he may have retained control of the salt chamber organization in this territory still in

that “German” cooked salt was also sold in the city in spite of the fact that it functioned as the seat of the royal salt chamber. In April of 1453, Hunyadi therefore called on the city, in an indignant letter, not to permit the import of salt from Austria (as it had been doing thus far) and to allow the representatives of the chamber to carry out investigations at the branch thirtieth offices, and even help their work there. He put pressure on the council by threatening it with the confiscation of the thirtieth.²³ These data indicate on the one hand that Hunyadi was resolute in his opposition to the import of salt from Austria, while the ruler (who was also duke of Austria) was not. On the other hand, they also suggest that the Hungarian chamber organization (which was under the oversight of Hunyadi) was not able to provide even close to enough salt, which was precious indeed, for the borderlands in the west, so the territory remained a good market for salt from Austria (which was cheaper anyway).

The Volume of Salt Imports

Beginning in the 1443–1444 financial year, the municipal accounts offer an overview of the quantities of the salt imports.²⁴ The financial affairs of the city were administered by a chamberer (*Chamerer*), who from the late 1430s are known by the name, and were assisted in their work by paid employees (*Chammerschreiber* or *Chammerknechte*). The chamberer was responsible for rendering all of the accounts. He usually began his tenure in office on May 12 (the day of Saint Pancras), and he usually remained in office for a year, though some of the people who held this position were in office for less than a year. The mayor was responsible for overseeing the work of the head of the chamber.²⁵ The accounts were not kept consistently, however, and today we often have only incomplete volumes on the basis of which to make hypotheses. The salt that was imported to the city was measured in Küfel. The account entries indicate that the suppliers did indeed pay a thirtieth (i.e. one Küfel for every thirty).²⁶ It was beneficial to the city to be able to levy the thirtieth in kind, since some of

1455, since his *familiaris* István Sasvári held the title of chamberer (*camerarius*) in Upper Hungary, and he issued charters concerning the trade of salt. MNL OL DF 240 323 (AMB 1694).

23 The municipal accounts from 1451–53 and 1455 rarely make any mention of Küfel. AMB Kammerrechnungen K-15. 17–20, K-16. 25–29, 33, K-19. 25–26 (MNL OL DF 277 071, DF 277 072, DF 277 075); MNL OL DF 240 227 (AMB 1598).

24 In order to make it easier to provide a clear overview, we tried to use calendar years.

25 Majorossy, “Egy határ menti,” 450–51.

26 Goda–Majorossy, “Städtische Selbstverwaltung,” 96–98.

the salt thus collected was sold and some of it was given to the city officials as a gift. The city's income stemming from the traffic of salt was not a substantial amount, oscillating between 100 and 160 golden florins annually. With regards to the value of the import, according to the calculations of Ferenc Kováts, in the 1440s it was somewhere between 3,000 and 4,800 golden florins annually, while in the 1450s it rose to 6,000 golden florins. This amount is a mere 4 percent of the 150,000 golden florins-worth of taxable merchandise brought into the city.²⁷

The numbers accounted by the employees of the chamber indicate that the amount of salt imported into the city fluctuated. In 1446–1447, very little salt was imported. There are no records of any legally imported salt between 1451 and 1453 or in 1455. And yet, in the 1440s and 1450s, significant amounts of salt may well have been imported into Pozsony. Of the various accounts that are at our disposal, the one from 1448 seems the most complete. According to this record, between January 28 and November 30 of this year, 194,464 Küfel (1,361.25 tons) of salt were officially imported. In all likelihood, this quantity increased in the 1450s. In the period between April 22 and December 22 1456, 170,406 Küfel were imported (1,192.82 tons). Duties were imposed on 133,800 Küfel (936.6 tons) of imported salt between May 9 and December 13 1457. After this, however, the amount of salt on which duties were levied began to decrease, and after 1465 the import of salt completely ceased, disregarding a few exceptional cases. Thus, in the 1440s and 1450s, there were significant imports (between 1,000 and 1,400 tons a year), though there were years in which only smaller quantities of salt were registered by the customs officials.²⁸ Unfortunately, the available sources do not indicate how much salt was produced within the Kingdom of Hungary in the middle of the fifteenth century. The demand for salt within the kingdom at the end of the century must have been somewhere between 24,000 and 30,000 tons,²⁹ of which 1,000–1,400 tons constituted between 3 and 5 percent. Naturally, if one takes into consideration contraband as well, these numbers are obviously higher.

Initially, King Matthias Corvinus did not take measures to hinder the import of salt through the city of Pozsony. Nonetheless, the amount of salt that was brought into the kingdom through the Pozsony customs office dropped drastically after 1459. This coincided with a general drop in foreign trade flowing through the city. The explanation for this lies in the Austrian financial crisis and

27 Kováts, "Pozsony városának háztartása," 459–60.

28 See Table 1 in the Appendix

29 Draskóczy, "Sóbányászat," 62.

the catastrophic drop in the value of the Viennese *denarii*.³⁰ However, one must also take into consideration the shifts in the policy of the royal court. In 1464, the national assembly forbade the import of salt. In 1465, King Matthias sent stern instructions to the city of Pozsony in which he prohibited the import of salt. This order had to be issued again in 1468. In other words, in spite of the prohibition, salt continued to be smuggled into the city.³¹ Later, it became possible again to occasionally import salt from Austria with a royal license, but in their quantity these imports never reached the levels that had been attained in the 1440s and 1450s.

It is also worth considering the importance of exports to Hungary from the perspective of mining in Austria. In Hallstatt, roughly 8,000 to 9,000 tons of salt were extracted annually. If one adds to this the salt that was mined in Aussee and then transported to Gmunden, at least 9,000 to 10,000 tons of salt had to find a market.³² With the most prudent calculation, 1,000–1,400 tons is 9–13 percent of this amount. Thus, the export to Hungary was hardly trifling. If one also keeps in mind that a significant amount of salt was brought into the Kingdom of Hungary through Sopron, and takes into consideration contraband as well, which, regrettably, cannot be quantified, and adds those amounts of salt that, for whatever reason, were not actually noted in the records, it becomes quite clear that the Hungarian market was in all likelihood very important for the producers and merchants (the princes who profited off of the trade of salt) of Gmunden (and Aussee). When King Matthias brought an end to the legal import of salt, this measure had serious consequences for the producers and merchants alike, since they had to find new markets for their export.

30 Kováts, "Korakapitalisztikus," 193–94.

31 *Decreta regni*, 164; MNL OL DF 240 491, 240 504, DF 240 539, DF 242 776 (AMB 1862, 1875, 1910, 4711).

32 The production in Aussee was 8,715 tons in 1336, 10,527 tons in 1392, 8,182 tons in 1523, and 10,875 tons in 1531, while production in Hallstatt was 5,691.28–6,544.072 tons in 1336, 6,984.2 tons in 1393, 9,351.58 tons in 1394, and 8,680 tons in 1520. In Hall in Tyrol, in the 1327–1328 financial year production was around 3,782.72 tons, whereas by 1520 it had increased to 9,733 tons. Around 1330, the combined production in Aussee, Hallstatt, and Hall was 18,189–19,041.8 tons. By 1520, this number had increased to 26,592. From the perspective of this inquiry, Hall in Tirol was not significant, since none of the minerals extracted in Hall were sold in Hungary. Palme, *Rechts-, Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte*, 135, 386, 466; Pickl, "Die Salzproduktion," 22.

The Markets for the City of Pozsony

What was the extent of the territory that the burghers of Pozsony were able to provide with salt imported from Austria? The city itself gave an answer to this question when it explained the details of its right to import salt from Austria to the ruler in 1453. Its delegates explained to the ruler (who raised no objections) that the city had previously transported and sold salt on the territories extending, on one side of the Danube River to the Rába River, and on the other side of the Danube River to the Vág River.³³ Regrettably, the charter gives no other, more detailed information.³⁴ The river Danube referred to in the charter should by no means be interpreted as the small branch of the Danube that in the Middle Ages was called Csalló (the Danube Csalló, or Csallóduna),³⁵ but rather as the main branch of the Danube (which was nowhere near as important then as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries), or the branch of the river known as “szigetközi” (an island plain in Western Hungary bordered by the Danube and its branches), both of which in the Middle Ages were used by boats traveling from Vienna and Pozsony to Visegrád and Buda (traffic on the “szigetközi” Danube must have been particularly large).³⁶ Thus, the territory to which the city of Pozsony had royal license to transport and sell salt imported from Austria included the river island known today as Csallóköz (today Žitný ostrov, Slovakia), as well as, at least to some extent, the area of the southern shores of the main branch of the Danube.

The burghers of Pozsony had close ties to Csallóköz. They regularly traveled to the island and the area surrounding it, from where they returned with foodstuffs. Their carts also often traveled by way of Csallóköz to Komárom on their way to Buda.³⁷ Place names of Csallóköz and settlements on the southern bank of the Danube are often found in the last wills and testaments of the denizens of Pozsony, in a way outlining the territories that were part of the narrower market

33 MNL OL DF 240 246 (AMB 1617)

34 The district over which the Pozsony salt chamber had jurisdiction is in the territory designated in the charter. It was larger than the average chamber district in Hungary.

35 Püspöki, *A Csallóköz*, 84–87.

36 *Quellen zur Geschichte*, nos. 3507, 3508, 3514; Takáts, “A dunai hajózás,” 106–07; Kováts, “Adalékok,” 434–44; Püspöki, *A Csallóköz*, 90–92.

37 MNL OL DF 239 632, DF 239 683, DF 239 854, DF 239 914, DF 239 869, DF 239 886 (AMB 1005, 1061, 1227, 1287, 1242, 1259); MNL OL DF 274 839 (AMŠ A-9-19); Kováts, “Adalékok,” 435. Part of the grain that was transported by the burghers of Pozsony to Buda came from here.

zone of the city.³⁸ According to Kováts, the extent of the city's reach stretched on the northern side of the Danube to the mining towns, Esztergom, and Vác. In other words, the whole of Pozsony and Nyitra counties depended on the markets and fairs in Pozsony, and so did the southern part of Bars County and the northern part of Komárom and Esztergom counties, lying just beyond the Danube.³⁹ The extent of the territory that the burghers of Pozsony alluded to as the area where they marketed imported Austrian salt was smaller than this, since it was bordered by the Vág river, but it did stretch to the southern shore of what today is the main branch. Most of the thirtieth offices farmed by the city of Pozsony in the 1450s were located in this territory.⁴⁰ Thus, the part of the country where the salt that came to Hungary through the customs office of Pozsony was sold consisted of Pozsony County itself, part of Nyitra County,⁴¹ at least the stretch of Komárom County lying to the north of the Danube, and parts of Győr and Moson Counties. Towards the northeast, it bordered the market zone of Nagyszombat, and towards the southeast it bordered the markets of Sopron, the border of which was also the Rába River. They were both important commercial centers. It is the territory described above that can be identified as the market zone of Pozsony.⁴² Furthermore, this was the part of the country for which the Hungarian chamber organization was no more able to guarantee adequate provisions of salt, even if only at times. The 1,000–1,400 tons of salt that were imported from Austria would have been enough for a population of 100,000–140,000 people at most, if one reckons with a demand of 10 kilograms of salt per person. The population of this territory may well have been approximately this size.⁴³

38 Majorossy, "Egy város," 190, 196–99.

39 Kováts, *Nyugat-Magyarország*, 8.

40 In 1453, Pozsony took by lease, in addition to the thirtieth offices of Buda, Sopron, and Pozsony itself, those of Oroszvár (today Rusovce, Slovakia), Nezsider (today Neusiedl am See, Austria), Szakolca (today Skalica, Slovakia), Újvár (today Holič, Slovakia), and Szenice (today Senica, Slovakia), but not the thirtieth office of Nagyszombat. It had already leased the thirtieth of Oroszvár in an earlier period. Ortway: *Pozsony*, II/2. 53–54, 82–85, II/3. 56–61, 67–95, 103. From Vienna, an important road went to Pozsony through Hainburg, along the Danube River. See Lukačka, "Verkehrs- und Handelsbeziehungen," 161. Nezsider and Zurány (today Zurndorf, Austria) in Moson County were branch thirtieth offices of Pozsony in the first third of the sixteenth century. See Kenyeres, "I. Ferdinánd," 73–74.

41 In 1450, the tenants of Szentgyörgy (today Prievaly, Slovakia), which is not far from Korlátókő (today Cerová, Slovakia) in Nyitra County, brought the wares that they had purchased in Vienna to the settlement through Pozsony, that is, two rolls of cloth, 1.5 pounds of pepper, and 64 Küfel (448 kilograms) of salt. These items were all transported by cart. Neumann, *Korlátköviék*, 155, 173–75.

42 Szende, "Beziehungen," 141–42.

43 Kubinyi, "Die Bevölkerung des Königreichs," 90–91; Draskóczy, "Sóbányászat," 62.

It is worth taking note of a bit of information dating from 1470. With the consent of the ruler, treasurer János Ernuszt permitted the purchase and sale of 400 pounds of imported salt. This amount corresponds to 96,000 Küfel (673 tons),⁴⁴ which in principle would have been enough to meet the demands of 60,000–70,000 people in a given year. The contents of the charter indicate that the city (and the royal chamber) was the center of the salt trade in the region. People may well have come to the city to purchase this important item not only from most of the settlements in Pozsony County (Nagyszombat was also home to a salt chamber, so its market zone should not be taken into consideration), but also from the settlements in the neighboring territories of the surrounding counties.⁴⁵ For the sake of comparison, it is worth considering some of the later data. When Wladislas II of Hungary permitted the import of salt from Austria in the period between 1496 and 1498, people could purchase the salt from the city chamber. Data from 1498/9, a period of almost a whole year, indicate the import of 8,160 Küfel (57 tons).⁴⁶ This quantity would have been enough for 5,000 to 6,000 people for one year. The population of Pozsony at the beginning of the sixteenth century was between 4,200 and 4,700 people.⁴⁷ Thus, this import would have been adequate for the local community and the very narrow surroundings at most.

It is worth saying a few words about the prices of salt as well. In the 1440s and 1450s, the city sold one Küfel for 7–9 Viennese *denarii*. Between 1496 and 1499, the city purchased one Küfel in Vienna for 13–14 Viennese *denarii* (roughly 4.5 Hungarian *denarii*) and then sold it in Hungary for 20 Viennese *denarii* (roughly 6–7 Hungarian *denarii*). At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the price of a Küfel at Pozsony was still 18–20 *denarii* (6–7 Hungarian *denarii*). At the end of the 1520s and the beginning of the 1530s, a Küfel could usually be purchased in Hainburg for 16 Viennese *denarii* and then sold in Pozsony for 20.⁴⁸

44 AMB 4771 (= MNL OL DF 242 835). In this case, the pound is an accounting unit: 1 pound is 240 Küfel.

45 One should think first and foremost of the places located within the jurisdiction of the Pozsony salt chamber.

46 MNL OL DF 240 822, DF 240 827, DF 240 850, DF 240 952 (AMB 2198, 2204, 2228, 2329); MNL OL DF 277 110, DF 277 111 - AMB Kammerrechnungen K-54. 25, K-55. 76–77 (MNL OL DF 277 110, DF 277 111). After Mohács, in the chamber year 1528–1529, sources indicate that 8,137 Küfel (roughly 57 tons) were sold. AMB Kammerrechnungen K-75. 53, K-76. 43 (MNL OL Microfilm collection, roll C 396).

47 Szende, *Ottthon a városban*, 26.

48 AMB Kammerrechnungen K-19 25, K-67 42r (MNL OL DF 277 085, DF 277 123), K-79/b. 77, K-82. 43, K-83. 39, K-88. 130, K-89. 97 (MNL OL Microfilm collection, roll C 396). In 1440–1447, in Vienna one golden florin was worth 210 Viennese *denarii*, and the value of the golden florin later grew.

In Transylvania, different sizes of rock salt were mined, depending on whether it was going to be transported by boat or by cart. Under the rule of the Jagiellonian dynasty, in the town of Torda (today Turda, Romania) the rock salt mined for shipment by boat was 2.7 kilograms (5.5 pounds) and the rock salt cut for shipment by cart was 8.6 kilograms (17.5 pounds). In the town of Vízakna (today Ocna Sibiului, Romania), rock salt for shipment by boat weighed 4.9 kilograms (10 pounds) and rock salt for shipment by cart 10.8 kilograms (22 pounds). In Dés (today Dej, Romania) presumably rock salt in the amount of 9.33 kilograms (19 pounds) was cut for shipment by cart and perhaps 2.5 kilograms (5 pounds) for shipment by boat. In 1515/6, one hundred units of the rock salt cut for shipment by boat were worth 1.1 golden florins, and one hundred units of the rock salt cut for shipment by cart could be purchased at the mines for 3 golden florins. One can easily imagine how much these prices jumped by the time the salt had made it to the borderlands (whether brought by boat or cart). These prices could hardly have competed with the price of a hundred Küfel, which weighed about 700 kilograms, and cost 6–7 Hungarian golden florins).⁴⁹

Conclusion

In the middle of the fifteenth century, a great deal of Austrian salt was consumed in the territories of Western Hungary. The rise in the import of salt can equally be explained by the domestic political circumstances and the fact that the city of Pozsony leased the local chief customs office. The burghers of the city strove to take full advantage of this opportunity. Drawing on their privileges, they brought quantities of salt to Hungary that far exceeded the needs of the local population. Others also took advantage of the profits to be made in the trade in salt. As power was centralized and consolidated under the rule of King Matthias, the king took back the thirtieth, and the amount of Austrian salt was imported to Hungary decreased accordingly. One should also keep in mind that Hungarian salt was too expensive in the parts of the

Thus, in 1450–1457, a Hungarian golden florin was worth 240 *denarii*. After 1466, according to the account books one Hungarian golden florin was worth 300 Viennese *denarii* (or in other words, one Hungarian *denarius* was worth three Viennese *denarii*), but the actual value was higher (between 1500 and 1524, one golden florin was worth 330 Viennese *denarii*). See Huszár, “Pénzforgalom,” 36, 43. In Vienna, the average price of a Küfel at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was 14 *denarii*. See Mayer, *Der auswärtige Handel*, 182.

49 Draskóczy, “Sóbányászat,” 60.

country that were far from the mines, and indeed it was not always possible to get enough salt from the mining areas to the distant borderlands. This was due to the difficulties of transportation, the inefficiencies of the chamber system, and the fluctuations in production in Hungary (though production also fluctuated in Austria). Furthermore, the rock salt mined in Hungary was sold in quantities that differed in their weight, while the Küfel brought in from Austria were always roughly the same. Finally, while in general the salt that was mined in Transylvania was very pure, the cooked salt from Austria may have been more uniform in its quality.⁵⁰

Appendix. The import of Austrian salt in Pozsony

Table 1. Salt imported between 1444–1464 on which the thirtieth was paid in Pozsony⁵¹

Period	Number of Küfel	Kilograms
June 10–December 9, 1444	79,200	554,400 (532,224)
March 12–December 30, 1445	127,080	889,560 (853,978)
January 1–April 3, 1446	7,080	49,560 (47,578)
July 17–December 8, 1447	76,440	535,080 (513,677)
January 28–November 30, 1448	194,464	1,361,248 (1,306,798)
May 13–October 11, 1450	113,580	795,060 (763,258)
March 29–May 28, 1454	18,720	131,040 (125,799)
April 22–December 22, 1456	170,406	1,192,842 (1,145,129)
May 9–December 13, 1457	133,800	936,660 (899,136)
March 14–July 7, 1458	60,840	425,880 (408,845)
June 2–December 31, 1459	94,170	659,190 (632,823)
May 30–September 21, 1461	37,800	264,600 (254,816)
January 2–July 8, 1463	19,842	138,894 (133,339)
December 16–December 22, 1464	6,925	48,475 (46,536)

⁵⁰ Draskóczy, “15. századi olasz,” 52–53.

⁵¹ This summary is based on the account books numbers MNL OL DF 277 064–277 089 (AMB Kammerrechnungen K–8. – K 32). When calculating the quantity of a Küfel in kilograms, we took two figures as our point of departure. We used the figure usually found in the secondary literature, according to which one Küfel weighed 7 kilograms, but in addition, we provided in parentheses figures based on measurements according to which one Küfel weighed 6.72 kilograms (see footnote 8).

Table 2. Salt imports into the city of Pozsony in 1496–1499⁵²

Period	Number of Küfel	Kilograms
December 13, 1496–April 17, 1497	6,000	42,000 (40,320)
May 17–December 12, 1498	6,840	47,880 (45,965)
March 21–April 20, 1499	1,320	9,240 (8,871)
1498–1499	8,160	57,120 (54,836)

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Bavarian Cloth Seals in Hungary

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The import of cloth was one of the most important sectors of international trade throughout the European Middle Ages and early modern period. Its history and impact on medieval economies have been studied by scholars for quite a long time, creating the impression that there are no new sources waiting to be found. Improved methods of archaeological excavations, however, have produced data significant to the international trade connections. This data was hidden in small leaden seals that were attached to the textile fabrics indicating their quality and origin. In this paper, I examine the cloth seals originating from Bavaria that have been found so far in the Carpathian Basin and compare the information provided by them with that already known from the available written sources. This comparison leads to several important conclusions. Perhaps most importantly, the dating range of the known cloth seals can be convincingly limited within the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for all the nineteen known textile production centers. Also, the cloth marked by these seals indicates that some serious changes arose in textile consumption at the end of the Middle Ages. In this study, I identify some new places of origin not mentioned in the written sources and trace their distribution in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary.

Keywords: international trade, textile production, medieval Bavaria, cloth seals, cloth and linen trade

Introduction

The reshaping and transformation of the Western European economy in the late Middle Ages had several consequences, including an increase in the role of the southern German and Silesian textile industry¹ and an ever greater presence of its fabrics on the Hungarian markets.² By the end of the Middle Ages, the cloth import of the Kingdom of Hungary had become dominated by the production from the Holy Roman Empire, and a large portion of these fabrics consisted of cloth from southern Germany.³ The appearance of such textiles

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1 On Silesian cloth production in Hungary most recently see Mordovin, “Sziléziai posztó,” 439–54.

2 The most relevant works include: Schenk, *Nürnberg und Prag*; Ammann, *Die wirtschaftliche Stellung*; von Stromer, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie*; Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*.

3 Ember, *Magyarország nyugati külkereskedelme*.

and the changes in their temporal and geographical distribution can be very clearly traced in the contemporary written sources. Fortunately, this part of the research has already been successfully accomplished by scholars of Hungarian medieval economic history, such as György Székely and Walter Endrei. Székely evaluated the available written sources on German cloth in Hungary in his 1975 article,⁴ and Endrei discussed the “rest” of the archival material in his book published in 1989.⁵

In this paper, I introduce a new – archaeological – type of source in the research on late medieval and early modern Hungarian cloth imports. This source is a group of small lead seals, which can help in identifying the origins of particular finds.⁶ These seals, however, indicate the provenance of the product, but not the route by which it was transported or the origin of the merchants. Certainly, I am not the first person to notice the significance of such finds in the region. Along with the work of Walter Endrei, some articles on the subject were written by Lajos Huszár, Ján Hunka, Radu Popa, and others.⁷ Nevertheless, the number of cloth seals in the last two decades has increased significantly, enabling one to pursue more detailed research according to smaller regions of the provenance of such finds.⁸

Although the cloth seals are very well known and widely evaluated in the Western scholarly literature, until about ten years ago their significance as a source was greatly underestimated in East Central Europe.⁹ The use and function of these seals and the institutional background of the authentication process in the larger textile centers are thoroughly analysed and described in the works of Nicolaas Wilhelmus Posthumus, Geoff Egan and Dieter Hittinger.¹⁰ Here, therefore, I concentrate only on the seals as a new type of source omitting the details of the production process.

4 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 765–95.

5 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*.

6 See Egan and Endrei, “The Sealing of Cloth in Europe,” 47–75; Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*, 7–17; Kocińska and Maik, *Średniowieczne i nowożytnie plomby tekstylne*, 11–16.

7 Huszár, “Merchant’s seals,” 187–94; Hunka, “Nálezy olovených plómb,” 295–309; Popa, “Plumburi de postav medieval,” 237–39. For a brief research history in Hungary see Mordovin, “Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals,” 193–94.

8 For Silesia once again Mordovin, “Sziléziai posztó,” 439–54.

9 Idem, “A 15–17. századi távolsági textilterekedelem,” 267–82; Idem, “Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals”; Idem, “Egy négy évszázados bűntény,” 107–14.

10 Posthumus, *De Geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*; Egan, *Provenanced Lead Cloth Seals*; Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*.

The last two decades of archaeological excavations and the intensive use of metal detectors (both legally and illegally) in several countries of the Carpathian Basin have produced a relatively large number of cloth seals the provenance of which lie in very different European regions, including Flanders, the Netherlands, the Holy Roman Empire, Bohemia, Silesia, Italy, etc. A significant group among them consists of finds connectable to the southern German regions, most of all to present-day Bavaria.

The borders of the huge number of principalities, counties, and duchies were continuously changing throughout the history of the Holy Roman Empire, so it is very hard to choose a single larger political-historical unit within the southern German region. This persuaded me to do an analysis of the items from the medieval and early modern finds that can be connected to the cities of the present-day Free State of Bavaria. Modern Bavaria includes parts of the historical regions of Franconia, Upper Palatinate, and Swabia. Unfortunately, the limits of the present study do not permit me to evaluate the whole German territory.

The temporal frames of the analysis are given by the dating of the earliest and latest known cloth seals provenanced from Bavarian cities. Thus, at the present stage of the research, the period in question can be limited to the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries.

In his 1975 article, György Székely mentions six southern German cities as origins of cloth exports to Hungary: Bamberg, Eichstätt, Schwabach, Ulm, Nuremberg, and its suburb, Wöhrd. All of them appear in the contemporary written sources evaluated by Székely.¹¹ He at the same time emphasizes that despite the obvious and well-known significance of textile production of Augsburg, he found no written evidence indicating that its cloths ever made it to Hungary.¹² Endrei names eight additional Bavarian cities: Dinkelsbühl, Isny, Kempten, Memmingen, München, Öttingen, Rothenburg, and Waldsee. Altogether, the available Hungarian written sources give us a list of fourteen textile production centers, which undoubtedly exported their fabrics to the Kingdom of Hungary in the period beginning in the fourteenth century and ending in the seventeenth.

Nevertheless, the total number of cities in the region in question that produced textiles in the late Middle Ages and early modern time was much

11 Székely, "Posztófajták," 778.

12 Ibid.

higher. According to Rudolf Holbach's monograph, at least 46 settlements had significant cloth industry.¹³

The Purely Written Evidence (Bamberg, Eichstätt, Öttingen, and Wöhrd)

Some of the aforementioned places, such as Bamberg, Eichstätt, and Wöhrd, can be discussed very briefly. Despite their intensive and significant cloth production in the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, so far no archaeological evidence has been found indicating that their fabrics were sold in Hungary. No cloth seals from these cities have been found so far in any other parts of Europe. This is surprising because their cloth fabrics are mentioned relatively frequently in the Hungarian written sources.¹⁴

The cloth of Bamberg as *Pabenperger* is first mentioned in the so-called Sybenlinder-register from 1436.¹⁵ This register was compiled by Hans Sybenlinder, the royal castellan of Óbuda and Solymár in 1436, and it specified the tariff articles imported to Hungary. According to it, the Bamberg cloth appeared as the second-to-last cheapest item.¹⁶

The situation with Eichstätt, Öttingen, and Wöhrd on the one hand, was similar to that of Bamberg since no indisputably identifiable cloth seals connected to these cities have been found so far. On the other hand, the state of the research is a bit worse, because their fabrics are only rarely mentioned in the available written sources. The largest of the three cities is Eichstätt. Goods from Eichstätt appear in the Sybenlinder account in 1436 (*de panno Achsteter*) among the cheapest articles.¹⁷ The other known source for its cloth is the 1457–58 custom register from Pozsony (Pressburg, today Bratislava, Slovakia) – *tuch aechstetar*.¹⁸ The quality of the cloth imported to Hungary from Eichstätt can be considered medium according to the duties paid for it.¹⁹ Öttingen appears in the sources only in the sixteenth century, alongside other southern German linen fabrics traded in Hungary by the Funck Trading Company. Balázs of Csepreg (*Walasch zu Tschapring*) bought twenty rolls between 1517 and 1522.²⁰

13 Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 127–40, 763 (Karte 5).

14 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 778.

15 Kumorovitz, *Monumenta Diplomatica* (hereafter BTOE 3/2.), 272.

16 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 778.

17 BTOE 3/2. 272.

18 Kovács, *Nyugatmagyarország áruforgalma*, 102, 171.

19 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 783.

20 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 140.

The identification of Wöhrd was problematic even in the written sources. György Székely was the first person who convincingly identified the *werderjyn, werder* cloth as a product of a Nuremberg-suburb, present-day Wöhrd. Known as an important textile production settlement, its fabrics appear in the Hungarian sources as early as the first half of the fifteenth century: in the Sybenlinder account²¹ and in the Pozsony custom register.²² They are mentioned in custom registers and north-western toll accounts from the end of the century in Nagyszeben (Hermannstadt, today Sibiu, Romania).²³ Most probably, its disappearance from the later sources and the lack of the cloth seals can be explained by the fact that from the end of the Middle Ages the craftsmen of Wöhrd were actually citizens of Nuremberg. Therefore, they produced the same sort of cloth as the imperial city and – most probably – sealed it the same way. The regulations of the Nuremberg City Council from 1489 and 1522 clearly imply this practice,²⁴ and behind some of the Nuremberg seals, actually Wöhrd may be hiding (see the Nuremberg chapter).

Written and Probable Archaeological Evidence (Schwabach, Isny, Kempten)

The cloth from Schwabach is mentioned only once in the Hungarian sources. In 1501, the royal city of Bártfa (today Bardejov, Slovakia) was allowed to pay part of its taxes in cloth from Schwabach.²⁵ The coat of arms of Schwabach depicts two crossing beer kettles with long handles combining the lion and the symbol of the Hohenzollern family (*Quarterly Argent and Sable*).²⁶ This coat of arms is interesting because a similar but very damaged image is familiar from two cloth seals. Both of them are stray finds but while the find location of the first is unknown (somewhere in south-eastern Hungary), the second one was discovered in the vicinity of Szolnok. The image visible on the obverse side depicts two crossing rods with some kind of basket at the ends. Thus, it resembles the charge of the Schwabach coat of arms. The background of the escutcheon is *quarterly* indicating the two different tinctures of the Hohenzollern coat of arms. According to the fragments of an inscription on the seals they can be dated to the late fifteenth or the sixteenth century (Fig. 1a).

21 BTOE 3/2. 272.

22 Kováts, *Nyugatmagyarország áruforgalma*, 160, 168.

23 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 782–83; Ember, *Magyarország nyugati külkereskedelme*, 75–78.

24 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 321.

25 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 784.

26 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 61.



Fig. 1. Cloth seals from Schwabach (a), Isny (b) and Kempten (c)

Another city of origin which might be traceable among the archaeological finds is Isny im Allgäu. The coat of arms of Isny includes a one-headed eagle holding a smaller escutcheon with a horseshoe.²⁷ No sources have been published on this in detail yet, but Endrei mentions the appearance of *aisner* or *eisner* linen fabrics in Hungary.²⁸ So far, only one cloth seal can be connected with Isny. It was found on the site of a deserted village destroyed in the late sixteenth century, located near Nagyszénás in south-eastern Hungary. The obverse side of the seal shows a well-executed horseshoe in a pearled circle, and a one-headed eagle-like bird can be seen on the reverse side. Since this is the only such find known both in and outside Hungary, the identification cannot yet be confirmed. It is not possible to date the find more precisely than sometime in the fifteenth or sixteenth century based on the style of the details and the *ante quem* dating given by the destruction of the settlement (Fig. 1b).

The third more-or-less probable identification concerns the products of Kempten. The linen fabrics of the city were well known in the sixteenth century,²⁹ and they can be traced on the Hungarian markets.³⁰ The coat of arms of Kempten is party per pale with a demi-eagle and a tower³¹ or party per pale

27 The most authentic contemporary depiction of the city coat of arms is known from a manuscript: *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, BSB Cod.icon. 391 [S.I.] Süddeutschland (Augsburg?) um 1530, f. 80.

28 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 141.

29 Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 160; Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 129.

30 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 141.

31 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 40.

with a double-headed eagle united by a crown (without a tower).³² The cloth seal identifiable as being from the Kempten linen or fustian is very damaged. However, the impressions on the obverse side recognisable as a double-headed eagle (without the crown) and a small fragment of a tower. The precise find location of the item is unknown but it was discovered in the vicinity of Szolnok, most probably beside a crossing over the Tisza River. There is no firm evidence to date this find. Only the bent sides of the escutcheon with the eagle suggest the sixteenth or seventeenth century (Fig. 1c). Cloth seals from Kempten have been found in Bremen (Germany),³³ London,³⁴ and Salisbury³⁵ but all three of them are quite different from the Hungarian one. The German find and the one from London can be dated to the seventeenth century, while the item from Salisbury is undated.

The Most Popular Cloth in Hungary (Nuremberg)

According to the fifteenth–sixteenth-century registers, Hungary had the most intense relationship with Nuremberg, of all the Bavarian cities in that period.³⁶ This is indicated not only by the large amount of different goods imported from the city³⁷ but also by strong family relations of the Nuremberg and Hungarian urban patriciate.³⁸ Cloth imports played a significant role in this.

The written evidence documents the appearance of the Nuremberg fabrics on the Hungarian markets as early as the fifteenth century. The earliest reference to this can be found in the custom register of Pozsony from 1457–1458, which mentions medium quality cloth from Nuremberg. In 1497, the fabrics of the city appeared in the Saxon region of Transylvania.³⁹

From the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the import of the Nuremberg cloth production increased significantly, a process which is reflected in the custom registers. At the same time, the available written sources report

32 *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 155.

33 Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*, 139, Taf. 9/8.

34 Egan, *Lead Cloth Seals*, 107, 192, Fig. 41/314.

35 Idem, “Cloth seals,” 71, 85, Fig. 26/155.

36 Westermann and Denzel, *Das Kaufmannsnotizbuch*, 129–31; Ammann, *Die wirtschaftliche Stellung der Reichsstadt*, 42–44, 80–83, Karte IV.

37 Schenk, *Nürnberg und Prag*, 47.

38 Ibid., 168–72.

39 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 779.

on at least two types of cloth brought from Nuremberg: more expensive long and medium-priced short fabrics.⁴⁰ These products are often mentioned in the custom accounts of Brassó (1529–56, Kronstadt, today Braşov, Romania) and Zsolna (1530–31, today Žilina, Slovakia). The local regulations of Kolozsvár (Klausenburg, today Cluj-Napoca, Romania) also recorded two types of the Nuremberg cloth.⁴¹ It seems that from the 1540s the import of the higher quality textiles into Hungary became dominated by the cloth from Nuremberg. Thus, Nuremberg provided 73.67 percent of the more expensive fabrics but only 4 percent of the medium-quality fabrics, and even including the cloth from Wöhrd this figure climbs only to 16 percent. At the same time, there were no Nuremberg textiles within the cheapest group.⁴² The intensity of this trade was so important that the German city became seriously dependent on sales in Hungary. The collapse of the Hungarian market in the late sixteenth century caused notable financial difficulties in Nuremberg.⁴³

Despite the wars and financial obstacles, from the mid-sixteenth century onward the cloth from Nuremberg was the most popular higher quality textile in the Kingdom of Hungary. It is mentioned in hundreds of letters and inventories, even if in some cases the contemporaneous spelling of the Nuremberg cloth may be confusing, causing it to be conflated with the cloth from Löwenberg (today, Lwówek Śląski, Poland).⁴⁴ In 1551, the Transylvanian Chamber of Salt paid its employees (salt cutters) with *short lurnberg cloth*. During the Ottoman wars, this cloth was transported to occupied territories and sold there by the Hungarian merchants throughout the second half of the sixteenth century.⁴⁵

The cloth production of Nuremberg was thoroughly analysed in 1993 by Hironobu Sakuma. According to his monograph, the textile was produced and dyed here from the late thirteenth century onward, while the differentiation of the fabrics began in the following centuries. Sources from 1504 already mention seven sorts of cloth produced in the city.⁴⁶

40 Ember, *Magyarország nyugati külkereskedelme*, 77–78. The differentiation of the fabric quality according to the sizes is presented in Nuremberg from the 1340s (Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 122).

41 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 780.

42 Ember, *Magyarország nyugati külkereskedelme*, 77.

43 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 146–48.

44 Mordovin, “Sziléziai posztó,” 448–50.

45 Székely, “Posztófajták,” 781.

46 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 50–53, 122.

The practice of sealing the local products first appears in the archival sources in ca. 1300 but with no indication of whether wax or lead seals were used.⁴⁷ The earliest reference to detailed regulation dates to the second half of the fifteenth century. According to this regulation, at the time, the quality of the cloth was indicated by the number of lead seals. There were three sorts, which had respectively one, two or three seals. Unfortunately, the source does not discuss the imprints on the seals.⁴⁸ By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the information concerning the seals becomes more detailed. The table given below summarizes the available data concerning the seals used for the Nuremberg cloth⁴⁹

Table 1. Types of the Nuremberg cloth sealed according to the regulations

Bleached cloth	15 th	Seal with a cross	single seal ¹
Dyed cloth		Seal with N	three seals according to the three examiners ²
Dyed cloth of different origin but examined in Nuremberg	1569 ³	Painted N and F.A.R.B.	no lead seals, except those traded in Italy. They received a usual N
Fustian		Ox, Lion, Grape and Letter	
English wool 1		Saint Lawrence and Imperial Eagle	
English wool 2		Coat of arms of Nuremberg, twice	
English wool 3		Divided coat of arms of Nuremberg and N	
English wool (<i>other cloth</i>)	1570 ⁴	N and Shield [probably the coat of arms of the city without the eagle]	

1 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 50–53, 122.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 137–38.

4 Ibid., 139.

47 Ibid., 49–50.

48 Ibid., 122.

49 Similar table is given in Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*, Anhang 1.

The data given in the table is well reflected in the cloth seal finds in Hungary. There are four types, which can undoubtedly be connected to Nuremberg (Fig. 2).

Table 2. Main types of the Nuremberg cloth seals found in the Carpathian Basin

T1	Obverse: Saint Lawrence holding book and gridiron; reverse: Gothic minuscule or Renaissance type NUE/REMBE/RG	5 finds	Eastern Slovakia, Stapar (Serbia: József Géza Kiss' Collection), vicinity of Szolnok (3 items)
T2	Coat of arms of Nuremberg on both sides of the seal	14 finds	2 from southern Transdanubia (Private collection and Hungarian National Museum [hereafter HNM]); northern Transdanubia (HNM) Unknown (HNM) Bácska-Bánság (József Géza Kiss' Collection) Csomorkány; Ópusztaszer; Szeged vicinity; Orosháza-Csorvás; Orosháza-Szentetornya; 3 from the vicinity of Szolnok; Paks-Cseresznyés, Pápa
T3	Coat of arms of Nuremberg and Renaissance W with floral ornament	12 finds	Orosháza-Gerendás; Orosháza-Nagyszénás; Kunágota; Bácska-Bánság (József Géza Kiss' Collection) Unknown (2 items in private collections) Castle of Bács, 3 from the vicinity of Szolnok, Paks-Cseresznyés
T4	Coat of arms of Nuremberg and Renaissance N with floral ornament	7 finds	Unknown (HNM) Battonya-Basarága; Castle of Diósgyőr; Castle of Bajcsa; Castle of Sempye (today Šintava, Slovakia); Orosháza-Szentetornya, Feltót

As the two tables make clear, the known cloth seals most of all fit the category either of textiles produced from English wool or English cloth dyed in Nuremberg. The first type of seals unambiguously corresponds to the first group of “English” fabrics from the sixteenth-century regulation, since there is no other version with an image of Saint Lawrence. The only difference is the lack of the imperial eagle and the inscription on the reverse side. The reason for this might be that, according to the type of NUE/REMBE/RG, these seals seem to precede this regulation chronologically. They are datable to the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century (Fig. 2a). Unfortunately, all four such seals are stray finds and cannot be dated any more precisely. The one found near Szolnok with the Renaissance [...]RE[...] / [...]RK[?] inscription indicates the use of this type until at least the mid-sixteenth century. A very interesting fact about these finds is that there are no known similar cloth seals from other countries.

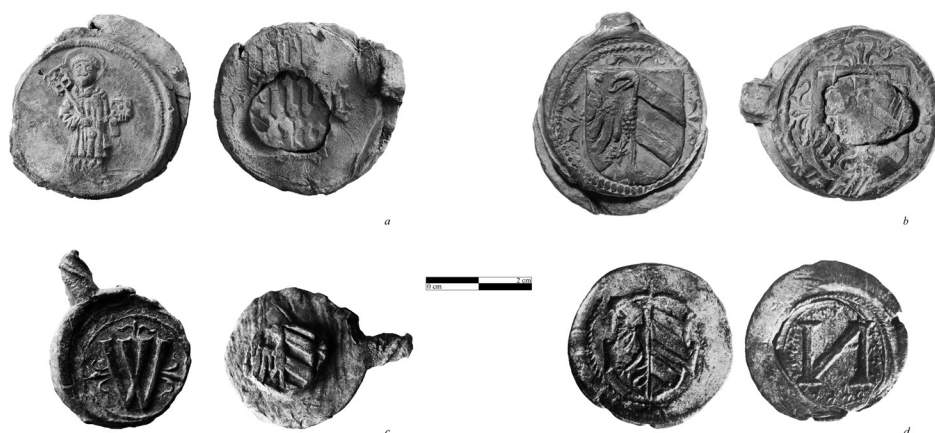


Fig. 2. Cloth seals from Nuremberg: Type 1 (a), Type 2 (b), Type 3 (c) and Type 4 (d)

The second type completely corresponds to the regulation. These seals have identical coats of arms of Nuremberg on both sides (Fig. 2b). Four out of the fourteen such seals are stray finds without even a precise location. Two were found somewhere in southern Transdanubia, another one in northern Transdanubia, while in case of the fourth find there is no data available at all.⁵⁰ Five more seals from different private and museum collections found in the vicinities of Szeged and Szolnok should also be considered stray finds since there is no data regarding their precise localisations. At the same time, there are several luckier finds from Ópusztaszer, Csomorkány, Paks-Cseresznyés, Orosháza-Csorvás, and Orosháza-Szentetornya on which considerably more information is available. Four of them were found during archaeological field surveys, while the fifth (the one from Ópusztaszer) was discovered during the excavations of an abandoned rural settlement and monastic site.⁵¹ The stratigraphy does not help in these cases but the historical events define the *ante quem* data of the finds. All five villages were more-or-less significant settlements before the Ottoman expansion in the mid-sixteenth century. Surviving the first period of military activity, all of them fell victim to the 1596 Ottoman campaign, the first phase of the Long Turkish War (or Fifteen Years War: 1591–1606).⁵²

50 Three of them have been already published: Mordovin, “Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals,” 213, Cat: 28–29; 214, Cat: 32.

51 Cloth seals from Ópusztaszer and Csomorkány were published: Vályi, “A távolsági kereskedelem,” 62, Fig. 1–2. The rest are unpublished. I am grateful to Zsófia Mesterházy-Ács (Paks), Gyöngyvér Bíró, and Zoltán Rózsa (Orosháza) for this information.

52 Vályi, “A távolsági kereskedelem,” 66; Béres, “Csomorkány-Pusztatemplom,” 23.

The cloth seals with the coat of arms of Nuremberg on one side and a Renaissance W letter on the other cannot be directly connected to any of the versions described in the regulations (Fig. 2c). However, the coat of arms seems identical with that on the second type. All of the twelve such finds were discovered either around Szolnok (three items) or in the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain: Orosháza-Gerendás; Nagyszénás; Kunágota; Bácska-Bánság (József Géza Kiss' Collection); unknown (two items in private collections) and the Castle of Bács (today Bač, Serbia). The chronology of this group can be also given according to the *ante quem* date of the sites: all the settlements around Orosháza (Gerendás, Nagyszénás, Kunágota) were destroyed at the end of the sixteenth century, which means that these seals must have been brought there earlier. The Renaissance details around the letter W and the coat of arms suggest that they date back to the sixteenth century. Since the known regulation does not give any hints concerning the interpretation of the fabrics marked with these seals, in my opinion, it should be identified with textiles not necessarily produced locally. It is very important that in the sixteenth century not only fabrics that were made in Nuremberg were given Nuremberg cloth seals, but also cloths that were imported from different places. Certainly, this product was also checked to be sure it met the required standards, and then it was sealed. After 1566, the local and the foreign cloths were marked differently.⁵³ At the same time, the most plausible explanation for the simultaneous appearance of the coat of arms of Nuremberg and a W on the same seal is that such fabrics were also produced in Wöhrd. In this case, the W refers to the name of the suburb. The fact that the Hungarian accounts and registers drew a distinction between the cloth from Wöhrd and Nuremberg⁵⁴ proves that this difference was somehow recognisable and that for some reason it was important to separate these fabrics. The easiest way to present the different origin was to mark it on the seals.

The fourth group of the known Nuremberg seals seems the best datable one. This is the type with a coat of arms on the obverse side and a letter N on the reverse side with a clear Renaissance character (Fig. 2d). According to the contemporary regulations, this version appeared in the late 1560s.⁵⁵ Altogether seven such finds are known so far, and they are all from the Carpathian Basin. Except the already published stray find,⁵⁶ three were discovered in castles:

53 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 137–38.

54 Ember, *Magyarország nyugati külkereskedelme*, 77.

55 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 137–38.

56 Mordovin, "Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals," 213, Cat. 31.

Bajcsa,⁵⁷ Diósgyőr,⁵⁸ and Feltót (today Tauți, Romania). Two more were found around Orosháza (the deserted villages of Szentetornya and Battonya). The last one, from Sempte, cannot be identified indisputably as a cloth seal from Nuremberg, because apart from the letter N, it bears no other characteristic details of the group.⁵⁹ As is known from the case of Switzerland, the letter N may also refer to Nördlingen.⁶⁰ The situation with the dating is in some ways similar to that with the other groups of Nuremberg finds since at least four of the seven sites existed until the last decade of the sixteenth or the first of the seventeenth century.

Summarizing the Nuremberg cloth seal finds from Hungary, two details are very conspicuous. One is that there are no known published analogies from outside the territory of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary, except a single stray find of the third type from Bohemia.⁶¹ The other such detail is that the dating of all known Nuremberg cloth seals fits within the sixteenth century, with slight variance towards the late fifteenth and early seventeenth. Both of these observations are hard to explain. Perhaps the lack of foreign analogies is primarily the result of the different states of the research. The reason for the second one might be explained by the relatively late introduction of lead cloth seals in the textile production in Nuremberg. The interruption at the beginning of the seventeenth century must have been the consequence of the collapse of the cloth market in Hungary during and after the Long Turkish War.

Written Sources and Rich Archaeological Evidence (Ulm)

The case of Ulm is somewhat clearer than the previous ones. The connections between Hungary and the city are well documented from the fourteenth century when Ulm became an important importer of Hungarian wool. From as early as the mid-fifteenth century, medium quality Ulm cloth can be traced in the Carpathian Basin. In the Sybenlinder list it appears as VLMER.⁶² Even if its quality decreased during the Ottoman period, it was still presented in the sixteenth–seventeenth-century custom records.⁶³ Beginning in the late Middle

57 Kovács, *Bajcsa-vár*, 179–206.

58 Czeglédy, *A diósgyőri vár*, XLVI/b.

59 Hunka, “Nálezy mincí zo Šintavského hradu,” 49.

60 I am grateful to Rahel C. Ackermann for this information.

61 Unpublished, found on a web-forum.

62 BTOE 3/2. 272.

63 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 131, 140, 150–51.

Ages, Ulm was producing mainly two types of textiles: woollen cloth and cotton fabrics. However, there is not yet any contemporary evidence for differences in the sealing practices used with these types of textiles. The written sources from Ulm itself show a gradually developing cloth industry up until the early seventeenth century, when it was interrupted by the Thirty Years' War and never recovered.

As archaeological finds, there are three types of cloth seals from Ulm in the Carpathian Basin, and all of them include the coat of arms of the city: party per fess Sable and Argent.⁶⁴

- 1) obverse: coat of arms of Ulm; reverse: imperial eagle (Fig. 3a)
- 2) obverse: coat of arms of Ulm; reverse: party per pale, demi-eagle at the pale (Fig. 3b)
- 3) obverse: coat of arms of Ulm; reverse: inscription ULM written in Humanist capital letters (Fig. 3c)



Fig. 3. Cloth seals from Ulm: Type 1 (a), Type 2 (b) and Type 3 (c)

There is a fourth type known in Germany, on which the coat of arms on the obverse is supplemented with Renaissance letters V-L-M⁶⁵ or a date (for example 1518), and the imperial eagle of the reverse is replaced with the Gothic minuscule type ULM. However, at the moment no examples of this version of the Ulm seals have been found in East Central Europe.

64 *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 80, 155, 171.

65 A similar one is known from Rheinau (Switzerland): Ackermann and Zäch, "Plomben Marken und Zeichen," 100, Abb. 1a.

The largest collection of the Ulm seals in Hungary originates from the excavations of the old market square in the small western Hungarian town of Pápa. These finds represent the first two of the known types of such items. In Pápa the 14 seals were found in very different layers. Apart from three stray finds, two more came from modern features in secondary positions. The stratigraphy of the rest of the eight items can be dated from the late fifteenth to the early seventeenth centuries. The layers datable by coins indicate significant strata from the mid-sixteenth century. They are connected most of all to the layers associated with the rearranging of the market square when some new houses were built on the formerly paved surface. This process took place between 1526 and the late 1560s.⁶⁶ According to the numismatic finds from the same layers, the dating can be narrowed to the 1550s or 1560s. Some other Ulm seals were found in a destruction or levelling layers datable not later than to the beginning of the seventeenth century. These layers indicate a huge catastrophe that struck the town around 1600. There were two such events in the history of Pápa in this period, which may have led to the destruction of all the buildings at the market square. The first was the siege of 1597 when the explosion of the gunpowder destroyed the castle and burnt most of the town to the ground.⁶⁷ The next event, which was less likely to have been the cause, took place in 1600. The unpaid Walloon mercenaries revolted and turned to the Ottoman side. This led to another siege, which might have caused damage to the town as well. In any case, from the first decade of the seventeenth century, the market square of Pápa was again rearranged and new stone houses were constructed on the site of the earlier timber-framed ones.⁶⁸ This construction activity was preceded by a significant levelling of the debris of the earlier structures. This is the levelling layer that contained the Ulm cloth seals. To conclude these observations, all the datable seals from Pápa come from the second half of the sixteenth century. The similar finds from Germany⁶⁹ and Great Britain confirm this dating,⁷⁰ indicating at the same time the earlier appearance of this type of Ulm seals.

Apart from the fourteen items found at Pápa, there are sixteen more cloth seals with the coat of arms of Ulm found in Hungary. All of them are metal-detector finds and thus cannot be dated properly. Eight seals were collected in

66 Mordovin, “Előzetes jelentés,” 248–49.

67 Pálffy, *A pápai*, 47.

68 Mordovin, “Előzetes jelentés,” 249–50.

69 Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*, 144, Taf. 11/7.

70 Egan, “Lead Seals for Textiles,” 196.

the vicinities of Szolnok, and five additional seals were found in the plain region of Hungary: Révbépuszta, Hajdúböszörmény, Nagyszénás, Orosháza-Fecskés, and Orosháza-Szentetornya, one more not far from Bény (today Bíňa, Slovakia). The last one is a stray find from a private collection. The finds from the plain region can be dated to before the end of the sixteenth century, because the deserted villages were destroyed in that time, during the so-called Long Turkish War (or Fifteen Years War: 1591–1606). Most of the stray finds (six seals) belong to the first group (arms and a whole eagle). Five more represent the second group with the demi-eagle. Only two items have the inscription VLM on the reverse, and three more were identified only on the basis of the fragments of the coat of arms. At the present stage of the research, there is not enough data to make any chronological distinction between the three types of seals from Ulm.

Scarce Written and Firm Archaeological Evidence (Augsburg, Dinkelsbühl, Memmingen, Rothenburg, and Waldsee)

The absence of the written sources concerning a particular production center does not necessarily mean the complete absence of its fabrics in the Kingdom of Hungary. This is the case of Augsburg. Cloth production in the city began in the thirteenth century. Its fabrics were very widespread all across the Europe. This fact is well documented not only by the contemporary written sources⁷¹ but also by a large number of the cloth seals with the coat of arms and symbols of Augsburg. The most popular product from the Augsburg textile industry was the fustian, which can be dated from the thirteenth century onward, and by the end of the Middle Ages was represented by fabrics of different quality and colours.⁷² According to Székely, there is no mention of Augsburg in the Hungarian sources. However, he checked primarily the sources on the north-western section of the border of the Hungarian Kingdom referring exclusively to the cloth fabrics (i.e. woollen production). He did not collect references for the linen or cotton textiles, which, however, was also regularly imported to Hungary. Correspondingly, the fustian – which was made of cotton – was omitted from his collection. At the same time, it is perfectly possible that the products from Augsburg were used as duties paid elsewhere, probably crossing the northern or western borders.

71 Stromer, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie*, 31–32.

72 Sakuma, *Die Nürnberger Tuchmacher*, 130, 179; Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 183, 188–90.

Walter Endrei in his study states that the Augsburg fustian was traded in Hungary. Thus, for example, in 1519 the Funck Trade Company sent some rolls of this textile to Kőszeg.⁷³ The presence of the Augsburgian fustian in the Kingdom of Hungary can be confirmed so far on the basis of two cloth seals. One of them is known from the private collection of József Géza Kiss. It was found originally in the south-eastern part of Hungary (Fig. 4a). The other was discovered during a field survey in Kóny (north-west Hungary) (Fig. 4b). Both of them represent a very characteristic type of seal with a Gothic majuscule A referring to the name of the city on the obverse and the pine cone on the reverse. The last one appears in the coat of arms of the city from the Middle Ages.⁷⁴



Fig. 4. Cloth seals from Augsburg (a-b) and Memmingen (c-d)

This type of cloth seal was in relatively widespread use all across Europe, and it is familiar from at least five countries: England,⁷⁵ Germany,⁷⁶ Poland,⁷⁷ Denmark,⁷⁸ and the Netherlands.⁷⁹ Since the seals from Hungary are stray finds,

73 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 150.

74 *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 80, f. 167.r; Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 18.

75 Egan, "Cloth seals," 70, 84, Fig. 25/143; 85, Fig. 26/144–50.

76 Hittinger, *Tuchplomben*, 126–27, Taf. 2/1–8.

77 Kocińska and Maik, *Średniowieczne i nowożytnie plomby*, 62–64; Bobowski, *Plomby tekstylne z wykopalisk*, 80–90.

78 Orduna, *Middelalderlige klaedepomber*, 253–56.

79 Baart et al., *Opgravingen in Amsterdam*, 53–54.

their dating can be done according to similar finds from other sites. The form of the coat of arms and the size of the Hungarian finds are very common for most of the similar European seals. These analogies enable us to date the item from the private collection to the sixteenth century and the one from Kóny to the seventeenth century. However, the style of the cone of the seal from Kóny and the fact that the reverse side of the seal has specific iconography suggest an even later date for this item, sometime around the late seventeenth or even the eighteenth century.

There is a relatively large group of southern German cities known as exporters of linen or fustian fabrics to Hungary in the late Middle Ages. The written sources from the first half of the sixteenth century mention Dinkelsbühl, Memmingen, Rothenburg, and Waldsee.⁸⁰ These places were relatively well known for their high and medium quality textile production in the late Middle Ages, up to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁸¹ There is no information concerning the quality of their fabrics sold in Hungary or the quantities that were sold. Nevertheless, the number of the identifiable cloth seals is relatively small. The most widespread type is from Memmingen, which can be identified by its coat of arms blazoned party per pale demi-eagle and cross gules.⁸² When readable, the reverse side in most of the cases shows a Gothic minuscule M referring to the name of the city. Altogether, six indisputable finds (i.e. finds that bear a recognisable coat of arms) are known from the Carpathian Basin: Pápa (Fig. 4c), Csejte (today Čachtice, Slovakia), Bény, Battonya-Kovácsháza, Szolnok, and one in a private collection (Fig. 4d). There are two more finds, which can be identified as originating in Memmingen on which only the Gothic M survived. Both finds were discovered at the market square of Pápa. Concerning the dating, only the finds from Pápa and Csejte have any stratigraphical data. In the first case, the seals with the letter M came from the layers datable to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The one from Csejte, which was improperly identified by Ján Hunka as a cloth seal from Opole (Silesia, Poland), was accompanied by two coins, the younger of which was a *quarting* of King Sigismund from 1430–37.⁸³ As they are almost identical with the stray finds, the dating seems to have

80 Endrei, *Patyolat és posztó*, 131, 140–41.

81 Stromer, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie in Mitteleuropa*, 15, 38, 54, 95; Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 135, 161–62, 183.

82 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 46; *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 80, f. 157. r.

83 Hunka, “Nálezy olovených plómb,” 300, 302, Obr. 3/3.



Fig. 5. Cloth seals from Dinkelsbühl (a-b), Waldsee (c) and Rothenburg (d)

been the same, roughly the period from the mid-fifteenth until the mid-sixteenth century.

All four cloth seals connected to Dinkelsbühl should be regarded as stray finds, including the two from the vicinity of Szolnok. The find locations of two others are completely unknown: one is in a private collection (Fig. 5a), the other, which is in the Hungarian National Museum (Fig. 5b), has already been published but as of unknown provenance.⁸⁴ These items can be identified according to the three corns in the ear from the coat of arms of the city.⁸⁵ The reverse side of the seals depicts an imperial eagle. In one case, only the reverse side survived with the eagle but its characteristic shape enables one to identify the seal firmly. There is no data so far for dating this group of seals more precisely than the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, based mostly on historical references on the settlement structure of the Great Hungarian Plain, where these finds might have been discovered. I have not yet found any published seals from Dinkelsbühl outside the Carpathian Basin.

The last two cities, Rothenburg and Waldsee, have relatively simple and thus not unambiguously identifiable coats of arms. The coat of arms of Rothenburg is *Argent a castle with two towers Gules*;⁸⁶ for Waldsee, the coat of arms is even

84 Mordovin, "Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals," 228, Cat: 92.

85 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 29; *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 80, f. 155.

86 Ibid., 154.

simpler: Sable a fess Argent.⁸⁷ The identification of the seals was possible due to the inscriptions on them: ROTEN/BVRG and WALDSEE. Two seals from Waldsee were found in the course of the excavations at Pápa, and another one comes from the vicinity of Szolnok (Fig. 5c). The latter is a stray find, but those from Pápa were discovered on the sixteenth–seventeenth-century surface layers of the market. The reverse side of the seals in all cases depicts the coat of arms of the city. There is only one known item firmly identifiable with Rothenburg, also found somewhere around Szolnok, but with no information that would make it possible to identify the location any more precisely (Fig. 5d). The dating can be deduced only from the type of inscription. The antique style of the fonts suggests dating not earlier than the first half of the sixteenth century.

Only Archaeological Evidence (Munich, Regensburg, Hof, Kulmbach, and Kaufbeuren)

The list of the cities the textile products of which were imported to the Kingdom of Hungary (as we know from the written sources) can be extended by five more places. This information comes from the archaeological finds. All five cities, namely, Munich, Regensburg, Hof an der Saale, Kulmbach, and Kaufbeuren, played more or less notable roles in the textile industry of southern Germany, but none of them appears in the known contemporary written documents as an exporter of textiles to Hungary. The most significant center for them was Munich,⁸⁸ the cloth seal of which found at Castle Szitnya (today Sitno, Slovakia) was first identified by Ján Hunka.⁸⁹ Since then, one more has been found in the vicinity of Szolnok and at least eight at the market square of Pápa (Fig. 6a–b). The basis for the identification of them is a monk's head on the obverse, which at the same time refers to the name of the city and to its coat of arms.⁹⁰ The reverse of the seals varies considerably, presenting at least five different imprints: a stylized image of a church (a triangle or rectangle with a cross on top), a Gothic minuscule letter M or flowers. Only the last type recurs twice. There is no convincing explanation for this phenomenon, but it might indicate that these marks were some kind of privy marks. The Munich seals found in Pápa can be dated predominantly to the sixteenth century, even if two items

87 Ibid., f. 164.

88 Steck, *Das Münchner Loder- und Tuchmachergewerbe*.

89 Hunka, "Nálezy olovených plómb," 300, 302, Obr. 3/4.

90 *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 15.r.; Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 47–49.



Fig. 6. Cloth seals from Munich (a-b) and Regensburg (c-d)

were discovered in later layers. It seems that no cloth from Munich arrived to Pápa after the occupation of the town by the Ottoman army in 1594 and its destruction during the siege in 1597.⁹¹ The seal found at Castle Szitnya has been dated to the fifteenth century.⁹² The last one from Szolnok is a stray find, but the characteristic late Renaissance style fonts from the fragmented inscription on the reverse ([...]HA) suggest a relatively late dating, maybe even to the seventeenth century.

Outside the territory of medieval Hungary, only two cloth seals that can be connected to Munich are known so far, both of them from the metal detectorists' web forums. The monk's head on the obverse is almost identical with that on the Hungarian finds, while the reverse shows privy mark-like symbols.⁹³ Their dating is uncertain, as are their find locations.

The textile production of Regensburg was as important as that of Munich, but only four cloth seals that can be indisputably connected to the city have been found so far (both in and outside of Hungary). The unquestionable identification is possible only when the imprints on the seals included the name of the city, because the relatively widespread crossed keys in its coat of arms may refer, for example, to Leiden, Lubań or Weil der Stadt. The obverse of all four certain finds shows the head of St Cassian (the patron of the oldest parish

91 Mordovin, "Előzetes jelentés," Some cloth seals from Munich found in Pápa have already been published: Mordovin, "A 15–17. századi távolsági textilkereskedelem," 273, 3, image 5–6.

92 Hunka, "Nález olovených plómb," 300.

93 Sources for this information: www.detektorforum.de.

church of Regensburg), with the circumscribed text RATISPONENSIS (Latin for *of Regensburg*). In some cases, the reverse side has also survived, presenting the coat of arms, i.e. the crossed keys. Three of the seals from Regensburg are stray finds: one was found in the vicinity of Győr (Fig. 6c), two others are still in a private collection with no indication of their find locations (Fig. 6d). The fourth item was found during rescue excavations carried out at the Buda castle. However, no archaeological dating is available for it either.⁹⁴ The chronology of these finds is based only on stylistic features, namely the fonts of the inscription, suggesting most convincingly that they were made in the fifteenth century.

There are some more cloth seals with crossed keys but with no other identifying details. According to their quality and comparing them with the reliably identified seals from Leiden and Lubań, they may be connected to Regensburg. Such seals have been found during field surveys in the vicinity of Szécsény and in the deserted village of Orosháza-Pereg.

Hof an der Saale was a less significant textile production center⁹⁵ but it is nonetheless relatively well represented in Hungary by its cloth seals. The obverse of these seals usually shows the coat of arms of the city: Gules two towers Argent in escutcheon between them Sable with Lion rampant Or.⁹⁶ The reverse could have been executed in two ways: a large Renaissance H referring to the name of the city, or a ligature HOF. Altogether, five cloth seals can be identified as provenanced from Hof. Four of them have been found in Pápa, predominantly on the sixteenth-century surface of the market (Fig. 7a). The fifth similar item has already been published but only as an unidentified find datable to the seventeenth century⁹⁷ (Fig. 7b). It was donated to the Hungarian National Museum as part of a larger collection and thus has no data concerning its origin. There are no other known seals from Hof elsewhere.

Another city not mentioned in the Hungarian written sources but represented in Hungary by its cloth seals is Kulmbach. The place was known primarily for its fustian production, which reached its peak in the late Middle Ages.⁹⁸ The cloth seals, both of which were found at the Market Square of Pápa, can be identified

94 Preliminary evaluation of the cloth seal from Buda was recently prepared by Viktória Horváth in her MA thesis. Viktória Horváth, “Színesfémleletek a 14–17. századi budavári palotából.”

95 Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 135–36, 195–97; Ammann, *Die wirtschaftliche Stellung der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 85.

96 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 39.

97 Mordovin, “Late Medieval and Early Modern Cloth Seals,” 231, Cat: 103.

98 Holbach, *Frühformen von Verlag und Großbetrieb*, 195–96; Stromer, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie in Mitteleuropa*, 89–92, 123–25.



Fig. 7. Cloth seals from Hof an der Saale (a-b), Kulmbach (c) and Kaufbeuren (d)

by the inscription CVLM/BACH (Fig. 7c) or by the easily recognisable coat of arms: party per pale with Hohenzollern arms on the left and Azure Lion and Eagle Argent on the right.⁹⁹ Seals from the Kulmbach-fabrics have been discovered in the layers dated by fifteenth and sixteenth-century coins. Most probably, the cloth was imported to Pápa in the time of the heyday of the city, i.e. in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The last city represented by only two items is Kaufbeuren. This relatively small place was not too significant but it produced reasonably good quality fustian.¹⁰⁰ There are two seals that can be connected to Kaufbeuren, in both cases on the base of the coat of arms visible on them: Gules bend Or with two stars Or.¹⁰¹ The one discovered in Pápa has been published. It can be dated to the sixteenth century according to the stratigraphy of the excavation site¹⁰² (Fig. 7d). The second cloth seal was recently acquired within a larger collection from

99 Tyroff, *Wappenbuch der Städte*, 26.

100 Stromer, *Die Gründung der Baumwollindustrie in Mitteleuropa*, 15–22.

101 *Sammelband mehrerer Wappenbücher*, f. 80.

102 Mordovin, “A 15–17. századi távolsági textilkereskedelem,” 273, 3, image 8.

the vicinity of Szolnok. Unfortunately, there is no data available concerning the find location of the seal. According to the similar features of the coat of arms, it must be dated correspondingly to the sixteenth century. There is a single known analogy for cloth seals from Kaufbeuren in Switzerland.

Conclusion

An evaluation of the written and archaeological sources together produces a complex image of textile imports from the southern German region to the Kingdom of Hungary in the late Middle Ages and early post-medieval period (more precisely, the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries). The most important result of this analysis is the creation of a long list consisting of nineteen textile production centers, fabrics from which undoubtedly reached Hungary in the period in question. The analysis also illustrates the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, even in questions concerning economic history. The archaeological finds function as contemporary written documents, offering important details concerning geography and chronology and creating a special puzzle missing from the early approaches, which relied entirely on traditional written sources. By evaluating cloth seals, we not only learn the names of other medieval cities, which from now can be connected to Hungary, we also can identify the very last stop of the fabrics of the city-exporters, the very places of consumption, where the rolls of cloth, fustian, or linen were finally sold in retail (Fig. 8).

Summarizing the information gained from the different sources, the chronological framework can be limited to a bit less than two centuries, from the mid-fifteenth century until the first decades of the seventeenth century. The lack of the cloth seals from the seventeenth century still needs explanation. Despite continuing reports in the written sources about the trade in German fabrics, the gradually shrinking market of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was devastated by endless wars with the Ottoman Empire, resulted in a spectacular decrease in the cloth import by the end of the Long Turkish War. The transformation in the composition of the goods consumed must have begun even earlier. According to the archaeological evidence (primarily from Pápa), the decrease in the overall value of the textiles consumed must have begun in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. While there is strong evidence for the presence of higher quality products (from centers like Nuremberg, Memmingen, and Dinkelsbühl) in the first half and middle of the sixteenth century, products which were marked with large, nicely elaborated seals, by the end of the century the size and

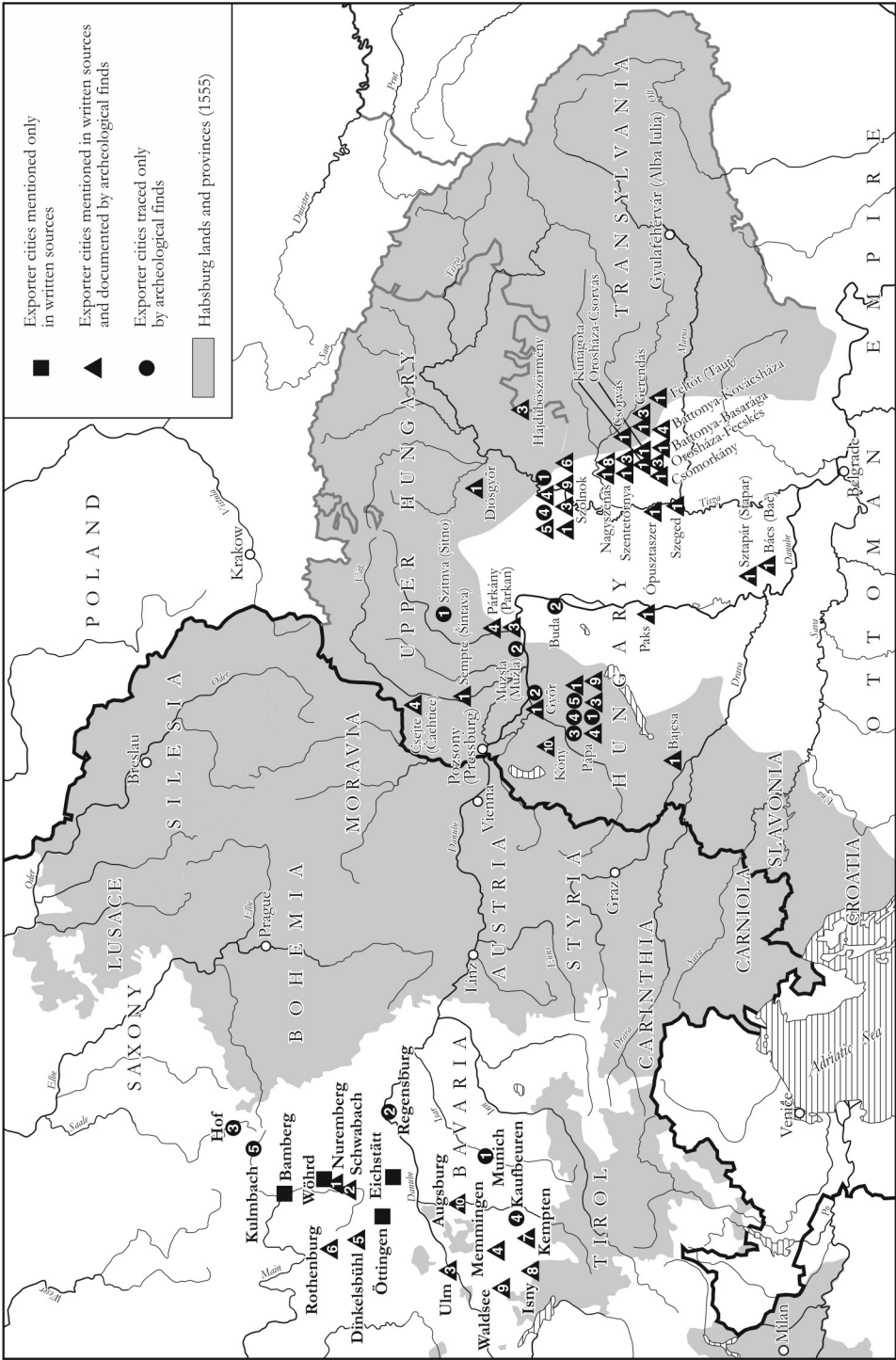


Fig. 8. Southern German textile export to the Kingdom of Hungary in the 15th–17th centuries (Map prepared by Béla Nagy)

the quality of the seals declined noticeably. The drop in the import and sale of quality textiles can also be seen in the appearance of a large quantity of relatively cheap fabrics (Hof, Waldsee, Munich, etc.). Trends in the import of cloths from other regions (e.g. the Low Countries, Silesia, Bohemia, and Austria) confirm and reflect this tendency.

This work should be regarded as preliminary, as there are still many unidentified cloth seals that have been found in the Carpathian Basin. From a longer perspective, an interdisciplinary analysis of all available finds will give a more detailed overview of this topic.

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Between “Faithful Subjects” and “Pernicious Nation”: Greek Merchants in the Principality of Transylvania in the Seventeenth Century*

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Towns in Transylvania were among the first in which Balkan Greeks settled in their advance into Central Europe. In this essay, I investigate the evolution of the juridical status of the Greeks within the Transylvanian principality during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in order to understand how they were integrated into the institutional and juridical framework of Transylvania. A reinterpretation of available privilege charters granted to the Greeks in Transylvania sheds light on the evolution of their official status during the period in question and on the nature of the “companies” the Greeks founded in certain towns of the principality in the seventeenth century. A close reading of the sources reveals tensions between tax-paying Greeks, whom the seventeenth century Transylvanian princes referred to as their “subjects of the Greek nation,” and the non-resident Greek merchants. Furthermore, strong inconsistencies existed between central and local policies towards the Greeks. I analyze these discrepancies between the princely privileges accorded to the Greeks and the status of the Greek merchants in Nagyszeben (Hermannstadt, today Sibiu, Romania) in particular. The city fathers of this town adhered strongly to their privilege of staple right and insisted on imposing it on the Greek merchants, but the princely grants in favor of the Greeks nullified *de facto* the provisions of the staple right. While they had obtained concessions that allowed them to settle into Transylvania, Greeks nevertheless negotiated their juridical status with the local authorities of Nagyszeben as well.

Keywords: Transylvania, Saxon towns, Greek merchants, Saxon traders, annual fair, staple right, trade, seventeenth century

Introduction

This paper explores the juridical status of Greek merchants in Transylvania during the second half of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, a status created through norms (dietal legislation, princely grants, and town

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statutes) and, as Zsolt Trócsányi argues, practice.¹ The emphasis of my analysis is on the policy of the Transylvanian princes toward the Greeks and the tensions and dissensions between the central legislation and local regulations in this respect. The town of Nagyszeben serves as the case study for the purposes of my analysis. The Transylvanian Diet regularly issued decisions concerning the Greeks, but this dietal legislation has been studied by Lidia A. Demény and Zsolt Trócsányi and consequently will not be revisited here at length.² It is crucial, however, to understand the interplay and the hierarchy between the different laws and statutes, while the Greeks themselves were naturally active factors in creating their juridical status and, in my opinion, used the shifting attitudes and the discrepancies in the rules to their benefit.

A brief introduction into the historical background of the political and economic situation in early modern Transylvania provides a better framework for the argument. By the middle of the sixteenth century, Greek and other Balkan-Levantine merchants, Ottoman subjects, had taken control of the trade with products coming from or via the Ottoman Empire.³ The complex notion of the Greek merchants in early modern Transylvania shall be discussed later. The “Turkish goods,” as they are called in the contemporary sources, were much sought after and made the Balkan merchants indispensable in the supply of products from the east for Transylvania.⁴ The so-called “Turkish goods” in which the Greeks traded consisted mostly of cotton and silk textiles, cotton and silk threads, carpets, specific carmine and saffian leather products, spices, dried fruits, olive oil, rice, alum, and various dyestuffs. While a detailed analysis of the commercial exchange in seventeenth-century Transylvania is sorely lacking, evidence from the unpublished customs accounts of Nagyszeben shows that the imports of goods from the Ottoman Empire by the Greeks continued along the patterns set in the previous century. The great obstacle with regard to the Greeks was accommodating the need for their skills with the Transylvanian political and juridical system of nations and privileges. We know from Olga Cicanci’s monograph that in 1636 the Greeks founded one “company” in the town of Nagyszeben and one in Brassó (Kronstadt, today

1 Trócsányi, “Gesetzgebung,” 98.

2 Demény, “Le régime,” 62–113; Trócsányi, “Gesetzgebung,” 94–104.

3 Dan and Goldenberg, “Le commerce balkano-levantin de la Transylvanie au cours de la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle et au début du XVII^e siècle,” 90.

4 The generic name of “Turkish” goods for merchandise coming from the Ottoman Empire was used in other parts of the former medieval kingdom of Hungary as well. See Gecsényi, “‘Turkish goods’ and ‘Greek’ merchants,” 58; Fodor, “Trade and traders in Hungary,” 5.

Braşov, Romania) in 1678.⁵ In my analysis of a wider array of documentary evidence, I argue that these “companies” were the result of a longer process of accommodation and integration of the Greeks in Transylvania, and that the nature of these organisations has been largely misconstrued. I use the term “merchant associations” instead.

Transylvania was among the first polities in Central Europe in which Greek and other Hellenised merchants from the Ottoman Balkans settled for business. The reasons for their choice were probably manifold. Beginning in 1541, Transylvania was a vassal state to the Porte, a situation which encouraged entry of the Ottoman subjects into the local market. Furthermore, the towns of Brassó and Nagyszeben in particular had been leading trading centers in the region since the Middle Ages, offering good business opportunities for profitable trade. One should not ignore a declared preference to live in Transylvania for religious reasons as well: in an official statement from 1624, Arbanassi merchants from Chervena Voda, which lies to the south of the Danube River in what today is Bulgaria, who settled in Transylvania declared that living in a Christian country was more precious than their life or merchandise.⁶

The seminal article of Traian Stoianovich distinguished several categories of Balkan Orthodox merchants who dominated international trade in Southeastern and Central Europe in the eighteenth century. Among them, he listed “the Greek, Vlach and Macedo-Slav muleteer and forwarding agent of Epirus, Thessaly and Macedonia,” and “the Greek and the Bulgarian of the Eastern Rodope.”⁷ The customs accounts of Nagyszeben and the records of the Greek merchant association show that the merchants who preferred Transylvania as their business destination belonged to this particular group described by Stoianovich: their places of origin were in historical Epirus, in northeastern and northwestern Bulgaria, or in the Pirin Mountains.⁸ Wallachia and Moldavia, neighboring principalities to the south and east of Transylvania, were significant places of origin for the Greek merchants. A recent study by Lidia Cotovanu on the Greek migration in Wallachia and Moldavia in the late Middle Ages reveals the same regions in the Balkans as the original homelands of the Greeks.⁹

5 Cicanci, *Companiile*, 24–25.

6 The document is published in Veress, *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, 257–58: *de mi készek levén inkább életünket is letenni, hogy sem többé az keresztények közül török keze és birtoka alá menni*. For the entire episode of these Arbanassi merchants see: Barbu, “Les Arbanassi,” 206–22.

7 Stoianovich, “The conquering Orthodox Balkan merchant,” 234.

8 Cicanci, *Companiile*, 100–01, 145–55.

9 Cotovanu, “L’émigration sud-danubienne,” 2–7.

The Transylvanian Diet proposed and passed articles of law concerning the legal status of the foreign merchants, including the Greeks.¹⁰ In seventeenth-century Transylvania, there was more than just one kind of “foreign” merchant. Zsolt Trócsányi has rightfully differentiated between the dietal decisions concerning alien merchants and those dealing strictly with the Greeks.¹¹ Trócsányi identifies the main directions in the legislation on the Greeks, although his assertions regarding the attitude of the princes in this matter are not entirely accurate. For instance, Trócsányi argues that Prince Gabriel Bethlen (1613–29) restricted the activity of the Greeks owing to his “monopolistic foreign trade ideas.”¹² As will become evident, Prince Bethlen was in fact supportive of Greek trade in Transylvania.

A discussion of identity among Greeks from the Ottoman Empire is beyond the scope of this paper, especially since I am using exclusively Transylvanian official sources on the matter.¹³ Nevertheless, it is worth asking: who was a “Greek” in early modern Transylvania? The term was used in various ways: a “Greek” was a Greek-speaking, Eastern-Orthodox merchant, but essentially any merchant coming from the Ottoman Empire and bringing oriental goods was called a Greek.¹⁴ Nevertheless, in many situations Greeks were set apart from non-Greek Ottoman subjects, such as Armenians, Jews, and Turks, just as in certain situations Transylvanian Greeks were distinguished from foreign Greeks. Once they became “inhabitants” of the country, i.e. once they agreed to pay taxes, Greeks were treated differently from the merchants who had the same origins but had not settled in Transylvania. The first official mention of this dichotomy between Greeks who owned houses in the principality and those who did not comes from the decision of the Diet in 1591.¹⁵ In the eighteenth century, this polarization of the diasporic Greek communities between Ottoman subjects and naturalized Greeks was also evident in Vienna and Naples.¹⁶

Furthermore, while we can argue that the notion of a “Greek” was polyvalent, with their growing presence in the country in the seventeenth century, the term was used with more precision, and the Greeks were definitely distinct from the

10 See a good explanation of how this institution functioned in Trócsányi, “Gesetzgebung,” 95.

11 Ibid., 95.

12 Ibid., 104.

13 See recent debates and specialist literature at Grenet, “Grecs de nation,” 311–44.

14 Petri, “A görögök közvetítő kereskedelme,” 69–70; Harlaftis, “International Business of Southeastern Europe,” 390–91.

15 *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek* (hereinafter EOE), vol. 3, 391.

16 Grenet, “Grecs de nation,” 318–19.

merchants of other nationalities coming from the Ottoman Empire. This is evident, for instance, in a decision of the Transylvanian Diet from 1650: “All Jews and all Greeks should wear cloaks according to their sort, and if anyone of them should wear a Hungarian military cape, he will be fined 200 florins.”¹⁷

I present first the juridical status of Greeks in Transylvania created through the agency of princely grants and then discuss the regulations of the town of Nagyszeben as an example of a local policy toward these alien merchants. I conclude with an interpretation of the complex relations between norm and practice in this respect. Owing to the staple right of Brassó, Nagyszeben, and Beszterce (today Bistrița, Romania), the three major towns on the southern and eastern borders of Transylvania with the neighboring principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, foreign merchants were not allowed to enter Transylvania beyond these points and were obliged to sell wholesale to the local merchants.¹⁸ The Saxon towns who enjoyed this privilege argued constantly for their rights to be preserved and observed: throughout the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the grants given in favor of the Greeks were made at the expense of the ancient rights of the Transylvanian Saxons.

While generally the presence of the Greeks in Transylvania was seen as beneficial, there were recurrent fears and concerns about them that came up from time to time in the dietal legislation: one of the concerns was that they were draining the country of good coins and precious metals (e.g. the 1618 decision of the Diet), and another stemmed from the mistrust in the Greeks as spies for the Ottomans (e.g. the 1600 decision of the Diet or art. 1 in tit. LII of the *Approbatæ Constitutiones*).¹⁹

Greeks and the Princes of Transylvania

The first decision of the Diet, most probably initiated by Prince Gabriel Báthory (1608–13), to give all alien merchants the freedom to enter Transylvania and sell their goods after having paid the customs duties came in 1609.²⁰ While subsequent legislation retreated on this measure and reinforced the obligation

17 “mind sidó mind görög tartson neme szerint való köntöst; ha ki pedig magyar katona köntöst viselne, légyen kétszáz forint büntetésnek.” EOE, vol. 11, 78.

18 For a complex discussion of the medieval privilege of staple and deposit see Weisz, *Vásárok és lerakatok*, 61–62, 73–74. For the specific case of Nagyszeben and its staple right, see “Dreptul de etapă al Sibiului în secolele XVI–XVII,” 131–43.

19 EOE, vol. 4, 552; Ibid., vol. 7, 477.

20 Ibid., vol. 6, 125; L. Demény, “Le régime,” 92.

to visit only the staple sites, the breach into the system of the staple towns had been made.

The recent digital publication of the *Libri Regii*, the protocols of the Transylvanian chancery,²¹ brought to light unknown princely charters, uncovering crucial facts concerning the settlement of Greeks in the principality. Historical research has hardly taken these “royal books” into account; beginning with Nicolae Iorga, all researchers have relied exclusively on the rich material of the Greek merchant associations in Nagyszeben and Brassó and the decisions of the Transylvanian Diet regarding the Greeks. Furthermore, the presence and activity of Greek merchants in other Transylvanian towns has been entirely neglected by scholarship, some authors only stating that such associations (“companies”) might have existed but that evidence was not available. A linguistic barrier and a national bias were evidently at play here: authors who took a keen interest in the Greek communities in Transylvania did not have access to the Hungarian archival material, while scholars specializing in Transylvanian history with good access to local historical sources have not paid much attention to the presence of the Greeks in trade and the economy in the early modern period.²² Since the inventories of the Greek merchant association in Nagyszeben and Brassó both contained copies of the 1636 privilege of George Rákóczi I (1630–48), scholars considered it the first document issued for the Greeks in Transylvania.²³ Authors such as Nicolae Iorga and T. Bodogae state that the protocols of these two Greek “companies” include copies of further confirmations of this charter, which was renewed frequently.²⁴ According to the *Libri Regii* however, this 1636 document is not the first grant of privileges to Transylvanian Greeks. At the complaint of Greeks of Alba County and of the towns of Kolozsvár (today Cluj Napoca, Romania), Marosvásárhely (today Târgu-Mureș, Romania), and Hunyad (today Hunedoara, Romania) concerning other Greeks, Wallachians, Moldavians, and Turks, Prince Gabriel Bethlen issued a mandate on 22 October 1627.²⁵ The rivalry between tax-paying Greeks and the other Balkan-Levantine merchants, including other Greeks, became a recurrent issue among these

21 *Az erdélyi fejedelmek oklevelei* (hereinafter *Libri Regii*). For the *Libri Regii* in Transylvania see Fejér, “Editing and Publishing Historical Sources,” 15–17.

22 A notable exception is the book by Miskolc, *A brassói román levantei kereskedőpolgárság*.

23 See especially Cicanci, *Comaniile*, 24–25.

24 Bodogae, “Le privilège commercial accordé en 1636,” 650; Iorga, *Studii și documente cu privire la istoria românilor*, vol. 12, V–VI.

25 *Libri Regii*, vol. 27, 162b–64.

trading communities. Bethlen’s privilege in favor of the Transylvanian Greeks reveals that there were established communities of Greeks in several cities in Transylvania (in the princely capital Gyulafehérvár [today Alba Iulia, Romania], Kolozsvár, Marosvásárhely and Hunyad), most notably in ones without the staple right. I would also underline that the text of Bethlen’s grant drew a clear distinction between his “faithful subjects” and other foreign merchants coming from Wallachia, Moldavia, or the Ottoman Empire. This charter throws an entirely different light on the issue of the Greek presence in the principality of Transylvania, as it addresses the resident/non-resident, i.e. tax-paying/non-paying dichotomies in a manner suggesting that the Greeks had been settled in these towns for quite some time. The non-resident merchants were ordered to sell only their own merchandise and not to buy goods from other traders:

We have understood from the humble request of our faithful subjects of the Greek nation who live in the towns of Gyulafehérvár, Kolozsvár, and Marosvásárhely and in the market town of Hunyad that many Wallachians, Moldavians and Greeks, Vlachs, Turks and other people of similar kind of the Turkish Empire who come to do their trade with Turkish merchandise sell their goods with the ell and by the florin [...] to the great damage of our inhabitants of the Greek nation living here in Transylvania.²⁶

Prince Bethlen thus called the Greeks “his faithful subjects of the Greek nation,” which suggests a good relationship between the two parties. Greeks did business for the prince, as is clear from a 1619 free pass given by Bethlen’s wife, Zsuzsanna Károlyi, to a number of Greek merchants who were entrusted by the prince to sell 24 hundredweights of mercury. The motivation was that, “according to the law,” the Greeks could not leave the country with gold or silver good coins, and therefore they had to invest their money after the fair

26 “quod cum ex humillima fidelium subiectionum nostrorum Graecorum nationis universorum hominum in civitatibus Albensis, Claudiopoliensi et Vasarbellyensi nostris ac Hunyadiensi oppido degentium relatione accipiamus, [...] quam plurimos Daci alpestres, Moldavienses ac Turcici Imperii Graecos, Valachos, Turcos ac alios cujusvis ordinis homines qui nostrum imperium Transilvanicum mercede Turcica quaestum suum faciendum non solum ulna venditione vero florenali res suas mercimoniales aequae venderent, ac postmodum aere bono conflato iterum ac externas nationes sese recipiant hique regni nostri Transsilvaniae incolis Graecae videlicet nationi multum incommodantes summamque eisdem afferentes iniuriam [...] demiterentur.” *Libri Regii*, vol. 27, 162b–64.

in Nagyszeben.²⁷ Indeed, in April 1618, the Diet passed a decision forbidding Greeks to export good currency or objects made of precious metals.²⁸

In the literature dealing with the founding of the Greek merchant association in Nagyszeben, the succession of events appears to be straightforward: in 1636, Prince George Rákóczi I granted them the privilege of setting up their own association under the direction of a “principal” and administering their own justice.²⁹ The Nagyszeben Greek association, according to its internal documents, was founded only in 1638 or 1639, when its members held the first meeting and elected their *proestos*.³⁰ The document published by T. Bodogae was hailed by this author and others as the founding privilege of the Nagyszeben Greek trading “company.”³¹ A cliché was born out of this simplification: recent literature, including works I have written, took it over from Cicanci’s book without criticism.³²

When reading the text of the 1636 charter, two things become obvious which should have raised questions: there is no mention of Nagyszeben or of any other place in Transylvania whatsoever, and the charter does not contain the word “company.” Principally, the grant sets the limits for the Greeks’ trade and allows them their own administration of justice.³³ Nicolae Iorga had indicated as early as 1906 that the 1636 charter was a grant issued to all Greeks living in Transylvania, but his opinion did not become part of the mainstream scholarship. Iorga also asserted that the Nagyszeben “company” was “one of the most significant branches of the great Transylvanian Greek company,”³⁴ and even though this assertion would be a logical conclusion of the foundational charter, other evidence suggests that such a guild or association encompassing

27 January 18, 1619: “Nylvan vagion minden rendeknel, hogyj ez országoknak constitutioia szerent az georeogeoktül az aranyj, taller, dutka es minden egieb fele jó monetaknak ez országgbul valo kj vitele interdicaltatot: melibezkepest ez mostani elmúlt Vizkerezt napi Szebenben leveo sakadalomra ment georeogeok kenzerittettek ide Feiervara keneseö vetelre jeöni [...] Melj meghnevezett georeogeoknak adatot uram eo kegyelme in summa huzon negy masa kenesseöt jó kezessegh alatt ez jeovendeö Viragh Vasarnapon valo Vasarbely sakadalomigh, hogy akkorra ararul eppen contentalliak uramat eo kegyelmet.” National Archives of Sibiu, Medieval Documents, U IV 254.

28 EOE, vol. 7, 477; Demény, “Le régime,” 93.

29 Bodogae, “Le privilège,” 649; Cicanci, *Companiile*, 23–24.

30 Ibid., *Companiile*, 25.

31 See also Demény, “Le régime,” 97; Karathanassis, *L'hellénisme en Transylvanie*, 29.

32 See Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiu–Hermannstadt*, 120, and Ciure, “The contribution of the commercial companies,” 147.

33 A critical edition of a copy of the charter, as recorded in the protocols of the Greek merchant association in Nagyszeben, at Tsourka–Papastathi, *I Elliniki*, 375–78.

34 Iorga, *Scrisori și inscripții ardeleni și maramureșene*, V.

all Greek merchants in Transylvania did not exist. Although “company” is not a term used in Rákóczi’s grant, it was used by the Greek merchants: *kompania*.

Despina Tsourka-Papastathi argued against Cicanci’s interpretation of historical facts immediately after the publication of her book.³⁵ Tsourka-Papastathi offered a more elaborate argumentation of the accurate reading of this 1636 charter in her own book on the Nagyszeben “company,” and she published a critical edition of the document as well.³⁶ She expressed her doubts about this charter being the foundational privilege of the Nagyszeben “company”.³⁷

Let us analyze briefly the contents of the 1636 privilege charter. The preamble mentions beyond any doubt that this grant was offered to all Greek merchants in Transylvania: *ex humillima totius communitatis universorum Graecorum in ditione nostra, quaesturam exercentium, supplicatione*.³⁸ This phrase strengthens my arguments concerning the Transylvanian Greeks: they had been paying taxes to the treasury, a fact which entitled them to approach the prince with their grievances. The terms of Rákóczi’s grant were very clear: first, the Greeks could elect a suitable man to be their head (*idoneum virum in principalem eorum inspectorem eligere possint et valeant*), who would arbitrate disputes between Transylvanian Greeks and foreign Greeks. Any litigation with a nobleman or an inhabitant of the country was to be brought to the attention of the local courts, who had the power to arrest any accused Greek. Secondly, the Greek merchants could sell freely at the fairs, under strict conditions. However, they could only offer their stock wholesale (i.e. sell by the bale and not the ell, and not under the value of 100 denars), and for only three days before and after the fair. These restrictions on free sale in fact were intended to favor local traders and merchants, who thus had the benefit of retail sale and could obtain profit margins on the goods bought from the Greeks wholesale.

While Greeks in other Transylvanian towns had established themselves and had been acknowledged by the central authorities as shown by the 1627 charter of Gabriel Bethlen, Nagyszeben had placed many obstacles to stop the Greeks at the gates, obstacles matched only by the opportunities for good business in the town. In my opinion, the non-specific charter granted by Prince George Rákóczi I in 1636 created the first opening for the Greeks to enter the most coveted town in Transylvania. In a memoir from 1747 addressed to Empress Maria Theresia,

35 Tsourka-Papastathi, “A propos des compagnies grecques de Transylvanie,” 423.

36 Idem, *I Elliniki*, 375–78.

37 Idem, “The Decline of the Greek ‘Companies,’” 217, note 5.

38 Bodogae, “Le privilège,” 650.

the Greek merchants from Nagyszeben claimed to have lost in a fire the founding charter for their association. Despina Tsourka-Papastathi believes this assertion, and she suggests that a separate grant for the Greek merchant association in Nagyszeben must have been issued in 1637 or 1638.³⁹ Cicanci mentioned that an undated memoir of the Nagyszeben Greek merchant association addressed to the Transylvanian governor alludes to privileges obtained by the Greeks in 1623, 1630 and 1632, and 1656.⁴⁰ Iorga also knew of another privilege charter of 1641, preserved in transcripts in the protocols of the Nagyszeben “company,”⁴¹ although other authors who studied this archive do not mention it. I personally do not think that a different founding privilege existed at all: the Transylvanian prince could not have overlooked the fact that Nagyszeben possessed the staple right. Greeks entered Nagyszeben by bending the law slightly. According to the protocols of the Nagyszeben Greek association from 1655,⁴² the scribe could not recover the privileges of the “old Greek merchants” because they were lost due to bad archiving.⁴³ If there are so many confirmations and copies of the 1636 privilege, surely the one that allegedly was lost could have been replaced over time. Furthermore, the 1636 charter was preserved in copies in the archives of the Brassó Greek merchant association as well.⁴⁴

The founding privilege of the Brassó Greek association from 1678 acknowledges the Nagyszeben “company” (*compania*) as a model. First, a decision of a Diet was confirmed by Michael Apafi (1661–90), setting the annual tax payable by the Brassó Greeks,⁴⁵ separately from other Greek communities in Transylvania.⁴⁶ Subsequently, the Prince issued the charter *ad normam companiae Graecorum nostrorum Cibinii commorantium*, according to which the Brassó Greeks were allowed their own administration of justice.⁴⁷ The choice of the Greeks to organize themselves in localized trading associations or guilds instead of a community encompassing all Greeks in Transylvania has to be explained through the social and cultural experiences and expectations of these newcomers into Transylvania. Their solidarities relied more strongly on

39 Tsourka-Papastathi, “The Decline,” 217, note 5.

40 Cicanci, *Comaniile*, 22 and 91.

41 Iorga, *Scrisori și inscripții*, VI.

42 Ibid.

43 Cicanci, *Comaniile*, 30.

44 Ibid., 25.

45 EOE, vol. 16, 621.

46 Cicanci, *Comaniile*, 25.

47 Full text of the charter published by Iorga, *Acte românești*, 2–3.

local connections: extended family and neighbors from their villages or towns of origin. Nevertheless, Greeks paid their taxes jointly at first and also had common duties. I shall return here to the idea, put forward by Iorga, that a pan-Transylvanian Greek association was divided into local branches, the Nagyszeben one being one of the most prominent ones.⁴⁸ While the historical evidence does not support this hypothesis, it is clear that in the eyes of the Transylvanian political and fiscal authorities the Greeks were one entity, one “nation.”

As a final amendment to another misconception regarding the Greek “trading companies,” I would stress that they did not copy the English Levant Company⁴⁹ or any other Western European trading company.⁵⁰ The Greek “companies” in Transylvania were not joint-stock business ventures. Before arriving to the wrong conclusion, Olga Cicanci was rightly looking in the Balkans for the possible models for the Nagyszeben and Brassó associations of the Greek merchants. The Transylvanian Greek “companies” were associations of individuals engaged in trade, but each merchant was responsible for his own ventures. When in 1694 the head and other members of the Nagyszeben merchant association appeared in front of the town judges to testify for a fellow “companion,” they strongly refused to settle any unpaid debts. They stated: *Nemo enim pro alio solvere tenetur*.⁵¹ The aim of their association was more a juridical and political one, aimed at protecting their individual commercial interests. Thus, it was very similar to a merchant guild.

The following princely charter dealing with the Greeks was issued on May 14, 1643 by the same George Rákóczi I. This is a mandate instructing clerks and officials to allow foreign Greeks, Armenians and Serbs to trade freely in Transylvania, because these merchants had agreed to pay an annual tax of 2000 florins.⁵² The document names the individual Greeks entrusted with collecting the tax from all concerned, including Greeks from Hunyad, Hátszeg (today Hateg, Romania), and Marosvásárhely. Lidia Demény asserted that a similar mandate was given by George Rákóczi I two years earlier.⁵³

Five years later, on April 9, 1648, at the request of the Greeks in Gyulafehérvár, Prince George Rákóczi I ordered that the Jews share the burdens of the services

48 Iorga, *Studii și documente*, vol 12, V.

49 See the idea first at Cicanci, *Companiile*, 171.

50 Ciure, “The contribution,” 147.

51 Pakucs-Willcocks, “Als Kaufleute,” 88.

52 From the *Libri Regii*, vol. 20, 168, and published in “Erdélyi görög kereskedők szabadságlevellei,” *Magyar Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle* 5 (1898): 402–03.

53 Demény, “Le régime,” 98.

assigned to the Greeks: either transporting mercury or managing the post-house and post-horses. In this mandate, significant details about the legal framework for the trade of the Greeks emerge:

The Greeks living in our suburb of Gyulafehérvár inform us jointly that [...] the Jews had taken away business from them, because whenever a Turk comes with goods, the Jews go even as far as Deva to meet him and buy up his stock, selling it onward for double the price, although they are not allowed to do so.⁵⁴

Jews had been allowed to settle in Transylvania in 1623, when Gabriel Bethlen had stipulated in his privilege that one of their tasks was to bring merchandise from Istanbul.⁵⁵ Rivalry quickly ensued with the Greeks, who were competing for the princely favors and for the distribution of the same goods.

On February 1, 1653, Prince George Rákóczi II (1648–60) issued a mandate at the request of tax-paying Greeks according to which all Greek, Armenian, and other foreign merchants (except for the Jews) who traded in Transylvania pay their due taxes. The competition between tax-paying Greeks and the other Balkan-Levantine merchants, including the non-resident Greeks, was a recurrent theme throughout the seventeenth century. This document reveals how the Greeks themselves explained their predicament to the Transylvanian prince:

Tax-paying Greeks doing commerce in our realm of Transylvania have reported that often Greeks who do not belong to any society [*társaságokon kívül levő görögök*], Armenians, and other nations come to this country to do trade, but refuse to pay the rightful contribution [paid by the Greeks]. Many of them resort to local judges and public officers for protection, paying them bribes. Furthermore they [Greeks outside the associations] don't allow others to pay taxes either, those who get married and settle in towns and villages, claiming that they are now inhabitants of the country, even though they continue to do trade.⁵⁶

A mandate of Prince Michael Apafi from October 21, 1678 settled the annual contribution that the Greek merchant association from Nagyszeben had to pay, separately from the other Greeks, and gave the Nagyszeben Greeks an order to

54 *Libri Regii*, vol. 22, 75; “Erdélyi görög kereskedők szabadalomlevelei,” 403–04.

55 EOE, vol. 8, 143.

56 *Libri Regii*, vol. 30, 173–74. The document is preserved in a 1659 confirmation from Prince Ákos Barcsai.

change to good money the contribution paid by the Szeklers for the tribute to the Porte. This *annuentia* thus sheds light on a new duty entrusted to the Greeks, that of money-changing: “the tax of 10 000 florins that [the Szeklers] owe on St. George’s day, the said Greeks should take into their hand to change into good money, as is the custom to change it to good imperial thalers.”⁵⁷

Nagyszeben and the Greek Merchants: Town Statutes and the Staple Right in the Seventeenth Century

The town magistrate and council of Nagyszeben issued their own statutes and regulations aimed at organizing the political, social, and economic life of the town. The Greek merchants had become an issue for the local authorities by the sixteenth century, and this issue was addressed accordingly by the town officials. The growing pressure from the southern merchants to be allowed to trade freely was more important for the town of Nagyszeben than it was for the Transylvanian Diet. The struggle⁵⁸ was to preserve the privilege of the staple right, granted to the town of Nagyszeben in the fourteenth century. In a nutshell, the original privilege allowing the exclusive distribution of cloth on the local market for the Nagyszeben merchants against the merchants from Upper Hungary (Kassa [Kaschau, today Košice, Slovakia]) had come to offer local Saxon traders a lucrative position to buy up and sell the products coming from the Ottoman Empire. Well into the sixteenth century, according to the staple right, merchants coming from Wallachia had to deposit their goods at Tâlmács (Talmesch, today Tâlmăciu, Romania) and later Sellenberk (today Șelimbăr, Romania) and offer their stock wholesale to local merchants.⁵⁹

However, there was undeniable pressure from these foreign merchants to sell unhindered on the Transylvanian market. Otto Fritz Jickeli mentioned that in 1577 a Greek merchant obtained the first princely privilege to sell salted fish, blankets, and sheep.⁶⁰ The Saxon towns succeeded in having the Diet on their side throughout the sixteenth century, but the overall attitude and consequently the legislation gradually shifted in favor of the Greek merchants. The last

57 “Erdélyi görög kereskedők szabadságleveli,” 405.

58 I am using this word reluctantly; it was overused by older literature when discussing the efforts made by the Saxons to preserve their trading privileges and stopping foreign merchants from selling freely in Transylvania.

59 Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiu–Hermannstadt*, 26–27.

60 Jickeli, “Der Handel der Siebenbürger Sachsen,” 88, quoting the work of von Bethlen, “Grundlinien zur Kulturgeschichte Siebenbürgens,” 246.

weapon the Saxons could resort to was their own town statutes. Sixteenth-century documentary evidence, albeit scant, indicates that the Greeks had not entered the town and that they carried out their business at the staple place.⁶¹

The first town statute of the seventeenth century was issued in 1614. Nagyszeben was recovering politically and economically from the devastation caused by the former prince of Transylvania, Gabriel Báthory, who had occupied, plundered, and emptied the city of its inhabitants. The new prince, Gabriel Bethlen, was trying to pacify the Saxons, and he negotiated with them new terms of mutual collaboration. Gabriel Báthory had deviously occupied Nagyszeben, after asking to spend the winter in the city; now the Saxons were asking for safeguards and guarantees that Bethlen's winter sojourn in Nagyszeben would not end in occupation and distress. The new prince tried to make amends, reaching an agreement with the community of Transylvanian Saxons⁶² and, particularly, with the authorities of Nagyszeben.

Among the conditions requested by the Saxon *universitas*, which negotiated the terms on Nagyszeben's behalf, one concerned foreign merchants:

16. The Greeks and other traders, coming with their goods from Moldavia, Wallachia, and other places, should be obliged to go first to the staple places, to the twentieth, and to the customs stations without any delays; they should sell their wares there, and not go to fairs, under the penalty of confiscation of their goods, because this causes great damage to the Transylvanian merchants and to the country. This is evident also from the fact that the good money, ducats and gold, is paid for them, and they [the foreign merchants – MPW] take the good money into foreign countries, causing a shortage of money in Transylvania.⁶³

Despite the prince's reassurances, the position of the Saxons within the Transylvanian Diet had waned significantly, and they rarely prevailed. Prince Bethlen's own stance was in favor of an abundance of goods from the Ottoman lands, and as we have seen, he had forged good relations with the Greeks.

In 1631, the city fathers of Nagyszeben issued their *statuta specialia*, the first article of which tackled the issue of Greek merchants and their disregard for existing laws:

61 See for instance the litigation between two Greeks in 1561: Pakucs-Willcocks, "Making a Profit in Sibiu," 109–10.

62 Cziráki, "Brassó és az erdélyi szászok," 847–76.

63 EOE, vol. 6, 386–87. Also mentioned by Demény, "Le régime," 93.

We shall discuss first the harmful nation of the Greeks (*die schädliche nation der Griechen*), who have become prevalent not only in Siebenbürgen [i.e. Saxon Seats – MPW], but travel unhindered through the entire country [i.e. the principality of Transylvania – MPW], causing great damage to the country; also they have taken such liberties (*Licenz*) within our towns, staying here all year round and selling their goods as they wish, causing damage and disadvantage to our city folk and merchants, by taking the food from their mouths, not taking into account the fact that the locals are the ones who carry the burdens of the city.⁶⁴

The privilege of the staple right (*Staffel*) was at the core of this statute: the Nagyszeben merchants had become accustomed to having the Ottoman products brought to their doorstep, giving them the upper hand in relation to foreign merchants, especially the Balkan-Levantines.⁶⁵ Such an attitude cost them in the long-run: the Greeks had access to the oriental goods, information, and support networks.⁶⁶

The 1631 town statute argued that Greeks were the only ones who disregarded the ancient privilege obtained by the Nagyszeben citizens for their faithful services to the Hungarian monarchs. The city council and the community therefore decided

that the Greeks and other nations coming with goods and products through the Turnu Roșu pass should go to the staple place or *Niederlag*, and after they have paid the twentieth dutifully, they should not repack [the goods – MPW] but sell them in open shops to the inhabitants and artisans, who should be able to get whatever they need for their work. [The Greeks] should not sell to other foreigners, and should only sell by the pound, the centner, and the dozen, and for gold florins. After the fourteen days set by the law run out, local traders are allowed to sell their goods to the Greeks, but the Greeks should not take [these purchases] to the houses or to the inn, under the penalty of losing their goods. Furthermore, the Greeks should not take their goods back home, and if they try to cheat and sell them in secret, their goods should be confiscated when the truth is uncovered.⁶⁷

64 Schuler von Libloy, *Merkwürdige*, 90. See also Cicanci, *Companiile*, 89.

65 The merchants of Vienna, too, became “lazy,” taking advantage of their staple right: Landsteiner, “Handel und Kaufleute,” 208.

66 Braude, “Venture and Faith,” 519–42.

67 Schuler von Libloy, *Merkwürdige*, 91.

The city fathers of Nagyszeben organized their concerns according to the interests of the guilds and townsfolk, giving them, at least in theory, the first choice in buying the goods they wanted or needed. The 1631 Nagyszeben town statute also stipulated that “Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Jews and other nations” who pay the customs duties were allowed to enter the country during the times of the annual fairs.⁶⁸ It was, however, an article that had little effect on the actual situation of the Greeks and foreign merchants in Transylvania. This statute echoes the 1597 “articles,” which aimed to create the rules to establish equal access for all townsfolk to merchandise and services, of which first on the list were the “goods brought by the Greeks.”⁶⁹

The fact that the Greeks established their own trading guild in Nagyszeben after George Rákóczi I’s 1636 privilege was not acknowledged in any official document issued by the local Saxon authorities. The general *conflux* of the Saxon *universitas* on 19–24 January 1654 had decided that “foreign merchants, Greeks, Armenians and Jews, cannot trade with goods that grow or are made in this country,” and it listed things such as pigs, lambskins, wool, or wax.⁷⁰

In 1656, the city council of Nagyszeben issued a decision intended to control the Greeks who had settled in the town by imposing harsh rules and limits on their trading. This regulation built on the privilege granted by George Rákóczi I twenty years earlier: unless the Greeks were willing to pay 50 florins a year to rent the town shops, they could only sell freely within the time span of 14 days before and after the annual fairs. Furthermore, a curfew was set for the Greeks at eight o’clock in the evening, they could only buy wholesale from the market and not to the detriment of locals, and they could not practice their religion or open schools.⁷¹ Although this statute does not mention the staple right, it became the reference point for the very harsh negotiations with the Viennese authorities for the statute of Greek merchants during the eighteenth century. Thus, a later memoir (1726) of the Saxons addressed to the Viennese court confirms the fact that the 1656 statute had been accepted and agreed to by the Greeks. Nagyszeben officials declared that they only made these concessions to the Greeks because a plague in 1654 had taken a hard toll on the Nagyszeben

68 Ibid., 91.

69 Wagner, *Quellen zur Geschichte*, 148.

70 Hientz et. al., *Hermannstadt und Siebenbürgen*, vol. 10, image 173.

71 The statute was published by Ioan Moga, “Politica,” 156–57, note 1.

merchants, thus compelling them to take advantage of the presence of the Greeks temporarily.⁷²

The town statute from 1698 addressed the question of foreign and local merchants by declaring that the locals had always had an advantage over foreigners, “a privilege which should not be overlooked or forgotten,” and arguing that even though the “Greeks and other foreigners are tolerated temporarily (*ad tempus*), they should be given precedence over the locals after having supplied the town with goods.”⁷³

I have argued that, although there was no formal abolition of the staple right, this medieval privilege became obsolete and surpassed by legislation and historical context. In the aforementioned memoir of 1726 addressed to Vienna, the Saxons stated that the Greeks had never been granted the right to sell freely in Nagyszeben and that this was a harmful abuse of the law.⁷⁴ However, the Saxons had created a norm from the practice of the staple right, shifting the original provisions of the medieval privilege to suit their own needs and the changing economic realities.⁷⁵

The Greeks in Transylvania between Freedom of Trade and Limitations

After discussing the documentary evidence, I offer a summary of the findings, focusing on the gains obtained by the Greeks in the principality of Transylvania and the strict legal and institutional framework that was created for them.

In the seventeenth century, Greeks made great advances in securing their leading position in the distribution of goods from the Ottoman Empire in Transylvania. However, they were far from being on equal footing with the local merchants. They were given specific duties to carry out for the common good of the principality, which were mentioned in this article. Their prowess and acumen for business were undeniably acknowledged by the Transylvanians: in 1671 the Greek judge was given the task of appointing people to investigate the exchange rates of foreign currencies.⁷⁶ Greeks were allowed to pursue their trade under strict conditions, which are underlined in a mandate of Prince Michael Apafi from 1675 sent to the royal judge of Nagyszeben:

72 Moga, “Politica,” 157, note 2.

73 Schuler von Libloy, *Merkwürdige*, 116.

74 Moga, “Politica,” 157, note 3.

75 Pakucs-Willcocks, “Dreptul de etapă,” 131–43.

76 EOE, vol. 15, 184.

We have read your letter and understood, about the goods of that Italian, that the Greeks living there [in Nagyszeben – MPW] have bought up his goods perfidiously, acting very badly and wickedly, whereas they had no permission (*annuentia*), neither from ourselves, nor from the country [the Diet – MPW] to buy such goods for profit to the detriment of our citizens, goods that other foreign merchants bring into our country to sell. On the contrary, we know that it is forbidden for them to interfere.⁷⁷

The text of the princely instruction highlights one crucial limitation imposed on foreign merchants, and particularly on the Greeks, who wanted to do trade in Transylvania: they were only permitted to sell the goods they carried themselves. This rule had two major implications. First, the prohibition against foreign merchants selling the goods of other non-locals stems from the 1627 privilege given by Gabriel Bethlen to the Greeks in various towns in Transylvania, and one comes across it in subsequent official documents. In 1648, the Greeks themselves complained about Jews who purchased oriental products in Transylvania for resale, while an article of the Diet from 1654 clearly stated that “Jews and other foreign merchants [...] should bring the goods from abroad themselves.”⁷⁸ Furthermore, in 1675 it was decided that Greeks, Armenians, and Turks could only buy from local merchants.⁷⁹ Some of these concerns and stipulations were mirrored by regulations of the Nagyszeben Greek merchant association as well: in 1687, the members of the associations were not allowed to pass on their merchandise to another merchant to sell. Moreover, a regulation from 1690 limited the number of fair members of the Nagyszeben merchant association were allowed to visit to two per year.⁸⁰ Secondly, Greeks and Jews, as we have also seen, were confined to selling only goods imported by them from the Ottoman Empire. The Diet had decreed this in 1591,⁸¹ and Bethlen’s 1627 privilege defined Greeks by their dealing in “Turkish goods.”

Fundamentally, while their situation improved in the seventeenth century, the Greeks and other foreign merchants from the Ottoman Empire retained their status of aliens and outsiders. Even when they decided to declare themselves inhabitants for tax purposes and own property in Transylvania, their juridical standing was inferior to that of the local merchants. These interdictions

77 National Archives of Sibiu, Medieval Documents, U 1211, Hungarian original.

78 EOE, vol. 11, 177.

79 Ibid., vol. 16, 174.

80 Cicanci, *Companiile*, 123.

81 EOE, vol 3, 191–92.

and limitations to business were meant to preserve the advantages of the local merchants for distribution and retail sale. In this intricate and definitely not linear construction of their juridical status, the Greeks resorted to individual strategies to improve their chances for integration. These strategies included marriages to local women (e.g. in 1646 a certain György Policzani asking for permission from the prince for his betrothal to a Saxon woman),⁸² the purchase of property, ennoblement,⁸³ and entering the service of the Prince (certain Greeks farmed out the customs and the salt mines). János Pater, a Greek active in the second half of the seventeenth century, was the most representative example in this respect.⁸⁴ Similar strategies of integration have been identified in Wallachia and Moldavia, though the scale of the Greek presence was incomparably larger there than in Transylvania.⁸⁵

The inconsistent legislation and the ambiguity of attitudes toward the Greeks, centrally and locally as well, are characteristic of this century. For instance, the Diet of November 1675 retreated on its previous policy to encourage the Greeks and other foreign merchants, deciding that they should not be allowed to travel or wander freely through the country or use the back roads, where they could be a danger to the country: “and they are allowed free entrance until Brassó, Nagyszeben, Szászváros (today Orăștie, Romania) and Bánffyhunyard (today Huedin, Romania) towards Kolozsvár, but they are forbidden to go anywhere else.” The article of the law points to corrupt customs officers who allowed these merchants to travel further into the country, but also to fellow traders who acted as guides for the newcomers.⁸⁶ It is clear that these were two of the most common ways of entering Transylvania clandestinely. In Nagyszeben, there was also pressure from the community to have a constant supply of the “goods brought by the Greeks”: requests for the better regulation of trade in oriental goods were presented to the city council.⁸⁷ Furthermore, in the 1640s, the wife of the royal judge in Nagyszeben, Colomann Gotzmeister, during a

82 National Archives of Sibiu, Medieval Documents, U IV 500.

83 National Archives of Sibiu, Medieval Documents, U IV 2402: nobility charter for Thomas Osztaniczai (1671).

84 Demény, “Le régime,” 105–06.

85 Lazăr, *Les marchands en Valachie*, 105–16; Apetrei, “Forme de integrare socială a grecilor,” 303–08.

86 EOE, vol. 16, 174; Trócsányi, “Gesetzgebung,” 99.

87 Such as in 1630, 1634, 1670: National Archives of Sibiu, Medieval Documents, U IV 366 (1630), U IV 394 (1634).

bitter divorce trial, was accused of having connections to the recently established Greek merchant association in Nagyszeben.⁸⁸

Final Remarks and Suggestions for Further Research

How many Greeks were there at any given moment in seventeenth-century Transylvania? The number of members in the trading associations can be an indicator of rough figures: Olga Cicanci has identified 32 members in the Greek merchant association of Nagyszeben in 1695, while in other years for which she could find data the numbers are even lower, usually less than 30.⁸⁹ In 1670, the Diet had ordered the Nagyszeben Greek merchant association not to have more than 60 members at any given time.⁹⁰

The Brassó association of the Greek merchants seems to have been larger than the Nagyszeben one, but along with these figures we also need to take into account the unknown figures for the Greeks settled in other places. As mentioned before, Transylvanian authorities also unsuccessfully tried to count the Greeks in the 1670s,⁹¹ but the Habsburg administration of Transylvania managed to organize a census of the registered Greeks in Transylvania at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The number of merchants was a little over 200,⁹² a number consistent with the estimate for the seventeenth century.

A significant feature of the Greeks in Transylvania in the seventeenth century was that they were still quite mobile:⁹³ visiting homes and families, undertaking business trips, or fleeing uncomfortable situations in Transylvania were strong reasons for the underlying mobility of Greeks and other Balkan merchants.

The frictions between the settled and non-settled Greeks in Transylvania reveal how dynamic their diaspora was and how the communities were constantly replenished with new members. Late-seventeenth-century data from the account books of Siguli Stratu show how a Greek trading house operated: based in Nagyszeben, the merchant had family members acting as his agents at fairs and

88 Roth, *Hermannstadt*, 111.

89 Cicanci, *Comaniile*, 65.

90 EOE, vol. 16, 180.

91 Demény, “Le régime,” 108.

92 Dumitran, “Comercianții greci din Transilvania,” 241.

93 For mobility in early modern Europe excellent studies by Lucassen, “Towards a Comparative History,” 20–21, 31.

in other trading centers, buying and selling, borrowing and settling debts, and exchanging money.⁹⁴

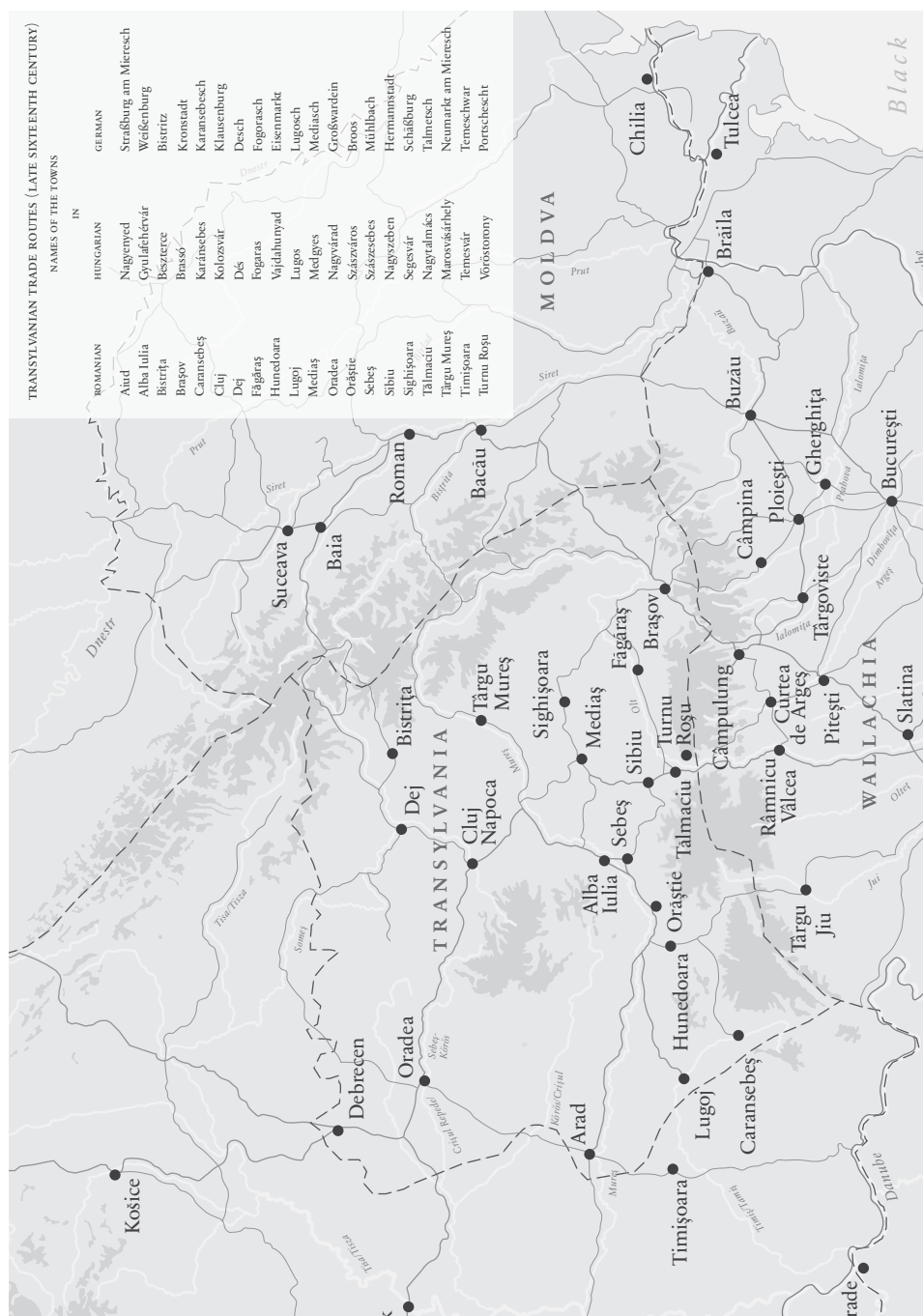
The work of Márta Búr has shown the situation of the Greeks in Hungary, where the first official Greek merchant associations were founded in Tokaj, Gyöngyös, Miskolc, and other towns in the second half of the seventeenth century. Greeks were faced with hostility in these towns as well, while authorities attempted, to no avail, to restrain the scope of their economic activity. As was the case in Transylvania, local authorities had assigned Hungarian Greeks the role of providers of Ottoman products, but Búr noticed that the Greeks chose to settle in market towns, where they could have good access to natural products and livestock. Greeks buying and selling grains, cattle, and sheep organized themselves in traders’ associations similar to the Transylvanian ones in order to protect themselves and their businesses, whereas Greeks dealing in Turkish goods remained individual traders with no guild-like bonds between them. Greeks in Hungary, at least in the early stages of their settlement, also constantly returned to their hometowns in the Balkans.⁹⁵

Vassiliki Seirinidou has argued that there were two types of Greek diaspora in Central Europe, an early one in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, carrying out retail trade in Turkish products but also keeping shops and monopolizing retail distribution of local goods in towns and villages, and a second diaspora, which formed around the middle of the eighteenth century and engaged in wholesale trade between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. She argues that while the second diaspora was born out of the first one, it had a different status, outlined in the peace treaties of Karlowitz (1699) and Passarowitz (1718).⁹⁶ I agree with Seirinidou that the status of the Greek merchants changed drastically after the Ottomans lost their authority over Hungary and Transylvania, but I cannot second her opinion that the second diaspora was formed by new merchants, who had to have the capital to engage in wholesale trade. As I have tried to show here, the Greek and other merchants, subjects of the Ottoman sultans, were very diverse in their origin, financial capability, interests, and status. If we are going to arrive at a subtle understanding of how the Greek diaspora in early modern Central Europe came into being, we must take into account a variety of factors. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the migration of the Greek merchants was still marked by a constant return to their homeland: the absence

94 *Catalogul documentelor*, 19–29.

95 Búr, “Handelsgesellschaften,” 289–91.

96 Seirinidou, “Grocers and Wholesalers,” 87–88.



Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, “Economic Relations Between the Ottoman Empire and Transylvania in the Sixteenth Century: Oriental Trade and Merchants,” in *Osmanischer Orient und Ostmitteleuropa: Perceptionen und interaktionen*, edited by Robert Born and Andreas Puth (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2014), 211, with thanks to Timo Stengl.

of the close family and the reliance on the extended male kinship for business is, in my opinion, a better indicator of the status of the Greeks. While some of them acquired either membership in an association (“company”) or paid their share of the common tax, until the eighteenth century, when the extended privileges were granted by Vienna, they could be considered as “migratory labor”⁹⁷ force. They had a highly-specialized profession, which was based on decades of shared experience, knowledge about the target markets, capital, and so on. In Transylvania, the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians were assigned specific tasks: their role was to provide goods from the Ottoman Empire.

Further research on the still underexplored archives of the Greek merchant associations in Nagyszeben and Brassó should offer more insights into the world of these Balkan merchants. Also, the close study of private letters, business correspondence, bills of exchange, and letters of credit which are found in the local archives will further a better understanding of their business activities and their increased share in Transylvania’s foreign trade beginning with the last decades of the seventeenth century.⁹⁸

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⁹⁷ According to the typology suggested by Lucassen, “Towards a Comparative History,” 17.

⁹⁸ Vencel Bíró has indicated that the archives of the Apor, Lázár and Teleki families in the state archives of Cluj and Budapest contain numerous such documents: Bíró, *Altörjái gróf Apor István*, 32, notes 5–17.

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Production of and Trade in Food Between the Kingdom of Hungary and Europe in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era (Thirteenth to Sixteenth Centuries): The Roles of Markets in Crises and Famines*

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Over the late Middle Ages and the early Modern Period, Western Europe was stricken by cyclical crises of subsistence or famines, related to several economic and social factors, such as the trend of production and the increasing price of wheat, the inadequate functioning of the market, the inappropriate intervention policies at the time of particular difficulties, and so on. In the Kingdom of Hungary crises and famines were caused by the same forces. But, surprisingly, cyclical large crises of subsistence and vast course famines had been nearly unknown in the kingdom between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. In this context, it is argued that the models of Ernest Labrousse and Amartya Sen may explain the emergence and development of crisis and famine not only and simply by the occurrence of exogenous forces such as a fall in crops, environmental shocks, war events and so on, but also and above all through a deeper analysis of the market, its functioning and its degree of integration with other markets. The paper thus highlights the particular Hungarian alimentary regime as characterized by a non-contradiction, but rather a thorough-penetration, relationship between agricultural and sylvan-pastoral activities. This not-contradiction was reflected by an alimentary equilibrium that characterized the kingdom throughout the period. In comparison with other parts of Europe, in Hungary alimentary alternatives such as grain, meat and fish remained accessible to most of the population, so the inhabitants' normal diet remained diversified and not entirely based on cereals. The specific production and exchange structures of the kingdom permitted the maintenance of this alimentary equilibrium that prevented the rise of vast alimentary crises, unless a shock such as war, climatic difficulties and so on occurred. Another reason for the absence of vast course famines was the kingdom's place in the exchange structures of Europe. The paper argues that, while wars—first of all against the Ottoman Empire—caused great damages and problems in food supplying, the complex economic interaction between crisis, famine

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and war that characterized the Hungary between over late Middle Ages and the early Modern Period is evidence of the kingdom's increasing and notable maturation as a market in the European context.

Keywords: food, production, commerce, market, nutrition, crisis, Hungary, Europe.

In the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era, Western Europe was stricken by cyclical famines. In this part of the continent, the crises of subsistence and famines alternated in cyclical waves, both short cycles (at least once a year, in periods preceding the harvest, essentially in relation to an expected increase in the price of wheat) and long cycles (approximately every 7–10 years, in relation to several complicated economic and social factors, such as the trends in production and the increasing price of wheat, the inadequate functioning of the market, inappropriate interventionist policies in a moment of particular difficulty, and so on).¹ As remarked by Fernand Braudel, “famine recurred so insistently for centuries on end that it became incorporated into man's biological regime and built into his daily life. Dearth and penury were continual, and familiar even in Europe, despite its privileged position.”²

In the Kingdom of Hungary famines were clearly caused by the same forces that caused them in Western Europe, such as a drop in the harvest, environmental shocks, wars, and so on. And, of course, when a famine occurred, it afflicted Hungary no less severely than it did other European regions. But, surprisingly, regular and cyclical large subsistence crises and long famines were nearly unheard of in the Kingdom of Hungary between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Similarly interesting, a growing number of food crises and famines was recorded with the passing of time, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries, with the largest number of events in the last one. Why did this happen? Does the admittedly fragmentary documentation provide an incomplete or distorted picture of the food regime of the Hungarian population? Or can the virtual absence of mention of famine and subsistence crises in the sources be interpreted as a sign of the existence of what might be termed a specific “nourishing order”? Can the political and institutional context and the production, distribution, and exchange structures of the Kingdom of Hungary explain the absence or limited impact of famine in these territories between late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era? And can this particular phenomenon

1 Palermo, *Sviluppo economico*, 225–82; see also the footnotes below.

2 Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism*, 73. Of course, Braudel refers to Western Europe, not Eastern Europe.

be explained by applying to the world of medieval and Early Modern Hungary the models elaborated by Ernest Labrousse and Amartya K. Sen to clarify the appearance and evolution mechanisms of crisis and famine in a preindustrial and industrial context, respectively (with a non-Malthusian approach) through a deeper analysis of the market, its functioning, and its degree of integration with other markets?³

Labrousse has defined the imbalance between production and demand of alimentary goods, and in particular the supply and demand of wheat (which was almost the sole basis of nourishment in the preindustrial societies of Western Europe), as a *crise de type ancien*. In the absence of intervention by the central or local authorities to address the consequences of a bad harvest or misguided speculation, this imbalance caused a famine, which should not be understood as a shortage of wheat, but rather as an increase in wheat prices. This increase could give rise to a large-scale crisis, and not only with regard to nourishment. In fact, in cases in which wages were non-elastic, i.e. they were not adjusted in any way to compensate for increases in the prices of agricultural goods, the necessary purchase of these goods (primarily of wheat) for daily nourishment meant a drop in available resources to purchase other agricultural and manufactured articles. It brought about a fall in consumption, prices, and the production of some articles. As mentioned, the central or local authorities could eliminate or limit the most negative effects of this imbalance through specific interventions: they could import alimentary goods or regulate prices. However, such measures did not always yield positive results, as they could inhibit the farmers' will to invest, since the husbandmen expected to earn higher profits thanks to crisis and famine, or rather thanks to increases in the price of wheat. In conclusion, sometimes such steps were followed by a phase of economic stagnation and crisis.⁴

Amartya K. Sen has explained the rise and diffusion of alimentary crises, including the phases when crises evolve into famines of vast proportions, through the concept of the *entitlement approach*, meaning the possession (or not) of

3 The applicability of both models to the phenomena of crisis and famine in medieval times has been the subject of broad debate. Today, their usefulness enjoys wide acceptance among economic historians of the Middle Ages. For a further bibliography, see: Palermo, *Sviluppo economico*; Herrer and Monclús, eds., *Crisis de subsistencia*; Monclús, ed., *Crisis alimentarias*; Monclús and Melis, eds., *Guerra y carestía*; Palermo, "Scarsità di risorse," 51–77; Strangio, "Urban Security," 79–93; Palermo, "Il principio dell'Entitlement Approach," 23–38; Palermo, Monclús, and Fara, eds., *Politiche economiche*, in press; see also the footnotes below.

4 Labrousse, *Esquisse du mouvement*, XXI–XXIX, 609–18, 621–42; see also idem, *Come nascono le Rivoluzioni*, 3–45, 46–96.

some suitable *entitlement* (*title*). Hunger does not become a problem because of a shortage of alimentary goods (on the contrary, in most cases, goods are available in sufficient if not abundant quantities on domestic or international markets), but because an individual has no useful *title* with which to acquire alimentary goods or participate on the marketplace. By *entitlement*, Sen means above all an income (in general, the whole of suitable rights) that guarantees the satisfaction of individual needs, among which the primary need is for nourishment. In order to understand hunger and famine it is therefore necessary to put the accent on market dynamics and dysfunctions: when there is no possibility to join or participate on the marketplace or some market actors are engaged in speculation (even if not on a large scale) and intervention by central or local authorities is lacking, these anomalies can cause the emergence of sudden and unexpected alimentary crises.⁵

In this sense, the models of Ernest Labrousse and Amartya K. Sen can explain the emergence and development of crisis and famine not simply as a consequence of the concurrence of external forces, such as a bad harvest, environmental shocks, wars, and so on, but also and above all, through a deeper analysis of the market, its functioning, and its degree of integration with other markets more or less distant. It thus exceeds the Malthusian and neo-Malthusian approaches, which attribute the onset of crisis and famine to the imbalance between the growth of food supply (expected to be arithmetical) and the growth of population (expected to be exponential).

So, in order to understand how and when crisis and famine began to appear in the Kingdom of Hungary in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era and to see whether it is possible to apply the models elaborated by Labrousse and Sen, it is necessary briefly to describe: a) the available sources; b) the market, i.e. the structures of production, distribution, and exchange in these territories, in particular with reference to food.

Sources

The first and greatest difficulty for anyone seeking to study the economic history of Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages is caused by the scarcity of the available sources, a consequence of both the more limited use of the written

5 In his vast bibliography, see for instance: Sen, "Famines as failures," 1273–80; idem, *Poverty and Famines*; idem, *Resources, Values and Development*; idem, "Food, Economics and Entitlements," 1–20; idem, *La ricchezza della ragione*; idem, *Etica ed economia*.

word than in Western Europe and the extensive damages suffered by the archives of the region over the centuries. The Kingdom of Hungary is no exception, and because of this dearth of sources, the economic and demographic conditions of the vast domains that were subject to the crown of Saint Stephen in the Middle Ages in many ways remain obscure.⁶

There are no comprehensive records regarding the collection of taxes or the number of settlements. The only source of this kind is the records of the collection of taxes prepared by papal collectors active in the Hungarian lands from the end of the thirteenth century to the second half of the fourteenth century, and these records are fragmentary at best.⁷

It was probably during the reign of Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437) that records began to be compiled for large estates, with inventories of settled tenants and villages, for military and fiscal purposes. But not many of these documents have survived, and they are mostly incomplete until 1531. The most important and extensively used among them are the *lucrum camerae* registers of five northeastern counties (Abaúj, Gömör, Sáros, Torna, and Ung) from 1427;⁸ the register of *lucrum camerae* of the Tramontane district of Nyitra County from 1452;⁹ the tax list of Nógrád County from in 1457;¹⁰ and the register of royal revenues prepared by Sigismund Ernuszt, bishop of Pécs and royal treasurer, for the fiscal year 1494/95, which is also incomplete, but which contains important information, such as the number of estates and tenants in each *comitatus* of the kingdom.¹¹ Similar documents for noble estates are exceptional before the end of the fifteenth century, and even then, they remain a rarity and are generally incomplete. A notable exception is the record prepared by Ippolito d'Este, bishop of Eger, then archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary (†1520).¹² However, more detailed administrative documents survive from the

6 Schmid, “Le pubblicazioni di fonti,” 141–210; Jakó, introduction to *Erdélyi okmánytár*, 7–32 (Hungarian text), 33–60 (Romanian text), 61–90 (German text); Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, XV–XIX; Ștefănescu, “Izvoarele istoriei românilor,” 3–30; Fara, “La Transilvania medievale,” 155–87; idem, “La città in Europa centro-orientale,” 15–62; see also the footnotes below. For a more recent summary of the Hungarian source situation concerning economic historical issues, see Laszlovszky, “Késő középkori gazdaság,” 13–19.

7 *Monumenta Vaticana*, vol. 1.

8 Engel, *Kamarahaszná-összeírások*.

9 Neumann, “Nyitra megye hegyentúli,” 183–234.

10 Kádas, “Nógrád megye adójegyzéke,” 31–82.

11 Solymosi, “Veszprém megye,” 121–239; idem, “Az Ernuszt-féle számadáskönyv,” 414–36.

12 Kovács, ed., *Esteri Hippolit püspök egri számadáskönyvei*.

sixteenth century, and they offer, at least indirectly, valuable data concerning demographics and population.¹³

For the urban settlements, beginning with the reign of Louis I (1342–82), lists of accounts and taxes paid by the towns begin to survive in increasing numbers.¹⁴ Some records of tax estimation have survived from the first period of Ottoman rule in the central territories of the kingdom (1540–90).¹⁵ The daily life of peasants, on the other hand, is described only superficially in official documents, and mostly in relationship to legal matters.¹⁶

Given this scarcity of sources, it would be foolish to hope to arrive at accurate mortality rates, and in particular mortality rates for times of subsistence crises and/or famines, in the Kingdom of Hungary between the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era: the available documents provide no precise information, and they offer only a rather impressionistic and vague image of such events. However, there are good indicators, such as descriptions of the phenomena and their amplitudes, in sources of different types from more or less neighboring geographical areas; prohibitions on the export of alimentary goods and (more or less) simultaneous requests for their import; some information about prices and price increases (though the available sources are not detailed enough to allow us to arrive at any overview of continuous trends in price increases); interventions or regulations concerning prices and markets on which alimentary commodities were sold by local and/or central authorities. Archaeological investigations have also contributed useful information.

Despite these limitations, it is possible to reconstruct a coherent framework of the economic structures and arrive at a realistic picture of the impact of famines in the Kingdom of Hungary between the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era.

13 See Maksay, *Magyarország birtokviszonyai*, 1–78. On demographic calculations for medieval Hungary, see footnote 22.

14 See for instance sources edited in: Manolescu, *Comerțul Țării Românești*; Szende, “Sopron (Ödenburg): A West–Hungarian Merchant Town,” 29–49; Pakucs–Willcocks, *Sibiu–Hermannstadt*. With more bibliographical information in Fara, “La città in Europa centro–orientale.”

15 See for instance Németh, “Die finanziellen Auswirkungen,” 771–80.

16 See Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, XIX.

Market and Food in Medieval and Early Modern Hungary

The sources dating from between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, in particular those of a narrative character, agree in their characterizations of the Kingdom of Hungary as a fertile land, rich in waters, pastures, and woods, where farming and cattle-breeding were practiced with good results.¹⁷ At the beginning of the fourteenth century, an anonymous Dominican who traveled a lot in East and Central Europe reported that the Realm of Saint Stephen was rich not only in cereals, meat, fish, and wine, but also in salt, gold, and silver.¹⁸ Accordingly, the anonymous chronicler deduced that the ancient names of *Messia* and *Pannonia* derived from abundant harvests and the availability of bread in Hungarian lands.¹⁹

The territorial expanse of the kingdom, Croatia included, was about 325,000 km², and the average population density was very low. While some areas were more densely inhabited, in general land was available in great abundance, and most villages had a vast area for arable land, pasture, and woods at their disposal. Moreover, urbanization lagged far behind by Western European standards. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, most uncultivated land was colonized thanks to the arrival of *hospites* coming, above all, from the Holy Roman Empire.²⁰ Colonization proceeded until the fourteenth century, but at the beginning of

17 See for instance Hrbek, “Ein arabischer Bericht,” 208–09; “Géographie d’Édrisi,” 377; “*Sunt autem predicti Ungari facie tetri, profundis oculis, statura humiles, moribus et lingua barbari et feroces, ut iure fortuna culpanda vel potius divina patientia admiranda est, quae, ne dicam hominibus, sed talibus hominum monstris tam delectabilem exposuit terram*” Otto Frisingensis, “Gesta Friderici I Imperatoris,” 369; Costantino Manasse, “Oratio,” 158. On this issue see also: Nagy, “The Towns of Medieval Hungary,” 169–78; Szelényi, *The Failure*, 1–42; Fara, “La città in Europa centro-orientale.”

18 In the middle of thirteenth century, in his *De proprietatibus rerum*, the Franciscan Bartholomeus Anglicus remembered that in the Kingdom of Hungary “*sal etiam optimum in quibusdam montibus effoditur*”: Schönbach, “Des Bartholomaeus Anglicus,” 55. At the end of the same century, the import lists of Bruges registered that “*Dou royaume de Hongrie vient cire, or et argent en plate*”: see *Inventaire des Archives de la ville de Bruges*, 225–06.

19 “[*Et est*] notandum, quod regnum vngarie olim non dicebatur vngaria, sed messia et panonia. Messia quidem dicebatur a messium proventu, habundat enim multum in messibus, panonia dicebatur etiam a panis habundantia; et ista consequenter se habent, ex habundantia enim messium sequitur habundantia panis”; 46: “*Est enim terra pascuosa et fertilis valde in pane, vino, carnibus, auro [et] argento, copia autem piscium excedit fere omnia regna, preterquam norvegiam, ubi pisces comeduntur pro panibus, vel loco panis. terra est comunitur plana, colles parvos permixtos habens, alicubi tamen habet montes altissimos: in partibus transilvanis sunt maximi montes de sale et de illis montibus cavatur sal sicut lapides et apportatur per totum regnum et ad omnia regna circumadiacentia.*” *Anonymi Descriptio*, 43.

20 Colonization was common throughout East and Central Europe in the Middle Ages: see with other bibliographical information Higounet, *Les Allemands en Europe centrale*. On this topic, and with particular reference to the Kingdom of Hungary, more recently see Kubinyi and Laszlovszky, “Völker und Kulturen,” 397–403.

the fourteenth century the Kingdom of Hungary was still far from densely inhabited. For instance, only a few settlements were clearly identified as *civitates*.²¹ Density remained low, with considerable differences between individual regions. The situation may have partially changed by the beginning of the fifteenth century, but the overall size of the population of medieval Hungary (and therefore calculations concerning population density, mortality, etc.) remained a highly controversial issue on account of the lack of relevant sources. As Pál Engel remarks, “it is almost impossible to determine how large the population of Hungary was at the end of the Middle Ages. Indeed, current estimates vary between 2.5 million and 5.5 million, which only serves to underline the prevailing uncertainty surrounding this issue.”

In this sense, the size of the settlements varied greatly throughout the kingdom. The urban network of the Kingdom of Hungary included some 30–35 towns with urban privileges of various degree, but they were all small from a Western European perspective, and the urban population is estimated to have been no more than 3 percent of the total population. Buda had about 10,000 inhabitants; Sopron, Pozsony (today Bratislava, Slovakia), Kassa (today Košice, Slovakia), Kolozsvár (today Cluj-Napoca, Romania), Brassó (today Braşov, Romania), Nagyszeben (today Sibiu, Romania) and the mining towns of Besztercebánya (today Banská Bystrica, Slovakia) and Selmecebánya (today Banská Štiavnica, Slovakia) about 4–5,000 each; Pest, Szeged, Székesfehérvár, Nagyszombat (today Trnava, Slovakia), Eperjes (today Prešov, Slovakia), Bártfa (today Bardejov, Slovakia), Lőcse (today Levoča, Slovakia), and the mining towns of Gölnicbánya (today Gelnica, Slovakia) and Körmöcbánya (today Kremnica, Slovakia) about 3,000 each. In the southern and southwestern part of Transdanubia and in the eastern edge of Transylvania there were hundreds of little villages with a population of well under 100, while in the Great Plain much larger villages were more common. These villages had at their disposal a large quantity of land, albeit with great differences between the various Hungarian territories. According to Engel,

21 “*Preter* [Buda, Esztergom, Győr, Zágráb (today Zagreb, Croatia), Veszprém, Pécs, Gyulafehérvár (today Alba Iulia, Romania), Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia), Nagyszombat (Trnava, Slovakia), Baja] *non sunt plures civitates in tota vngaria, preter quinque alias circa mare in dalmacia; sunt tamen multa opida, [castra] seu fortalicia et ville innumerabiles in dicto regno, et cum hoc [toto] videtur prefatum regnum esse omnino vacuum propter magnitudinem eiusdem.*” *Anonymi Descriptio*, 48–49. See Nagy, “The Towns of Medieval Hungary;” Szelényi, *The Failure*; Fara, “La città in Europa centro-orientale.”

in the counties of Abaúj and Tolna the average village territory was around 2,800 acres at the end of the Middle Ages. Yet there existed great regional differences. The Great Plain was characterized by populous villages with extensive territories, whereas in the southern part of Transdanubia and south of the Drava small villages were more usual. For example, around 1500, in the County of Vas the extent of a village's territory was 2,100 acres on average, while the corresponding figure in Zala was 1,700 acres.²²

It is nevertheless important to underline two general features: a) there was a general trend of population increase; b) there was a large availability of land. These two elements, and above all the second one, affected the structures of production in the primary sector (agriculture and livestock) and led to economic specialization. Agriculture (cereals and wine) had represented an important economic sector in the kingdom's economic structure since the twelfth century, although it was practiced above all through a periodic change of cultivated lands, given the abundance of available land. This remained the principal cultivation method, up to the first half of the thirteenth century, when it was progressively replaced by a more coherent system of open fields, most of which were still exploited in an extensive way, but with the use of more developed techniques (such as the two-field rotation and in some regions even the three-field rotation, as well as the asymmetrical heavy plough). Agricultural productivity increased from a yield of 1:2 at the beginning of the thirteenth century to 1:3–4 one century later.²³ Nevertheless, livestock breeding (above all the raising of horse and oxen) maintained a fundamental economic role, in accordance with the traditional Hungarian nomadic and semi-nomadic forms of organization, as well

22 On the demographic course in the Kingdom of Hungary: Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 267–77, 326–34 (quotations respectively at 330 and 273); Györffy, “Einwohnerzahl und Bevölkerungsdichte,” 163–93; Fügedi, “The Demographic Landscape,” 47–58; Kristó, “Die Bevölkerungszahl,” 9–56; Engel, “Probleme der historischen Demographie,” 57–65. For an analysis about the problems of different demographic calculations for medieval Hungary, with detailed references, see Kubinyi and Laszlovszky, “Népességtörténeti kérdések,” 38–48. A most recent reference of this issue, with relevant literature, is Romhányi, “Kolostorhálózat,” 1–49. See also the footnotes below.

23 In general, Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 56–8, 271–77, 326–28; for more information and a good bibliography, see the historical and archaeological studies of Laszlovszky, “Einzelsiedlungen,” 227–55; idem, “Field Systems,” 432–44; idem, “Földművelés,” 49–82. See also: Belényes, “Der Ackerbau,” 256–321; Maksay, “Das Agrarsiedlungssystem,” 83–108; Makkai, “Agrarian Landscapes,” 193–208; Kubinyi, “Mittelalterliche Siedlungsformen,” 151–70. See footnotes 32, 33, 34, 38.

as the abundance of land, forest, and pastures.²⁴ Hunting and fishing were also notable natural resources, and in general not closed to peasants; only limited areas were subject to absolute royal and noble control.²⁵

Thus, Hungarian lands produced and exported more agricultural products and livestock than they did raw materials, but they also exported mineral and metals like iron, copper, salt, gold, and silver, as well as slaves (at least up to the beginning of the thirteenth century). Imported goods were mostly luxury products: the crown, the royal court, and the nobility demanded these goods in great quantities. Italian, French, and German cloths of various quality were brought into the country from the West, as were jewels and handicraft products; from the East, goods like skins, wools, and cloths of different types were imported, along with wax and spices.²⁶ Non-luxury items were also imported in large quantities, for instance knives, pottery, etc.²⁷ A considerable share of the imported commodities passed through the region on its way to Eastern or Western Europe.

Western sources almost unanimously describe the Kingdom of Hungary as a land in which it was possible to make good profits through the exchange of Western luxury products for local livestock, precious metals, spices, and other Levantine articles. Unfortunately, the available sources do not enable us to reconstruct price levels continuously from the Late Middle Ages to the Early Modern Era. However, on the basis of the available documents, scholars agree that the difference in price between local and imported goods created many profitable bargains, above all for Italian and German *mercatores*, with a considerable outflow of cheap staples from Hungary to Western Europe.²⁸

24 “(...) *parvos habent equos comuniter, licet alias multum fortes et agiles, principes tamen et nobiles habent equos magnos et pulcros* (...)” *Anonymi Descriptio*, 49. In 1433, the knight Bertrandon de la Broquière from Burgundy had similar impressions in the course of his travels through the Great Hungarian Plain: he noted the great quantity of free horses, which were easily purchasable in the markets of Szeged and Pest: Broquière, “Voyage d’Outremer,” 233. See footnotes 32, 33, 34, 38.

25 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 328, 356; Bak, “Servitude,” 394, footnote 17.

26 See for instance the expenses of Prince Stephen and his court in 1264, compiled by the Venetian merchant *Syr Wulam*, for the purchase of many articles, textiles in particular (from Gand, Milan, Lucca and German territories of the Roman Holy Empire, but even from Byzantium and territories of Rus’), for about 1,500 silver marks. Zolnay, “István ifjabb király számadása,” 79–114.

27 See for instance Holl, “Külföldi kerámia,” 147–97; Voit and Holl, *Old Hungarian Stove Tiles*; Holl, *Fundkomplexe*.

28 For a synthesis see Nagy, “Transcontinental Trade,” 347–56. For a discussion with a focus on the Kingdom of Hungary, see Pach, *Hungary and the European Economy*. See also Nagy, “The Study,” 65–75.

For instance, in 1376, the Florentine Bonaccorso Pitti was in Buda and, before going back to Italy, he decided to buy six Hungarian horses. Their local price was very low, though they were famous in Western markets, thus making it possible to make a good profit. During his journey home, Bonaccorso lost one horse, gave another away as a present, and sold two others, losing some of his profits through gaming. Nonetheless, he returned to Florence with two horses, 100 gold florins, and the satisfying experience of having made an excellent bargain.²⁹ Other documents also indicate that the Kingdom of Hungary was rich with economic opportunities.³⁰ At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the price of an ox in Hungary was around three or four florins, and a horse of average quality was not much more expensive. Bertrandon de la Broquière noted that in Hungary a horse of the best quality cost around ten florins, while in Western Europe it could cost as much as 50 florins. On the other hand, a cheap roll of Bohemian cloth could be bought for seven florins, while the same quantity of the best Italian cloth cost around 45 florins, that is, the price of 10–15 oxen.³¹

In this context, Hungarian households were able to produce a substantial share of their own food instead of purchasing it on the local markets. Of course, it was always possible to turn to the market, but only in cases of specific necessity. This allowed most of the Hungarian population to have almost continuous access to different alimentary resources, such as cereals, meat, and fish, and also to maintain a very diverse diet, not based almost entirely on cereals, as was the case in Western Europe. Moreover, long-distance trade did not affect the availability of food for the Hungarian population. Data gathered by Vera Zimányi confirms that

before the ‘price revolution’ in the 1520s, for the price of an ox it was possible to have Moravian cloth [of average quality and largely accessible] sufficient for an item, an item and a half, of clothing; after the differentiating effects of the ‘price revolution’ around the 1580s, in exchange for an ox it was possible to buy cloth sufficient for 2 items and a half of clothing, and, in the 1600s, for 3 and 1/3. [...] Livestock

29 Bonaccorso Pitti, “Ricordi,” 366–68.

30 Dionisio Huszti, “Mercanti italiani,” 10–40; Branca, “Mercanti e librai,” 336–37; Kellenbenz, “Gli operatori,” 333–57; Dini, “L’economia fiorentina,” 633–55; Raukar, “I fiorentini in Dalmazia,” 657–80; Budak, “I fiorentini nella Slavonia,” 681–95; Teke, “Operatori economici,” 697–707; Arany, “Firenzei kereskedők,” 483–549; Fara, “Attività,” 1071–89; idem, “Italian Merchants,” 119–33.

31 Broquière, “Voyage d’Outremer,” 233.

breeding, therefore, involved, temporarily, greater advantages than cloth production.³²

On average, about 100,000 cattle were exported from the Hungarian lands per annum, with peaks of up to 200,000. In periods of strong demand, more cattle could be added from Moldavia and Wallachia through Transylvania. About four fifths of all cattle reached the Austrian, German, and Moravian markets, while about one fifth went to Venice. Only a few cattle were destined for the Ottoman lands (essentially to satisfy the demand of a section of the armed forces). It is calculated that in 1580 the total number of cattle was about 3 million. This would mean that, at least in that year, the exports comprised merely six per cent of the available livestock: evidently the rest remained available for domestic consumption.³³

Indeed, meat was the main protein source for most of the inhabitants of the kingdom, and it played a central role in the Hungarian diet in the Middle Ages and in the Modern Era. If in the Hungarian lands the average annual consumption of cereals was about 112 kilograms (well below the European average, estimated at 175 kilograms), the consumption of meat was very high, 63 to 69 kilograms per capita (well above 50 kilograms in Nuremberg, 47 kilograms in the cities of southern Germany, and 26 kilograms in southern France). Moreover, the large size of the animals should also be kept in mind. Between the tenth and the twelfth centuries, Hungarian cattle lacked the special traits that became their distinguishing features by the sixteenth century, specifically the large size and large horns: these features were probably the product of a selection of species, even for commercial purposes, which took place over the course of several centuries; so, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the weight of an average Hungarian ox was about 300–350 kilograms, a figure which increased to about 450–500 kilograms by the beginning of the seventeenth century, while the European standard was 200 kilograms.³⁴ Not surprisingly, in the Hungarian lands the production and consumption of cereals continued to have only

32 Zimányi, “Esportazione,” 148.

33 Makkai, “Der ungarische Viehhandel,” 483–506; Tucci, “L’Ungheria,” 153–71; Żytkowicz, “Trends of Agrarian Economy,” 73–80; N. Kiss, “Agricultural and Livestock Production,” 84–96; Sárközy, “Mercanti bovini,” 31–39; Blanchard, “The Continental,” 427–60; Fara, “An Outline,” 87–95; idem, “Il commercio di bestiame.”

34 Bartosiewicz, *Animals*; idem, “Cattle Trade,” 189–96; idem, “The Hungarian Grey Cattle,” 49–60; idem, “Animal husbandry,” 139–55; idem, “Turkish Period Bone Finds,” 47–56; Bartosiewicz and Gál, “Animal Exploitation,” 365–76; Bartosiewicz, “Animal Bones,” 457–78; Hoffmann, “Frontier Foods,” 131–67; Rácz, “The Price of Survival,” 21–39. See footnotes 32, 33, 38.

limited importance until the middle of the eighteenth century, when Hungarian agricultural structures underwent a deep transformation, with an increasing economic and commercial integration into the Habsburg Empire and, as part of the Empire, Europe.³⁵

In his *Cronaca* of 1348, the Florentine Matteo Villani offers information concerning some Hungarian alimentary habits based on meat and the importance of cattle-breeding in the local economy:

The Hungarians [...] are well and easily stocked with food even when they are in inhospitable places. This is because there is a large number of oxen and cows in Hungary which are not used to work the land; and since there are wide pastures in which to graze them, the animals grow faster and fatter. The animals are then slaughtered for leather and fat, which are heavily traded; the meat is boiled in large pots, and when it has been cooked and salted and separated from the bones, it is desiccated in ovens or in some other manner. Once dried, the meat is pulverized in a subtle mode; in this manner, it is preserved. And when they are traveling or marching with the army, when they cannot find anything to eat, they carry pots and copper vessels and each a small bag with this meat powder, as a war provision; and other bags are carried on carriages at the orders of their lord. And when they encounter a river or other water, they stop and fill their pots and pans with water; once the water has come to a boil, they add an amount of the pulverized flesh depending on the number of men who are eating. The meat powder grows and swells, and a handful or two of it can fill a pot with a kind of soup which is very nourishing to eat and which makes men vigorous with little bread, or even without bread.³⁶

Between the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era, the general characteristics of production and exchange in the Kingdom of Hungary

³⁵ See footnotes 87 and following.

³⁶ “Li Ungheri (...) di loro vivanda co· lieve incarico sono ne’ diserti bene forniti, e· lla cagione di ciò e· lla loro provisione è questa; che ‘n Ungheria cresce grande moltitudine di buoi e vacche, i quali no· lavorano la terra, e avendo larga pastura, crescono e ingrassano tosto, i quali elli uccidono per avere il cuoio, e il grasso che ne fanno grande mercatantia, e· lla carne fanno cuocere in grande caldaie; e com’ell’è ben cotta e salata la fanno dividere da l’ossa, e apresso la fanno seccare ne’ fornì o in altro modo, e secca, la fanno polverezzare e recare in sottile polvere, e così la serbano; e quando vanno pe’ diserti con grande esercito, ove no· truovano alcuna cosa da vivere, portano painoli e altri vasi di rame, e catauno per sé porta uno sacchetto di questa polvere per provisione di guerra, e oltre a· ciò il signore ne fa portare in sulle carrette grande quantità; e quando s’abattono alle fiumane o altre acque, quivi s’arrestano, e pieni i loro vaselli d’acqua la fanno bollire, e bollita, vi mettono suso di questa polvere secondo la quantità de’ compagni che s’acostano insieme; la polvere ricresce e gonfia, e d’una menata o di due si fa pieno il vaso a modo di farinata, e dà sustanzia grande da nutrire, e rende li nomini forti con poco pane, o per sé medesima sanza pane.” Villani, *Cronaca*, 773–77.

remained almost unchanged, including in regard to food. With the passing of time, a notable development in the internal market occurred, characterized by a greater use of money and a meaningful increase in commercial activities over short, medium, and long distances. Although the prices of the Hungarian products slowly but consistently increased, potentially these prices remained low in comparison with prices in the West. Thus, the exchange of Hungarian raw materials and livestock for Western and Eastern products (textiles in particular) remained profitable.³⁷

The realm of Saint Stephen was rich in alimentary resources, which were easily accessible to a large stratum of the population. The levels of nutrition in the Kingdom of Hungary were therefore higher, both quantitatively and qualitatively, than in Western Europe. The normal diet of the kingdom's inhabitants was based not only on cereals but also on fish and, above all, meat, which was available to most of the population. Even if there was a decrease in crops, it was always possible to fall back on the consumption of meat, or even pulse, fish and game.³⁸

The kingdom of Hungary remained in this state of alimentary equilibrium for the whole of the Middle Ages and most of the Modern Era. The absence in the sources of mention of crises or famines suggests that in this period famine, which was cyclically frequent in other territories of Europe, was nearly, if not completely, unknown in Hungary. Furthermore, the structure of exchange in the kingdom also suggests that there were no enduring famines. Keeping in mind the general lacunae in the available documentation, there are very few traces of a resort to the import of alimentary goods (while there are some signs that they were exported), and very few indications of intervention or regulation of prices and markets of alimentary commodities by the crown or by another secular or ecclesiastical authority of the kingdom.³⁹

37 See footnotes 32, 33, 34, 38.

38 László Makkai offers a description of the diet in medieval and modern Hungary, "Economic landscapes," 24–35; Kiss, "Agricultural and livestock production," 84–96. See also the ethno-anthropological analyses by Kisbán, "Food and Foodways," 199–212. Some specific studies in idem, "May His Pig Fat Be Thick," 26–33; idem, "The Beginnings of Potato Cultivation," 178–91; idem, "Milky ways," 14–27. See footnote 90.

39 Andrea Fara, *Guerra, carestia*, 22–31. See footnotes 23, 32, 33, 34, 38.

I will now offer a brief survey of the main events related to hunger and famine in the Kingdom of Hungary between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁴⁰

Crisis and Famine in the Thirteenth Century

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, hunger and famine were reported in 1044, 1074 (or 1075), and 1141. These dates all overlapped with periods of military conflicts, but unfortunately the sources do not permit a real analysis of the economic impact of the events of the wars. One should note that there were wars and conflicts in other years too, but no signs of other hunger or famine events.⁴¹

More interesting data are available beginning in the thirteenth century, when a great famine occurred in 1243/45. It was not caused by earlier or repeated bad harvests, however, or by correlated speculations. Rather, the famine was a direct consequence of the Mongol invasions and devastation wreaked by the Mongols, which led to a genuine collapse of the political, economic, and social structures of the kingdom in 1241/42.⁴² According to the *Chronicon Austriacum*, in 1243–45 famine took a much bigger toll on human lives than the previous invasions and devastations; in all likelihood, the episodes of cannibalism referred to by the author never took place, but they do give an idea of the emotional impact of the catastrophe on contemporary society.⁴³ The destruction and demographic loss were certainly considerable, estimated to between 20 and 50 per cent of the

40 For a more detailed description of the single event, consult the bibliography indicated in the related footnotes.

41 See data in Kiss, “Weather and Weather-Related I,” 5–37.

42 Among the available sources, see *Magistri Rogerii Epistola*. On the impact of the Mongol invasion on Hungary, with an ample bibliography, see the papers in: “*Carmen miserabile*,” see also Fara, “L’impatto,” 65–86; and the appended footnotes.

43 “*Interea fames horribilis et inaudita invasit terram Ungariae, et plures perierunt fame, quam antea a paganis: canes comendebant et catos et homines: humana caro publice vendebatur in nundinis. Deinde locuste illud, quod seminatum erat, corroserunt. In quindecim diaetis in longitudine et latitudine homo non inveniebatur in regno illo: a nativitate Christi non est tanta plaga et miseria visa et audita in aliquo regno, sicut in Ungaria, propter peccata eorum: in plaga et post plagam erant, quales antea fuerunt.*” “*Chronicon Austriacum*,” 1958. “*Et quia seminare in illis temporibus non potuerunt Hungari, ideo multo plures, post exitum illorum, fame perierunt, quam illi, qui in captivitatem ducti sunt, et gladio ceciderunt.*” “*Chronici Hungarici Compositio saeculi XIV*,” 468.

entire population, and even higher, with high divergences among the different Hungarian territories.⁴⁴

Another famine was recorded in 1263, in a period characterized by clashes between the Hungarian nobility and the crown, as well as conflicts within the royal family itself (with civil wars in 1262 and 1264–66 between king Béla IV and his son and heir Stephen). So, the uncertain political situation created by the trauma of Mongol invasions seems to have contributed to a breakdown of normal economic and commercial progress.⁴⁵ In this context, the *Chronicon Austriacum* reported a *maxima fames* in 1263, not only in Hungary, but in most of East and Central Europe. Nevertheless, this generic report does not allow us to assess the real impact of the famine.⁴⁶

Crisis and Famine in the Fourteenth Century

On the other hand, the same wartime events also triggered wide-ranging political, economic, and social changes which overlapped with: a) elements of the previous period of economic expansion and growth (which was interrupted by the trauma of the Mongol invasions); b) the political and economic reforms, institutional stability, and stronger royal power established by the new Angevin dynasty, with Charles I (1301–42) and his son Louis I the Great (1342–82);⁴⁷ c) the so-called “advantage of backwardness” (as explained by Alexander Gerschenkron).⁴⁸

In the fourteenth century, the Hungarian markets were still not adequately developed, and thus they offered profitable spaces for investment for European merchant capital, which had fallen on hard times. With the reorganization of

44 Historiography on this topic is ample; different evaluations of the Mongol invasions and the impacts of these incursions are discussed in Berend, “Hungary, the Gate of Christendom,” 206–07, footnotes 46–48; idem, *At the Gate of Christendom* 33–39, 163–71. See also Laszlovszky, “«Per tot discrimina rerum»,” 37–55.

45 See Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 101–11.

46 “Chronicon Austriacum,” 1958: “*Hoc anno [1263] fuit maxima fames per totam Austriam et Hungariam et Bohemiam et Moraviam, qualis antea raro visa fuit, et duravit usque ad messem.*” Other difficulties but not critical situations in Hungarian lands are noted in Curschmann, *Hungersnöte in Mittelalter*. For an overview of the thirteenth-century data, see Kiss, “Weather and Weather-Related II,” 5–46.

47 Hóman, *A magyar királyság pénzügyei*; idem, *Gli Angioini di Napoli*, 120–283; Pach, “La politica commerciale,” 105–19; Kristó, “Hungary in the Age of the Anjou Kings,” 56–66; Várdy, Grosschmid, and Domonkos, *Louis the Great*; Kristó, “Les bases du pouvoir,” 423–29; Petrovics, “The kings,” 431–42; Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 153–94; Fara, “Le riforme politiche,” 41–70; idem, “Il conflitto e la crescita,” 5–38; see also the papers in *Hungarian Historical Review* 2, no. 2; and in *L’Ungheria angioina*.

48 Although he refers to the industrialization in Italy and Russia, see the analysis in Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness*.

the kingdom's economic structures, Hungarian raw materials and livestock found extensive markets, and trade over short and long distances with the Italian Peninsula and the Holy Roman Empire suddenly grew considerably livelier. These innovations launched and favored dynamic and sustained economic development in the kingdom. The series of subsistence crises that struck Western Europe between 1315 and 1322 had a limited impact on the Hungarian lands.⁴⁹ This economy continued to grow until at least the beginning of the fifteenth century, and this was followed by a further growth phase in the same century and in the next one, with a different economic cycle in comparison with Western Europe.⁵⁰

In this political and economic context, fourteenth-century sources report on four main cases of increases in the prices of alimentary goods; three of these cases include mention of famine phenomenon and/or food crises of varying extents. Two events were just local and occurred in the northern regions of historical Hungary (in what today is Slovakia). In 1312, in the Szepesség (Spiš) region, the prices of alimentary goods increased to the point of causing a food crisis; prices increased again in 1316 in Pécsújfalu (today Pečovská Nová Ves, Slovakia), but without bringing about large scale famine.⁵¹ In all likelihood, these two episodes were influenced by the struggle for the throne, which divided the kingdom at the time.⁵² However, there is no evidence of large scale economic or demographic impact.

Two other events were of greater importance with regards to external factors. In 1338, a great locust invasion hit Transylvania, from Brassó up to Lippa (today Lipova, Romania): with the exception of the region around Arad (today Arad, Romania) region, locusts devoured a great share of the crops, triggering an increase in the prices of alimentary goods, which eventually ushered in a food crisis. The famine was not terribly prolonged, however, because summer rains

49 Szántó, "Természeti katasztrófa," 50–64; idem, "Az 1315–17. évi európai éhínség," 135–42; idem, "Környezeti változások," 159–64. More difficulties are noted by Vadas, "Documentary evidence," 67–76; idem, *Weather Anomalies*. See also footnote below.

50 Hoszowski, "L'Europe centrale," 441–56; Malowist, "The Problem of the Inequality," 15–28; idem, "Problems of the Growth," 319–57; Topolski, "Causes of Dualism," 3–12; see also papers in Pach, *Hungary and the European Economy*; Samsonowicz and Mączak, "Feudalism and capitalism," 6–23; Topolski, "A Model of East-Central European," 128–39; Laszlovszky, "*«Per tot discrimina rerum»*"; Kloczowski, ed., *Histoire de l'Europe du Centre-Est*, 621–41; Fara, "Tra crisi e prosperità," 285–325.

51 Kiss, "Some weather events II," 58–61 (Table 1. Records of weather and hydrological events in Hungary in the period between 1301 and 1387, nr. 2 and 5).

52 See footnote 47.

forced the locusts to move westwards.⁵³ A second event is reported to have taken place in 1363/64. The summer was remarkably dry, and it was followed by a hard winter. This caused a fall in agricultural production, which led to an increase in the prices of alimentary goods and therefore a food crisis. Even in this case, the famine was of limited significance. It was felt above all in the eastern territories and the markets of the Great Hungarian Plain. Moreover, with the intention of preventing food crises and famines of greater dimensions, King Louis I ordered his officers to locate and inventory the cereal stocks in order to put the surplus on the market.⁵⁴

However, beginning in the fourteenth century, with the progressive involvement of the Kingdom of Hungary in the so-called “world economy,”⁵⁵ crises and famines began to be reported with growing frequency, and they had an ever larger impact, even in prosperous periods, evidently in connection with the oscillations in the functioning of the market.⁵⁶ Furthermore, wars (first and foremost the conflicts with the Ottoman Empire), caused considerable damage and led to problems in the food supply. However, warfare often created opportunities for profitable bargains.⁵⁷

Crisis and Famine in the Fifteenth Century

In the fifteenth century, the Kingdom of Hungary played an important role in European politics and the European economy. The strong royal power of Sigismund of Luxemburg (1387–1437)⁵⁸ and Matthias Corvinus (1458–90)⁵⁹ and the prestige and valor of Filippo Scolari (Pipo Ozorai or Pippo Spano) (1369–1426)⁶⁰ and John Hunyadi (c. 1407–56)⁶¹ made the crown of Saint Stephen

53 *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 4, *Chroniken und Tagebücher*, vol. 1 (1143–1867), 52. See Réthly, *Időjárás események* 42–43; a synthesis in idem, “Les calamités naturelles,” 1: 373–78; 2: 77–87.

54 Fejér, ed., *Codex diplomaticus*, 3, 408–11. See also Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 35; Kiss, “Some Weather Events II,” 57; Kiss and Nikolić, “Droughts,” 13–14.

55 Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*.

56 Fara, *Guerra, carestia*, 31–45. More references related to food shortage and famine in the fourteenth century were recently collected by Kiss, “Bad Harvests,” 23–79.

57 See for instance Ágoston, “The Costs,” 196–228.

58 Mályusz, *Die Zentralisationsbestrebungen*; Hoensch, *Kaiser Sigismund*; Takács, ed., *Sigismundus rex et imperator*.

59 Nehring, *Matthias Corvinus*; Kubinyi, *Matthias Corvinus*; Kovács, *Matthias Corvino*.

60 Engel, “Ozorai Pipo,” 53–89; Hațegan, *Filippo Scolari*; Papo and Papo, *Pippo Spano*.

61 Mureșanu, *Iancu de Hunedoara* (English translation: *John Hunyadi*); Held, *Hunyadi*; Dumitran, Mádly and Simon, ed., *Extincta est lucerna orbis*.

strong again after the political crisis that had weakened the country after the extinction of the Angevin dynasty.

In the fifteenth century, most of the Hungarian political and economic resources were devoted to war. While the “centrifugal forces” of the nobility were thwarted by Sigismund after years of intense struggle, military pressure increased along the borders of the realm. In the north, the Hungarian lands were involved in the Hussite Wars, triggering far-reaching political, economic, and social transformations. In the West, clashes with the Habsburgs became inevitable. In the south, the struggles with the Ottoman Empire increased to the point of constant war. Other conflicts put Hungary in opposition to political entities in the Balkans and the Carpatho–Danubian area (first and foremost Serbia and Bosnia, Wallachia, and Moldavia), which were struggling to maintain an uneasy equilibrium between the long-established power of the Kingdom of Hungary and the increasing strength of the Ottoman Empire.⁶² Yet, despite the internal political difficulties and the almost endemic warfare along all of its frontiers, the kingdom enjoyed a phase of strong economic growth throughout the whole century.⁶³

The events of the wars interfered with normal commercial activities; but often war was an occasion to make profits and bargains.⁶⁴ For instance, in the summer of 1438, the eastern territories of Hungary suffered a large scale Ottoman invasion. All of the Transylvanian towns suffered huge damage, and many inhabitants were carried off as slaves.⁶⁵ This brought about a partial interruption in the import of wheat from the Carpathian regions, a shortfall aggravated by attempts at speculation. For this reason, in January 1439 the authorities in Nagyszeben sent a missive to the authorities in Brassó urging the restoration of the normal flow of wheat imports from the south; in the case of a refusal, Nagyszeben threatened to close paths of communication between the north and Brassó. The sources do not allow us to know whether the city ever actually made good on its threat, nor do they indicate when the situation was normalized. But the attempt is evident: the municipal authorities of Brassó, taking advantage of the fact that their city was situated in a border

62 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 195–322.

63 See footnote 50.

64 Ágoston, “The Costs;” Fara, “Economia di guerra,” 55–98; idem, “Le relazioni,” 231–54; idem, “Tra crisi e prosperità.”

65 *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, nos. 2523, 2524, 2588. See the report by Georgius de Septemcastris in *Georgius de Hungaria*; see also Banfi, “Fra Giorgio di Settecastelli,” 130–41, 202–9; Pall, “Identificarea,” 97–105.

area through which a significant share of the commodities coming from the Carpathian regions was being transmitted, tried to raise the price of wheat in the Transylvanian territories in order to make huge profits.⁶⁶

Years of unfavorable climate could also lead to a poor harvest. Documents report on events of greater importance, such as hard winters in 1407/08, 1428/29, 1441–44, 1457/58, 1463, and 1491 and dry summers in 1460, 1463, 1473 (which also bore witness to a locust invasion), 1474, 1478–80, 1491, and 1493/94. In particular, the cold winter in 1428 and the warm summer in 1429 caused a fall in wheat and wine production, again limited to the eastern territories of the Great Hungarian Plain. Food crises of some importance occurred in 1456, 1463, 1470–74, and 1493/94.⁶⁷

Nevertheless, the documents make no mention of events of widespread or prolonged hunger or famine in any of these years. In 1456, further difficulties arose because of the critical political and military situation of the Kingdom of Hungary. The Ottoman advances towards the west were halted at Belgrade in a battle led by John Hunyadi.⁶⁸ For 1463, sources mention a particularly unfavorable year, with direct consequences for crops; but the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, involving a reorganization of markets, probably had a greater impact on commercial exchange.⁶⁹ In February 1470, King Matthias of Hungary forbade the Transylvanian Saxon towns from exporting “*triticum, milium, avenam et alias fruges*” to Wallachia in order to avoid a shortage of these products on the Hungarian markets.⁷⁰ It is not possible to establish, however, whether this decision was motivated by a real shortfall of agricultural products in the eastern territories of the kingdom. Prolonged difficulties due to low crop yields were registered up to 1474.⁷¹

It is worth noting, however, that at the time a customs war was underway between the Kingdom of Hungary and the voevodate of Wallachia. The clash dated back to the times of Voivode of Wallachia Vlad III Țepeș–Dracula (October 1448; 1456–62; November–December 1476), who tried to annul the staple right of the Transylvanian Saxon towns by creating a parallel line of border markets in Wallachian territory and to penetrate the Hungarian markets

66 *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 5, no. 2325.

67 Réthly, *Időjárási események*, 46–47, 52–58; Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 36–39.

68 See footnote 61.

69 In 1463, the last king of Bosnia, Stephen Tomašević, was killed. See Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans*, 583–85.

70 *Urkundenbuch*, vol. 6, no. 3782.

71 Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 39.

directly and secure the free circulation of Wallachian merchants in Transylvanian lands.⁷² So it is probable that the decision of 1470 was intended to protect the Hungarian markets, not only from the commercial threat posed by the Wallachian towns but also from the excessive dynamism of the Transylvanian Saxon towns, which made high profits from the exchange of commodities between East and West, often undermining the interests of the Kingdom of Hungary. Sources do not reveal whether or not the import ban actually took place or, if it did, how it was enforced. The customs war between the Kingdom of Hungary and the voevodate of Wallachia certainly dragged on for a long time. Thus, in all likelihood, it was a combination of political conflicts and adverse climatic factors that badly affected the normal course of the market, giving rise to a new famine in Transylvania in 1493/94.⁷³ Events affected above all the chief urban centers, but not the surrounding villages: for instance, Brassó faced a stagnation of its population in the town center, but not in its outlying territories.⁷⁴

In conclusion, in the fifteenth century neither wars nor bad harvests exerted a considerable influence on the availability of foodstuffs in the Kingdom of Hungary, and they certainly did not give rise to famines. Only on a few occasions do documents make mention of increases in prices, and they contain no references to alimentary crises of vast proportions. Mentions of hunger and underfeeding are also rare.

Crisis and Famine in the Sixteenth Century

In the sixteenth century, Hungarian territories were characterized by a notable institutional instability and prolonged external and internal wars. The defeat at Mohács (1526), the tripartite division of the kingdom (1541), and the Treaty of Speyer (1570) left the ancient lands of Saint Stephen in a situation of confusion and war, to which the most deleterious effects of famine and the decrease or relocation of the population were added.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, in the middle of the century the situation quickly normalized in connection with the integration of western and northern Hungarian territories into the Habsburg dominions, the

⁷² Manolescu, *Comerțul Țării Românești*; Cazacu, *Dracula*.

⁷³ Réthly, *Időjárás események*, 46–47, 52–58; Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 36–39; for more data, see Kiss and Nikolić, “Droughts,” 14–17.

⁷⁴ Philippi, “Cives Civitatis Brassoviensis,” 11–28; idem, “Die Unterschichten,” 657–87.

⁷⁵ Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 345–71; *Histoire de la Hongrie médiévale*, vol. 2, 329–400; Bérenger, *La Hongrie des Habsbourg*, vol.1, 45–65.

formation of the Ottoman Vilayet of Buda, and the creation of the autonomous Principality of Transylvania. Therefore, in the sixteenth century, a phase of political decadence was not accompanied by a parallel economic decline. A partial adjustment of the commercial network and the exchange flows took place. Documents suggest that merchants of different origins operating in the area looked for and easily opened new and convenient commercial paths. Imports of large consumer goods increased (including cheap textiles from the East and the West), as did exports of raw materials (agricultural products and livestock to the East and the West).⁷⁶ Hungarian lands were becoming increasingly integrated into the European markets.⁷⁷

In the middle of the sixteenth century, the so-called Little Ice Age began to affect the entire European continent, and it reached its peak in the middle of the eighteenth century. The Little Ice Age was characterized by increasingly adverse and unstable climatic conditions, which influenced all the spheres of the economy and agriculture in particular. Nevertheless, the shift in the climate did not have an absolutely negative impact on the agriculture, because the disappearance of some crops brought about the introduction of others (including new ones) in the different climatic areas of the continent. Thus, famine was not the product of periodic and ordinary climatic adversities; on the contrary, more often famine was tied to some short term, anomalous, and extreme climatic perturbation, aggravated by the poor functioning of the markets.⁷⁸

In this context, Hungarian documents report on three famines of local importance: in 1529–31 (when abundant rains and bloody wars for the Hungarian throne between the supporters of Ferdinand of Habsburg and John Szapolyai caused a crop failure), in 1545 (caused at least in part by an invasion of locusts and the continuous wars against the Ottomans), and in 1553 (after a very severe winter). Sixteenth-century documents also refer to another seven years characterized by severe and widespread famines with high mortality rates. The first event was recorded in 1507/08. It was caused by excessive rains and floods, followed by a period of drought. These events caused a food shortage

76 Ágoston, “The Costs.” See footnote 50.

77 Zimányi, “Mouvements des prix,” 305–33; idem, “Economy and Society,” 1–119; idem, “The Hungarian economy,” 234–47; and see the papers in Pach, *Hungary and the European Economy*.

78 Historiography on this topic is ample; for deep analyses and discussions see: Brázdil, “Historical Climatology,” 197–227; idem et al., “Historical Climatology in Europe,” 363–430. For the Hungarian territories: Rácz, “Variations of Climate,” 82–93; Landsteiner, “The Crisis of Wine Production,” 323–34; Kiss et al., “Wine and Land Use,” 97–109; Kiss, “Historical climatology in Hungary,” 315–39; Vadas, *Weather Anomalies*.

on all of the Hungarian markets, with a general increase in the price of food and the emergence of intense speculation (“*magna caristia rerum*”).⁷⁹ Between 1534 and 1536, unfavorable climatic events were recorded: they caused a shortage of various goods, followed by a steep increase in prices. In 1534, a *cubulus* (80–85 litres)⁸⁰ of wheat could cost 18 silver coins in Brassó, 12 in Medgyes (today Mediaș, Romania), 14 in Nagyszeben, and up to 3½ gold florins in other territories of Transylvania; the following year, the price of a *cubulus* of wheat rose to six gold florins. The price of livestock witnessed an analogous rise: a cow could cost six gold florins, a calf 60 silver coins, and a sheep 12 silver coins. Thus, a food crisis of vast proportions was recorded, marked by high mortality rates.⁸¹ The excessive drought and the persistent war caused a new food shortage of alimentary goods between 1574 and 1575, with the hardships continuing up to 1577 in some regions. To limit damages and losses, between April and May, the Diet of Transylvania decreed a general tax reduction and total tax exemption for unmarried young people, wage-earning servants, and people belonging to other categories with low incomes.⁸² Drought again caused low crop yields, and food prices rose between 1585 and 1586: in Kolozsvár and Marosvásárhely (today Târgu Mureș, Romania) a *cubulus* of wheat ended up costing six gold florins.⁸³

There were other examples of crisis and famine in Transylvania, one of the most economically developed lands in the kingdom. It is interesting to note that, in the sixteenth century, famines had a greater impact in the Transylvanian lands before and after the division of the Kingdom of Hungary. Historical data show that in sixteenth-century Transylvania, over a period of 80 years, crop yields were of exceptional quantity in 28 seasons, on an average level in 27 years, below the average in 18 (only three of which were characterized by limited hunger of only local impact), and in seven years crops were not available in sufficient quantities, resulting in widespread famine.⁸⁴ Of course, throughout the entire century, these territories were marked by bloody clashes, but the war also offered occasions to make profits. Indeed, Transylvania consistently remained very active from

79 See for instance *Estei Hippolit püspök egri számadáskönyvei*, 316 and 324. This document makes mention of “*magna caristia rerum*” and an increase of prices in alimentary commodities in previous years: *ibid.*, 64, 168–69, 221. See Réthly, *Időjárás események*, 59–60; for more data, see Kiss and Nikolić, “Droughts,” 17–109.

80 Lederer, “Régi magyar ürmértékek,” 123–57.

81 *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 2, 370, 375, 377, 379. See Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 48.

82 Prodan, *Iobăgia în Transilvania*, 417.

83 Cernovodeanu and Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului*, 54–55.

84 *Ibid.*, 45, 70–71.

the point of view of commerce, as it was in a favorable position of mediation between East and West. Although it remained in a basically marginal position from a European perspective, Transylvania functioned as an important market up to the Modern Era.⁸⁵ Even the famines recorded in Transylvania were closely connected to a malfunctioning of the local markets: in particular, in periods of exceptional difficulty (a drop in the harvest, environmental shocks, or events caused by the war), the absence of suitable policies for food imports or price regulation could favor a rise in the prices of food and consequently lead to crisis and famine.⁸⁶

It is evident that, also in the sixteenth century, famines in the Hungarian territories were conditioned not only by external elements, such as poor harvests, environmental shocks, events caused by the war, and so on, but above all by a malfunctioning of the markets. In fact, in other periods when wars, unfavorable climatic events, and/or crop failures were recorded, there were neither famines nor higher mortality rates, and even the prices of food did not go up. Moreover, it is interesting to note that, although in general the sixteenth century represents a period of political and institutional crisis in Hungary, major demographic crises (which involved significant drops in the population and the desertion of villages and whole regions) only occurred at the end of the century as a result of all of these factors, eventually combined with climatic changes. Thus, the huge population decrease which took place in the last part of the century was not the result of famines.

Conclusion – An Alimentary Equilibrium

Documents and observations thus apparently confirm the hypothesis that it is possible to apply the models of *crise de type ancien* by Ernest Labrousse and *entitlement approach* by Amartya K. Sen to the Kingdom of Hungary between the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era to clarify the appearance and evolution mechanisms of crisis and famine in a preindustrial and industrial context (according to a non-Malthusian approach).

85 Manolescu, *Comerțul Țării Românești*; Fara, *La formazione di un'economia*.

86 Goldenberg, "Urbanization and Environment," 14–23; idem, "Urbanizarea și mediu înconjurător," 311–20; idem, "Supplying of Transylvanian Towns," 231–39; idem, "Aprovizionarea și politica," 199–207. See also Fogarasi, "Habitat," 189–205. Often, not even the measures taken by the local authorities sufficed to eliminate or limit the imbalances in the markets; an intervention could even worsen a temporary conjuncture and lead to an additional rise in food prices and therefore a more serious crisis: see footnotes 4 and 5.

In comparison with other parts of Europe, in the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era alimentary alternatives in Hungary, such as wheat, meat, and fish, remained accessible to most of the population, which maintained free access to the alimentary resources (agricultural and sylvan-pastoral). Consequently, the normal diet remained diversified and not entirely based on cereals or on wheat, in particular. This permitted the maintenance of an alimentary equilibrium which, in part because it was based on a wide and comparatively diverse array of foods (and on meat in particular), prevented the rise of vast alimentary crises and famines, unless a shock such as war or climatic changes occurred. Moreover, the production and exchange structures were very specific. Raw materials and agricultural articles, in which the country abounded, were exported, while imports consisted mainly of specific luxury articles demanded by the crown, the nobility, and the wealthiest social groups of the kingdom. As a consequence of this economic situation, the Hungarian population turned to the market only in cases of specific necessity, and rarely merely to obtain necessary foodstuffs.⁸⁷

Western Europe had also had a similar alimentary regime, characterized by vast access to resources and based above all on meat, but this was between the Early and High Middle Ages.⁸⁸ In the most developed and integrated markets of Western Europe, between the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era, cereals and wheat in particular had emerged as the almost exclusive basis of nourishment. The shortage of these goods, the production of which was subject to significant fluctuations as it depended on seasonal rhythms and not (or not completely) on market movement, led to increases in their prices. Therefore, given the rigid wage system and the lack of alimentary alternatives that might be socially approved, and in the absence of adequate policies to complement supplies, shortages could easily lead to famines with large impacts and even to a fall in demand and production (sometimes of significant proportions) of non-agricultural goods and services until the phase of economic crisis passed.⁸⁹

In contrast, although increasingly integrated into the European markets, Hungary did not suffer periods of serious famine because it preserved an alimentary equilibrium and the free access of its population to the food resources in most of the regions of the kingdom. Engel notes that

87 Fara, *Guerra, carestia*, 45–52.

88 Montanari, *Campagne medievali*, 191–201; idem, *La fame e l'abbondanza*, 7–49.

89 Palermo, *Sviluppo economico*, 225–82.

on the whole, by the 1500s the living conditions of the peasantry had improved rather than deteriorated. They could freely change their place of residence, they were allowed to bear arms and to hunt and they sometimes even took the field alongside the nobles. [...] Famine was a rare visitor among them. Although sometimes there was less bread than necessary [...], they had no difficulty in supplementing their diet with pulse, meat, fish and even game. As the density of the population remained rather low, there were abundant expanses of woodland and pasture throughout the country. At the beginning of the sixteenth century an average household raised two or three cattle and—at least in the eastern part of the kingdom—no fewer than eight pigs, not to mention poultry. In the 1510s it was quite natural for the servants of the domain of Ónod to eat meat every day, sometimes even twice, and we have no reason to believe that the diet of the peasantry in general was significantly worse.⁹⁰

The complex economic interaction of difficulties due to crop yields, climate, war, and famine, together with the responses of the institutional framework to these factors, are evidence of the economic dynamism and increasing and notable maturation of the Hungarian market, as well as its growing integration into and role as a mediator between Western and Eastern markets between the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Era.⁹¹

90 Engel, *The Realm of St. Stephen*, 328.

91 The Ottoman occupation and a long period of war lasting for a century and half resulted in a huge population decrease in Hungary. Thus, vast areas were empty and there was a relative abundance of fertile, non-cultivated land which allowed new colonization and new extension of the agricultural area. These conditions and the maintenance of almost completely open, free-market access reduced the chances of emerging famines. Furthermore, new land colonization and extension of the agricultural area were combined with new innovations in agriculture and the introduction of new agricultural products (corn, potato, etc.). This also contributed to the decrease in famines in modern Europe (and Hungary) by offering different foods (not only grain or meat) for a growing population. See the analyses by Kisbán, “Food and Foodways”; “May His Pig Fat Be Thick”; “The Beginnings of Potato Cultivation”; “Milky Ways.” In this sense, it seems that Hungarian alimentary equilibrium and free access to market and food resources were progressively restricted, or even negated, only in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, i.e. in a different political, economic, and social context, when, within the Habsburg Empire, Hungarian markets became even more integrated into the European economy. But restriction or negation of the market and food resources was not always successful: it led to differences in the crises and the impacts of the famines, including their frequency and lethal consequences, depending on the territory of the country in which they hit. Of course, these hypotheses need to be evaluated. The following works of secondary literature merit further study and analysis: Makkai and Zimányi, “Structure de production,” 111–27 (Makkai and Zimányi note the low mortality caused by famines in Hungarian lands at the end of seventeenth century); Fara, “Crisi e carestia,” 251–81; Gunst, “Hungersnöte und Agrarausfuhr,” 11–18 (Gunst notes an increase in famine events in Hungarian lands and their relationships to economic and social changes in

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the eighteenth century); idem, *Agrarian Development*; idem, “Az aszályok,” 438–57. One should also consult the data collected—but analysed according to a Malthusian approach—in Komlos, “Patterns of Children’s Growth,” 33–48; idem, “Stature and Nutrition,” 1149–61; idem, *Nutrition and Economic Development*.

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FEATURED REVIEWS

The Habsburg Empire: A New History. By Pieter M. Judson. Cambridge, MA–London: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2016. 567 pp.

In recent decades, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changes of regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, interest has grown in the histories and ultimate falls of the empires that once ruled the region. It is thanks, in part, to this new interest in the pre-World War I history of the region that numerous new, engaging works of scholarship on the Habsburg Monarchy have been published. In contrast with earlier assessments, which were rather one-sided and negative, a new “revisionist” trend has emerged, which is particularly prominent in the United States. The earlier scholarship tended to present the Habsburg Monarchy as an anachronistic state or a so-called “prison of nations,” the fate of which was allegedly sealed from the outset, and the decades immediately preceding its fall were characterized as a time of chronic crises and death throes (the mere titles of the monographs and articles that were published on the subject in the 1960s, 1970s, and even 1980s exemplify this tendency). The newer literature, in contrast, reassesses these schematic views. The roots of this earlier “master narrative” are found in the scholarship that was published in the period leading up to the Great War and the period immediately after the war. The arguments that were made by R. W. Seaton-Watson and Oszkár Jászi (to mention only two of the more emblematic names), which rested on the notion of tensions between centripetal and centrifugal forces, exerted a decisive influence on the scholarship on the Monarchy and its fall for a long time. Works of history that approached the region from the perspective of the nation state did not really know how to deal with the many peculiarities of the Habsburg Monarchy, though to paraphrase an article by Gary B. Cohen in 1998, with regards to the monarchy of the Dualist Era, one can speak neither of absolutism nor of anarchy (“Neither Absolutism nor Anarchy: New Narratives on Society and Government in Late Imperial Austria” [1998]). As Cohen suggests, when historians concentrate too narrowly on the collapse of the monarchy and study its internal conflicts according to an approach that is too narrow in its perspective (first and foremost the national conflicts and, in connection with them, the failure of the state to democratize), then a number of other important processes are pushed to the margins. One of

the great merits of the reviewed book is that it does not repeat the notion—at this point a wearisome cliché—that the empire was “doomed to collapse from the outset.”

The other side of the coin (the factors that contributed to the Monarchy’s relative stability and functionality) were neglected for a long time. Beginning in the 1970s, one could see signs of a shift. In Hungary one might think of the work of Péter Hanák as perhaps the most illustrative example.

In the emergence of the aforementioned trans-national tendency in the United States, along with Cohen, John W. Boyer, the Hungarian-born American professor István Deák, and their students, Pieter M. Judson, the author of the book under review, played a significant role. In his earlier works, Judson, who is now a professor at the European University Institute in Florence, studied the transformation of liberal politics and political culture (*Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* [1996]). In other works, he examined the process of nationalization which came in the wake of the work of the “national activists” on the language border, and the phenomenon of the national indifference. Alongside the books by Cohen, Jeremy King, and Tara Zahra, Judson’s *Guardians of the Nation* (2006) constitutes one of the fundamental works in the new assessments of national identity. It offers a lively analysis of complex and highly malleable identities, the very complexity and malleability of which seemed to have escaped entirely the notice of the earlier approach, which tended towards simplification.

Judson’s new monograph on the last two centuries of the Habsburg Monarchy fits into this narrative well. It places emphasis not on nation building, but rather on state building. The book begins with a story from 1911: in a multiethnic small town in Galicia, passions and tempers flare in connection with the election. The soldiers sent to quell the disturbance shoot into the crowd and 26 people were killed. The story, however, is not about electoral corruption, national antagonisms, or the brutal measures taken by the authorities. Rather, it is about the odd unity among the linguistically, ethnically, and denominationally diverse people of the crowd, for whom the election (i.e. the future of the monarchy) was at stake. Judson offers the following explanation of the purpose of the book: “This book is about how countless local societies across central Europe engaged with the Habsburg dynasty’s efforts to build a unified and unifying imperial state from the eighteenth century until the First World War. It investigates how imperial institutions, administrative practices, and cultural programs helped to shape local society

in every region of the empire, from the late eighteenth century until the first decades of the twentieth century. It also examines how citizens in every corner of the empire engaged with these various practices and institutions, often appropriating them from their own purposes or reinterpreting them to fit their interests. Taken as a whole, these complex processes of empire building gave citizens in every corner of the empire collective experiences that crossed linguistic, confessional, and regional divides” (p.4.). Judson considers it important to show that, alongside the ruler, the bureaucracy, and the military, the imperial Habsburg state “was also an ongoing project that engaged the minds, hearts, and energies of many of its citizens at every level of society” (p.5.).

The book is captivating from the outset. The writing is elegant and precise, and the manner of presentation is enthralling. Judson shows a remarkable gift for balance as he mixes a presentation of the events (knowledge of which is indispensable to understanding) with a discussion of processes and innovative approaches. The antecedents and the annals history are painted with broad brush strokes, with all of the advantages and disadvantages that this involves. With regards to the annals history, Judson is very judicious in his selection (though in some cases readers ought to have already some knowledge of the topics). He strives to use individual stories to shed light on and bring the reader closer to a given era and the theme at hand, but his goal is not to provide yet another account of the events, but rather to build his own quite innovative interpretation of these events. Rather, building on the ideas and interpretations presented in the first paragraph of this review, he focuses on the ways in which the empire functioned, and he examines how the empire was part of the everyday lives of its citizens and how its citizens identified (or did not) with it.

Judson presents the history of this unusual Central European state formation (which, as the book itself demonstrates, was actually not so unusual) from the second half of the eighteenth century to its fall (though in the epilogue he even goes a bit further). He contends that the Habsburg Monarchy was a perfectly viable formation in which, from the middle of the eighteenth century until the outbreak of World War I, numerous attempts were made to modernize the structure of the state, attempts which were always aimed at improving the quality of life and the circumstances of the subjects or citizens of the state. Thus, the most emphasis is placed on presenting this process of development, while aspects which are not tied (or not directly tied) to this concept are given significantly less consideration. Judson examines the monarchy from a “Gesamtmonarchie”

point of view, but he gives each of the individual countries and crownlands considerable attention, being moderate and balanced. Interestingly, one has the impression that, in this delicate balance, the peripheral regions, first and foremost Galicia, are given greater emphasis than, for instance, the Austrian hereditary provinces.

The point of departure for the narrative is the period of the reign of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. It was under their rule that the desire for a unified, centralized monarchy first began to exert sway. New institutions were created in pursuit of this goal, and numerous reforms were introduced. While these reforms and institutions undoubtedly yielded results in many spheres of public life, they were not sufficient to allow the monarch to achieve the goal of creating a united empire. There were many reasons for this failure: the traditions of autonomy in the provinces and the opposition of the traditional elites to Joseph II's reforms, not to mention the national movements that were emerging in the colorful linguistic and ethnic mix of the monarchy. Even Joseph II's personality contributed in part to the failure of these efforts. In the wake of the work of the reformers, however, a bureaucracy and system of rules took form that constituted the principal uniting force of the monarchy. In Judson's estimate, the *Allgemeines bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* (issued in 1811) played a role of particular importance in this process as a tool of state integration, which established the preconditions for civic equality, linking citizens of the state directly to the monarchy, and not to the feudal estates or provincial bodies. In principle, this and the creation in 1804 of the Austrian Empire established a unified state and the unifying institution of state citizenship (even if the Hungarians saw this very differently, both at the time and later).

After the death of Leopold II and in the wake of the French revolution, the empire in Central Europe became a bastion of ossified conservatism for a few decades, but the tradition of the *Rechtsstaat* endured, and beneath the surface a new economic and social order was beginning to take form. Liberalism and nationalism—the two most influential ideologies of the nineteenth century—were spreading to ever wider circles. The revolutions of 1848 brought about the decisive turn. In the chapters on the revolution, Judson offers a vivid picture of the complex and often mutually contradictory efforts, but he emphasizes that, with the exception of the Italians and, later, the Hungarians, the other ethnic and national groups of the empire and their elites remained loyal to the dynasty. They did not seek to bring down the empire, only to transform it better to suit their needs and interests. Given the overall interpretation presented in the

book, it is perhaps not surprising that there are only a few references to the civil war in this chapter. The revolution, however, also cast light on the fundamental problems faced by the empire.

The subsequent period attempted to find various solutions to these problems, and it was in this period that the united empire was actually made a reality, even if only for a short time. In the previous section of the books, Judson adheres for the most part to the traditional periodization. For the period between 1849 and 1914, however, he diverges from the norm. To be more precise, he regards the decades between 1849 and the 1880s as a single, unified period, since, in his assessment, as of 1849, the government was essentially liberal. A process of reform had begun, according to Judson, the result of which would be the emergence of a liberal empire (as the title of the fifth chapter, “Mid-Century Modern: Emergence of a Liberal Empire,” suggests). However, his argument is not entirely convincing when he tries to characterize the Silvesterpatent (with which Franz Joseph, still a young man and relatively unseasoned ruler, withdrew the Imposed March Constitution), as the beginning of what was “an ambitious and in many ways forward-thinking program of economic, social, and cultural renewal.” Although both recent Austrian and Hungarian historiography have offered nuanced portraits of the neo-absolutist era, with regards to the intentions of the monarch and his most influential advisors one can hardly harbor any illusions. (See for instance Stickler, “Die Herrschaftsauffassung Kaiser Franz Josephs in den frühen Jahren seiner Regierung: Überlegungen zu Selbstverständnis und struktureller Bedeutung der Dynastie für die Habsburgermonarchie” [2014]). Furthermore, some of the reforms, for instance the decision to abolish what remained of the feudal system, had been a consequence (and arguably victory) of the 1848 Revolution, which the regime would not have been able to undo in the wake of the conflict. Judson acknowledges that the price of reforms was the introduction of a police state (since the empire was compelled to use force to compensate for its lack of legitimacy, primarily in the Italian provinces and Hungary), but in his assessment, the attempt to forge a unified, centralized empire had far greater and more general significance. Although various attempts were made to make the system and the dynasty itself more popular (Franz Joseph’s wife Elisabeth or “Sissi” was given an important role in this), the period beginning in 1849 was clouded by foreign policy failures (the threat of Italian and German national unification), financial difficulties, and internal discontent (in particular, the openly oppositional conduct of the Italians and the Hungarians). The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 was a consequence

of the Italian fiasco and the gradual marginalization of the Austrian Empire in the wake of German unification, but this disrupted the unity of the state and thus, at least in Judson's assessment (though he does not emphasize this) it was a step backwards. Hungary never really fits neatly into Judson's interpretation of events up until 1867, and it fits even less into his assessment of the empire after the Compromise. He does not really find a persuasive solution to this, but he raises many questions and dilemmas that merit further thought in connection with Hungary and many other matters.

The most exciting part of the book is chapter six ("Culture Wars and Wars for Culture") and seven ("Everyday Empire, Our Empire"). The ever increasing authority and jurisdiction of the state and the ever increasing number of tasks it had to address in the spheres of infrastructure and social politics, combined with the transformation of politics itself (the involvement of ever wider circles of the masses instead, merely, of the narrow elites in politics as part of the process of democratization), gave rise to challenges that were confounding not only for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but for all of the old monarchies of Europe. One of the virtues of this book is that it demonstrates how, in many cases, the problems facing the Monarchy were merely local variations of the great problems of the era. Judson offers convincing examples of how the state attempted to address the cultural differences among its peoples, first and foremost in Cisleithania. While the central bureaucracy made noble efforts to modernize the Monarchy and make the state apparatus effective and efficient (as persuasively argued recently by John Deak: *Forging a Multinational State: State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War* [2015]), a partly contrary process was also underway. The local elites and, first and foremost, the political activists were "attempt[ing] to both manage and take advantage of the entrance of larger numbers of people into political life" (p.271).

According to Judson, in whose earlier work the notion of national indifference already played a significant role, in the local societies in which they lived, people who spoke various languages did not necessarily perceive cultural differences as such. The significance of these differences grew in the wake of political mobilization. The efforts of the political activists to attain institutional protected rights for the people who spoke a given language contributed to the tendency among people in local communities to see themselves and one another "in terms of language based-categories" (p.272). Thus, political conflicts were given a linguistic, cultural, and ultimately national tinge, but the nationalizing elites (political activists, representatives, journalists) played a significant role

in this. As the electoral base in Cisleithania broadened as a consequence of parliamentary reforms, the popularity of cultural principles and arguments grew in politics: “Activists naturalized their particular political agendas by expressing demands in the more inclusive language of ethnic nationhood. This language made cultural commonalities the basis for group identification” (p.272). Nation building was a difficult and tiring process, and for precisely this reason Judson feels that, in order to understand this process, we need a concept of “event-driven” or “situational” nationalism. In a manner familiar from his earlier works, Judson contends that “nationalist conflicts” (he deliberately uses this term instead of “nationalities conflicts”) were a product of institutions. Institutions and administrative practices made significant contributions to the deepening of a sense of cultural difference. The story begins, according to Judson, with the bitter fight between the conservative federalists and the liberal Vienna government (the so-called Bürgerministerium) in power after the Compromise, and Judson considers the symbolic implications of this fight. Nationalists later continued to add to the tools used in the “culture wars” of the 1870s. The press and the societies that began to appear in ever larger numbers in the 1860s played a significant role in this. Given the focus of his earlier research, Judson concentrates primarily on Cisleithania, and the vast majority of his examples are drawn from these territories of the empire.

The presentation of the paradoxical process of the elevation of language and language use to the critical and decisive factor in identity (i.e. the principal criterion of membership in the “nation”) is extremely interesting, in particular the presentation of how the state’s efforts to guarantee equal linguistic rights for all of its citizens led to the rise of separate, closed national groups that defined themselves on the basis of language. In connection with this, the emphasis shifted from individual rights to group rights, and in administrative and legal practice nations became legitimate legal actors. Indeed, the political activists who stood up in the name of the nation sought increasingly to use the law in order to compel people to make the “correct” decision, for instance when it came to the question of children’s schooling, as studied by Tara Zahra. In other words, in the end, there was a battle underway over national upbringing, and it displaced the national indifference (*Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* [2008]). The last stage of this came with the Moravian (1905) and then later the Bukovinian (1910) and Galician (1914) compromises, which put new tools for the cultivation of national identity in the hands of political activists. Thus, the language rights of the individual were

transformed into the right of the national community over its members: “the liberal constitutional guarantee of language rights to the individual gradually became transformed into the right of the national community over its members. This steady legal transformation was the culmination of cultural arguments that had long maintained first, that an individual has a fundamental and authentic national identity, and second, that the cultural gulf between national communities was unbridgeable” (p.316).

It is unfortunate that Hungary, the other half of the monarchy, is presented less elaborately. Either it is not mentioned in these analyses or Judson merely adds a shade of nuance to the traditional image. (Though this is in part a consequence of the lack of similar research and the paucity of scholarship on the subject in English, it is primarily due to the fact that Hungary simply does not fit well into the larger interpretation.) Yet careful consideration of the consequences of the two diverging political practices would have been interesting from this perspective.

Parallel to this, Judson presents the efforts of the liberals to emphasize the new civilizing mission of the empire and their attempts to achieve this mission in Galicia and Bosnia. The conclusion he reaches following a presentation of an instance of corruption in Galicia, however, is an exaggeration at best, particularly if one takes into consideration the antecedents: “The liberals had also made the East a site of corruption, of arrogant chicanery, and worst of all, of downright failure”, and liberalism, furthermore, “had been revealed as simply one more sectarian political party or set of ideologies that benefited only a part of Austro-Hungarian society at the expense of other parts of society” (p.327).

Judson then presents the developments that took place in the monarchy over the course of its last three decades, including increasingly rapid urbanization, the development of infrastructure, the spread of literacy, and, parallel to all this, the growth of the state bureaucracy. Social questions, the workers’ movement, the appearance of social democratic parties, and expansion of the right to vote in Cisleithania and, in contrast, the freeze of suffrage in Hungary created new problems. However, the monarchy produced fascinating phenomena, such as the use of many languages in the military. The activities of veteran organizations, which were used in an attempt to strengthen a sense of patriotic attachment to the empire, offer a clear example (as Laurence Cole has shown in his research) of the complex role that patriotism played in everyday life, and they shed light on the interesting intertwining of imperial patriotism and regional and ethnic identity. The political storms of the turn of the century were partly

national conflicts, but the “nationalist movements shaped their demands around the institutions and expectations created by empire,” and the actors thought within these frameworks (pp.381–82). Following the crisis of the turn of the century, the decade before the outbreak of World War I was again a period of consolidation. People who were engaged in fierce debates in parliament were eager to reach compromises in the wings. “Habsburg bureaucrats and party politicians had long demonstrated a flexible creativity in negotiating structural modifications intended to make the empire function more effectively and to give it greater longterm political stability” (p.376). World War I interrupted this complex but fundamentally positive process. In Judson’s view, the processes of modernization and integration essentially had been successful. The national movements and conflicts had not significantly weakened the state, and they certainly did not contribute to its fall. The monarchy fell because of the war and the consequences of the war.

At the time of World War I, destructive tendencies and processes were set in motion which led to the collapse of the monarchy. First and foremost, the military leadership (the *Armeeoberkommando*, or AOK) bore responsibility for pushing the bodies of civil administration to the side and harassing, for the most part, citizens of the empire who were Serbian, Ruthenian, or members of other nationalities that had been branded “suspicious.” By doing so, they alienated these people from the monarchy. The military dictatorship (the term is borrowed from Josef Redlich) caused a rupture in the traditions of the constitutional state. In addition, the state was no longer able to perform the tasks it was expected to perform, and members of the civilian population who were indigent received assistance primarily from the nationalist organizations. This further undermined the legitimacy of the monarchy and contributed to its disintegration. The last chapter offers a short overview of the afterlife of the monarchy and the ways in which the multinational successor states, which presented themselves as nation states, in many ways passed on the repudiated legacy of the monarchy. The maps and the attentively chosen illustrations offer an excellent complement to the book.

Many comprehensive works have been written on the history of the Habsburg Monarchy, and they have all had to address the fundamental difficulty of writing on what was a composite state formation. The authors not only had to plough their way through the swollen body of secondary literature, they also had to be able to incorporate the histories (written in seven or eight different languages) of the individual lands and provinces into their work. And any author

writing on the Habsburg Monarchy had to have a true gift for synthesis in order to grasp the history of the empire in all its complexity. From this perspective, Judson is the ideal scholar, for he knows the most recent secondary literature in English and also uses the secondary literature in German, Czech, and other Slavic languages. He also merits recognition for his efforts to devote adequate attention, alongside Cisleithania, to Hungary. The fact that the most recent works of Hungarian historians are the least frequently mentioned in his inquiry is less his fault and more due to the shortcomings of Hungarian historiography. This also explains the unevenness of the sections of the book that deal with Hungary. Since the writings of Hungarian historians have not been adequately spread in international scholarly forums (first and foremost in English), they have not become part of the larger circulation of ideas among historians outside of Hungary, although recently, there have been numerous efforts to change this, for instance the very journal in which this review is being published. I would mention only a few of the mistakes or misunderstandings in connection with Hungarian history as examples: allegedly the national assemblies of the Reform Era did not deal with the peasantry or the cities (p.152); in 1848, Hungarian citizenship was tied to the use of the Hungarian language, and this was one of the reasons behind the Serbian uprising (p.200); Judson repeats a mistake often found in the works of history of the successor states according to which after the so-called Lex Apponyi, (a law passed in 1907 on the legal state of non-state schools), all instruction in the schools of the non-Hungarian nationalities had to take place in Hungarian (pp.304–05); and until 1896 the Jews were not eligible for election to public office (p.518, note 31). Judson's treatment of the various layers of the nobility is often vague, and it is often unclear what the terms "noble" or "gentry" actually are intended to mean, precisely. However, these kinds of small imprecisions are insignificant given the many merits of the book.

Judson's efforts to remain balanced and impartial are clear in his use of settlement names and proper names. In the case of settlement names, he uses several variants, depending on the ethnic makeup of the given community. This merits praise in part because it is hardly common practice at Anglo-Saxon publishing houses. Judson also avoids normative terms when dealing with the nationalities. Instead, he prefers phrases like "German speaking" or "Czech speaking," and he also uses the word Hungarian instead of "Magyar". Proper names are given on the basis of the professed ethnicity of the given person, though there are a few exceptions to this rule (for instance Julius Andrassy instead of Gyula Andrassy).

Judson is clearly biased in favor of the Habsburg state which forms the subject of his book, but he is not frustratingly apologetic. Thus, a great work has been written on the eve of the centennial of the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy which rethinks the existing scholarship on the subject and challenges the old paradigm. It paints a new, balanced picture from an interesting perspective of this multifaceted Central European state.

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Thinking through Transition: Liberal Democracy, Authoritarian Pasts, and Intellectual History in East Central Europe After 1989. Edited by Michal Kopeček and Piotr Wciślik. Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2015, 599 pp.

If there is one methodological point upon which classical historians of intellectual history such as Quentin Skinner, post-structuralist theoreticians such as Judith Butler, or social historians of the political field such as Gareth Stedman Jones would undeniably agree (in spite of their conspicuous differences), it is that the primary purpose of intellectual history or the history of ideas is not essentially to retrieve or recuperate the (real or accurate) meanings (of texts). Rather, it is about *activity*. In other words, intellectual history is above all about linguistic action; it is in the first place an analysis of the situational employment, or, more aptly phrased, the strategic deployment of language in order to generate meaning in, or in dialogue with, specific or variable contexts (these may consist of other texts, particular historical constellations, configurations, or traditions, counter positions, etc.). Precisely this act presupposes an audience and attests to the social and public character of the utterance as activity, particularly in the realm of political philosophy.

The edited volume assembled by Michal Kopeček, Head of Department of Late- and Post-Socialism at the Institute for Contemporary History and Assistant Professor at Charles University, Prague, and Piotr Wciślik, PhD candidate at the Central European University, represents not only a successful example of good practice in consideration of the above; more importantly, it offers a novel and refreshing take on the history of the political transformations of East Central Europe (ECE) in the post-communist era, a field that has been long and eminently dominated by the normative and often ahistorical prescripts of “transitology” scholarship (and business). The volume is the result of an exploratory workshop convened in 2011 by a group of East Central European intellectual historians under the auspices of the Institute for Contemporary History (Prague) and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, in cooperation with the ERC-funded research project “Negotiating Modernity: History of Modern Political Thought in East-Central Europe,” the innovative and bold aim of which is to provide a synthetic and comparative history of political thought in the region. (The first volume, which covers the nineteenth century, has already been published, see Trencsényi, Janowski, Baar, Falina, and Kopeček, *A History of Modern Political Thought in East*

Central Europe, vol. 1 [2016]). *Thinking through Transition* brings together 18 essays by scholars from the region and beyond, combining the strengths of history, political science, sociology, and anthropology. It focuses on the political and ideological metamorphoses of actors and institutions in ECE with a greater and more systematic emphasis on the cases of Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, but it also includes contributions on ex-Yugoslavia and Romania (one essay on each). A series of essays tackles the transitions from a comparative perspective, and this enhances the analytical strength of the book.

The specific contribution of intellectual history in general and this volume in particular to a subtler understanding of *Zeitgeschichte* lies in its analyses of the transfer and circulation of ideas from a bottom-up perspective. In other words, it endeavors to contextualize the circulation of ideas in the specificities of local cultural discourses, historical trajectories, and political configurations, without, however, neglecting their interregional, European, and/or global entanglements. Intellectual history is operationalized through a variety of paradigms, testifying to the methodological pluralism in the field, from classical *Begriffsgeschichte*, which examines mutations of concepts like “totalitarianism” or “civil society,” to the worldview of specific intellectuals and their cohorts, from the legal history of rights and constitutionalism to the history of transfer, from the sociology of knowledge to history and memory politics. The political field appears as a rapidly shifting and dynamic arena involving a constant and (in contrast to transition theories) unpredictable restructuring of positions. Going against the grain and challenging the frequently encountered picture of a glorious passage from immobile dictatorship to liberal democracy, the volume discusses 1989 as a reconfiguration of the political field rather than as a sudden break with the past. Though 1989 functions as the springboard of narration, several essays trace and connect discourses back to earlier intellectual genealogies; they demonstrate how both past intellectual standpoints and present concerns provided the particular ideological admixture and the choice of positionality in the present, drawing upon an arsenal of actual or fictitious continuities, discontinuities, and/or reconfigurations of political discourse, a circumstance perhaps best exemplified in the transformations of “1989” itself: from an initial symbol of consensual politics to a floating signifier and, eventually, a convenient moment of contestation in order to redraw the lines of the political. Moreover, this volume exemplifies the fact that intellectual history is not only about the life-cycle of ideas but also about the performativity of the political, in other words, the capacity of actors to occupy timely key political/ideological spaces in relation

to their political opponents and therefore not only to define the political agenda but also to capture public space and social imagination. Here, the interplay between ideological choices, socioeconomic factors, and power becomes most apparent. Organized around five comprehensive thematic blocks—liberalism, conservatism, populism, the left, and the politics of history—the volume charts the political and ideological landscape of the post-1989 era as it was framed through the tension between the “space of experience” and the “horizon of expectations.”

The first thematic section addresses the transformation of dissident liberal discourses and the unspectacular career of liberalism in post-communism. Ferenc Laczó analyses post-dissident liberal discourses in Hungary based on a sample of five leading liberal intellectuals involved in the publication *Beszélő*. In spite of their varying and ambiguous content, most post-dissident concepts of liberal democracy in Hungary showed paradoxically stronger affinities with the left than with the right. Often articulated in a polemical and abstract style, they most probably contributed to the marginalization of political liberalism after its heyday in the early 1990s. The remarkable afterlife of the concept of “totalitarianism” in post-communist Poland is the focus of Piotr Wciślik’s essay. He demonstrates how the boundaries of the political were redrawn via the contestation of the post-totalitarian divide. This involved the transitional reconfiguration of political languages in the merger between formerly competing concepts of totalitarianism of the ex-dissident elite and the liberal “new realists” of the late 1980s. In the rapidly-polarizing political field, radical anti-communism emerged as the strongest language of political contestation. The mutation, which constituted an almost outright setback of Václav Havel’s idea of civil society as conditioned by Havel’s contestations with his neoconservative political rivals of the ODS, is the focus of Milan Znoj’s essay. Though initially conceived as a concept based on the dissident experience but also drawing upon the local intellectual tradition of the first republic, Havel’s concept ebbed in a moral populism that eventually contributed to the rise of anti-communism. Paul Blokker offers a comparative analysis of the rise of legal constitutionalism after 1989, understood initially as an antidote to the ideological instrumentalization of law in the previous period. Though representing the dominant paradigm, legal constitutionalism also saw the parallel rise of alternative models, such as democratic and communitarian constitutionalism. Finally, Blokker expounds on the reasons why a radical form of communitarian (nationalistic/conservative) constitution could be established in countries like Romania and Hungary.

The three case studies in the second thematic block are devoted to examining the impact of conservative ideas. Petr Roubal looks at a small yet influential group of Czech post-dissident neoconservatives and their alliance with neoliberal economists around the Civil Democratic Alliance (ODA). They shaped the belief in neoliberal shock therapy and advocated a radical break with the past, playing a leading role in pressing for the denunciation of the communist regime and the adoption of an uncompromising stance towards Slovak demands for greater autonomy, which they interpreted as left-wing nationalism. How conservatism, though lacking strong continuity and even an independent political organization, nevertheless imposed itself as the language of the right in Poland is the focus of Rafał Matyja's essay. He examines the ideational convergence of intellectual groups around the publication *Res Publica*, the Young Poland Movement (RMP), and right-wing liberals of the 1980s. Conservatism was a school that arose out of a religious outlook on reality, but it gladly borrowed from the language of Anglo-Saxon neoconservatives. Zoltán Gábor Szűcs analyzes the aborted constitution-making project of the socialist-liberal government in Hungary between 1994 and 1998. Though initially indifferent to constitutional amendment, Fidesz was able to base its own conservative and highly contested constitutional revolution (the so-called Basic Law of 2011) on the systematic promotion of a conflicting vision of politics, thus turning the tables on the consensualist politics and the predominantly technocratic policy approach followed by the socialist-liberal coalition after 1989.

Is populism the antithesis of or a constituent part of democracy? In other words, is populism a syndrome of the region or a symptom of the age? The third section of the volume focuses on these questions. Camil Alexandru Pârvu pleads for a wide characterization, and he contends that populism is a symptom not merely of fringe parties in contemporary Romania, but also of mainstream ones. The roots of populism lie in a succession of blockages of political representation and the endemic constitutional crisis that accompanies them. As a result, most political parties relatively easily shifted their political identities towards a strong populist mode. The Janus face of populism is at the center of András Bozóki's contribution regarding the populist phenomenon in Hungary. He examines populism's inherent paradox, namely the promise of broad inclusion of the people in the political process while in essence populism serves the opposite goal. In the case of Hungary, not only has populism been applied flexibly to different and contradictory political platforms, it has also been used for exclusionary political purposes. Viktor Orbán's policies of

pampering the middle classes at the expense of the lower classes offer perhaps the most illustrative case. Finally, Juraj Buzalka deals with “political necrophilia” in Slovakia, that is, the popular practice of ritual reburials of political leaders in post-communist states as a political symbol for legitimizing actual political power. He explains why the reburial of interwar prime minister Milan Hodža seemed best to fulfill the qualifications for Slovakia’s return to Europe, even though in popular memory Hodža would never match the popularity of the authoritarian leader of the Slovak People’s Party, Andrej Hlinka.

The fourth thematic block of the volume addresses the left’s soul-searching between communist legacy, neoliberal challenge, and global protest movements. Ágnes Gagyí examines attempts to formulate the agenda of the political left in post-1989 Hungary beyond the official successors of the Hungarian Communist Party. These attempts were made by various groups and activists (“Politics Can Be Different,” Anarchism, the United Hungarian Left, Left Alternative, Erzsébet Szalai, András Lányi, “Protect the Future,” 4K!, etc.) operating within and outside of the Marxist tradition, their common ground being a diagnosis of the social effects of post-socialist neoliberal politics and concomitantly the incubation of a new extreme right. Though liberalism and the right have had a firm grip on politics in Poland since the 1990s, the left’s vitality of ideas after 2002 is disproportionate to its political weakness, argues Maciej Gdula. By tackling issues related to memory, gender, populism, neoliberalism, and the knowledge society, the Polish left has managed to distance itself from the previously common use of naturalized concepts of liberal democracy and the market, which had effectively functioned as imaginary standards with which to “discipline” and frame the political body. Stanislav Holubec focuses on the Czech case by analyzing seven figures of the post-communist intellectual left and their endeavors as public intellectuals. They allow a certain typologization along the lines of five different traditions and generations: reform communism, the anti-Stalinist radical left, new party members after 1970, sympathizers of environmental politics in the 1980s and 1990s, and, finally, a group of outright converts to the left. In the last contribution to this section, Zsófia Lóránd takes a closer look at feminist discourses in Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s and the ways in which feminists resolved to redefine democratic politics in order to counter dominant political discourses that equated democracy with the free (allegedly liberal) expression of nationalism. The feminists’ agenda targeted essentially three topics: 1. civil

society and active citizenship, 2. the inclusion of women in politics and 3. critiques of patriarchy.

The last section in the volume deals with the politics of history and memory. The article “1989 After 1989” by James Mark et al. scrutinizes the memory of 1989 in the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia from a comparative perspective. It demonstrates how the wrangling for the canonization and interpretation of 1989 related either to questions concerning the reconfiguration of the nation and its history or served as a point of distinction between left and right. The authors analyze the specific constellations, which resulted either in positive identifications with 1989 postulating a national identity based on democracy and freedom or negative identifications, which stage 1989 as a betrayal of expectations and a moment of great lost opportunities. Gábor Egry deals with concepts of history and the nation in 1989–2010 and shows how and why the community of destiny (nation) came to predominate over the community of will (republic) in contemporary Hungarian politics. 1989 offered an opportunity to redefine community and brought up several neglected or taboo topics (such as 1956, the Treaty of Trianon, and the end of World War II), which eventually led to mutually exclusive interpretations of the past by political actors and signaled the loss of a common history. In this stalemate, the concept of suffering emerged as the nation’s strongest identity marker. Stevo Ćurašković shows how the nationalist Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) was able to gain power in the 1990s by appropriating the national identity-building discourse developed by Slovak communist intellectuals in the post-1968 normalization period. Relying largely on the historical concoction devised by Vladimír Mináč, the HZDS was able to promote the self-image of a state-founding, all-embracing people’s movement. Finally, Zoltán Dujisin discusses the transregional cooperation of post-communist memory entrepreneurs, who via a state-driven institutional apparatus pursue the establishment of a mnemonic regime based on the equalization of communist and Nazi crimes and the externalization of the communist experience from the region. This “usable totalitarianism,” which is based on a crime-centered narrative, is crafted through the cooperation of portions of the political and academic elite, who are also backed with appropriate financial and institutional resources. Their interpretation of history, stylized as the “politics of truth,” is presented as an allegedly “specific” Eastern European contribution to the European memory regime; it contrasts and clashes, however, with the prevailing West European memory consensus, built upon the “politics of regret.”

Thinking through Transition is not a book for beginners; it does not offer a comprehensive history of the East European transition. Rather, it provides compact, thoughtful, and dense analyses of transitional politics through the lenses and methodological instruments of intellectual history. It brings together essays with varying strengths and emphases, and with its focus on local contextualization, it certainly keeps its promise to engage with the origins, genealogies, adaptations, and dynamics of ideas, not as simple transplants, but as energetic and resourceful local processes with their own historical trajectories. The volume is truly informative and thoroughly analytical, and it offers a persuasive example of the capacity of intellectual history to offer a different historicization of the East Central European transition. Narrating the history of this transition is a daunting task, perhaps first and foremost because it means charting and framing an as yet non-existent scholarly field and doing so without the comfort and reassurance of hindsight. Furthermore, historians find themselves faced with open-ended, dynamic, and mutating processes, which in the twenty-first-century information society develop unprecedented forms of acceleration. In addition, in view of the abundance of normative paradigms (transition studies, modernization theory, democratization studies, path dependency etc.) that have been used to explain the transition, developing a new structure of narration where ECE is not the object but becomes the subject requires imagination and creativity. Finally, it is challenging because of the project's ambitious aim of simultaneously accommodating a comprehensive narrative and a comparative perspective.

The time frames used in the individual essays are rather variable (from a couple of years or decades to genealogies traced back to the nineteenth century), so it is quite hard to assemble them into a bigger and consistent picture in spite of their thematic ordering into ideological currents and the volume's insightful introduction, which binds them together very intelligibly. The comparative perspective is applied occasionally but not consistently throughout the whole volume. Missing is a systematic and coherent thematic and chronological framework of comparison for East Central and Southeastern Europe capable of accommodating synchronic and a-synchronic developments in each case and explaining them adequately as parallel or contrasting developments (though this is provided to a certain extent by the introduction). In what respect and to what degree do they react to similar or different challenges, in what respect are they or were they reacting to similar or different influences, and in what respect and to what degree have they had similar or diverging historical trajectories?

Second, there is little emphasis on inter-regional intellectual cross-influences between the countries of East Central and Southeastern Europe. In my view, this represents a desideratum not only for the post-1989 period, but also for the era of the Cold War. It is common knowledge that the Cold War imposed its own geography upon the globe, a specific way of seeing and understanding the world but also a particular way of structuring networks of information. An interesting question here is to what degree and in what way is the post-1989 period a reshuffling of this geography and its networks. Can we discern or fashion interesting patterns here for intellectual history? And furthermore, to what degree and in what form did foreign interventions in the form of think tanks, foundations, capacity building, etc. help structure or delineate the lines of the political internally (locally)?

Third, the issue of sample representativity might need to be considered more closely and thoroughly, since it frames and structures the comparative endeavor. Nolens volens, a certain selection, prioritization, typologization, and structuring of topics will have to be made. At times, I had the impression that the concept of intellectual history was perhaps stretched a bit too far (burial rituals, memory politics, etc.); not that I feel compelled to defend some kind of imaginary or purist borders of intellectual history, which do not exist anyway, and one of the volume's definite assets is its inclination towards experimentation; however, given the abundance of themes and areas that might potentially be covered and integrated (for example, the intellectual history of economic or religious thought, both of which are absent from the volume), such an overstretching might prove tricky in the long run.

Fourth, in spite of the indisputable merits of local contextualization, it is important not to lose sight of the bigger picture with respect to European and global developments. Some of the essays reflect individually on this, but this is insufficient for an analysis which makes the explicit claim to narrate a regional history. Also, it is crucial to provide an approximate or stringent time frame in order to further an understanding of the directionality of transfers and their interdependence. Neoliberalism and the way in which it bounced back and forth between Eastern Europe and the Western world during the Cold War as exemplified by Johanna Bockman's innovative study on the left-wing origins of neoliberalism" (Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism* [2011]) is a good example. Another good example is populism and its spectacular resurrection in the West. Greater attention will therefore need to be paid to global temporalities and the ways in which they affect the contents of

discourses. Where the East European left took the stage in the 1990s (for instance in Hungary), it did so not only after the fall of communism, but simultaneously with the rise of “New Labour,” which was itself a capitulation to capitalism. The sensitive question here is the extent to which local timing shaped the events and the extent to which global timing was decisive or at least significant, and also how the local and global trajectories paralleled each other and how they diverged.

Fifth, in contrast to the nineteenth century, when Europe represented predominantly an idea, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries it also represents concrete structures and policies and communicating public spheres. How does this affect the ways in which we narrate European intellectual history?

Sixth, although the individual essays are assembled under traditional and established ideological currents (liberalism, conservatism, etc., which in fact is quite comforting and reassuring for an intellectual historian), it would seem to me that the major challenge for contemporary intellectual historians is how to provide intelligible categories for the present blurring of ideological borders (for example, the appropriation of the defense of social rights by the extreme right wing, the patriotic turn of both the left and the right, the anti-EU positions of both the radical left and the radical right) so typical of post-industrial society. Do we group them according to well-known and established political categories? According to their self-ascription? According to their institutional affiliations to transnational party unions and associations? When I discuss the intellectual development of Viktor Orbán with my Hungarian liberal-democratic (and anti-communist) friends, they all tend to push him into the communist corner, the official justification being that this is the milieu out of which he initially emerged. However, Fidesz belongs formally to the European conservative party block, and Orbán’s politics are explicitly populist. Which political category can digest all this?

Thinking through Transition provides unique insights into the complex constellations described above. Nevertheless, local contextualization cannot deliver better answers unless it maintains the dialogue with bigger contextual frameworks by demonstrating their affinities, cross-fertilization, cleavage, or distance. The volume is particularly successful in avoiding a portrayal of Eastern Europe either as an aberration from European and global developments or as a mere passive recipient of ideas. This paradigm would need to be elaborated and developed further in its full complexity—admittedly not a simple task. *Thinking through Transition* is certainly a brave and important step in the right direction.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Money and Finance in Central Europe during the Later Middle Ages.
Edited by Roman Zaoral. (Palgrave Studies in the History of Finance.)
London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 269 pp.

In 2013, Central European historians, numismatists, and archivists held a major international conference at Charles University, Prague dealing with the financial aspects of the medieval economy. The collection of papers was edited by Roman Zaoral, senior lecturer at the University of Prague. Most of the authors (Antonín Kalous, Stanislav Bárta, Petr Kozák, Martina Maříkova, Zdeněk Puchinger, Pavla Slavíčková, Marek Suchý, and Zdeněk Žalud) are working at archives and universities in the Czech Republic, not just in Prague, but also in Brno, Olomouc, and České Budějovice. The contributors also include Beata Mozejko and Grzegorz Myśliwski from Poland, Daniela Dvořáková and Martin Štefánik from Slovakia (Bratislava), and Balázs Nagy and János Incze from Hungary. The volume also includes a paper by Prof. Michael North, the Chair of Modern History at the University of Greifswald (Germany), and Hendrik Mäkelar, the curator of the Uppsala University Coin Cabinet.

The fifteen papers focus on medieval monetary and fiscal policy and the account books of courts, towns, and ecclesiastical institutes. They cover a wide field of Central European economic history from the Holy Roman Empire to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and from the fourteenth to the second half of the sixteenth centuries. The book is divided into four thematic sections addressing the processes of minting, court funding, the towns, and the church. Although these research fields may seem very different, there are two aspects which have a significant role in almost all of the papers. One is the relationship between the king and the royal court, and the other is the account books and the accounting system. In my review, I chose three papers which give a good sample of the sources on which the contributors tended to draw, their findings, and their methodologies.

Zdeněk Žalud's paper focuses on the court funding of Bohemian king John the Blind. Žalud examines the incomes and the main creditors of King John. The prosopographies of these four people reveal different types of creditors. Frenzlín Jacobi was originally a burgher of Prague, but later he was knighted and was given some important noble offices, such as the position of king's sub-

chamberlain. He established a wide economic and social network, and he also had business connections with the Archbishop of Trier and the Duke of Lower Bavaria. Peter Rosenberg, in contrast, was one of the most powerful Czech aristocrats. As reward for his support, he was given many important and wealthy pledges, castles, and towns. He gave more and more loans to King John, and got not just estates, but also revenues from the royal taxes and the *urbura* of Kutná Hora. Gisco of Reste came from a burgher family of Wrocław which had gained noble status. His loans to King John played a significant role in the acquisition of the Duchy of Wrocław for the Czech crown. The fourth creditor, Arnold of Arlan, was a knight of Luxembourg who was appointed to serve as the seneschal of his country. He loaned huge sums to John and the other members of the Luxembourgian family. In 1343, he became the regent of Luxembourg, but after King John's death, his successors dispossessed Arnold and his heirs. John the Blind inherited huge debts from his predecessors, but he established a network of creditors which helped him repay these debts. He was even able to use these transactions to gain new territories for his kingdoms, for instance the Duchy of Wrocław.

The example of Wrocław sheds light on the other main topic of the volume, namely the utilization of the data in the account books. The paper by Grzegorz Myśliwski examines the accounting practices of the merchants of Wrocław. The oldest of these records was issued between 1412 and 1426. It was written by Paul Beringer, a factor and later shareholder in the company of one of the wealthiest merchants of Wrocław. His records reveal an interregional trading network from Venice to Silesia, and they offer a detailed list of the luxury goods in which he traded. The second record from 1438 was written by Hans Hesse and his partners. It contains a list of the commercial and financial activities between their company and the Kingdom of Hungary. They sold fur and clothes in Hungary, and they purchased mainly copper and pepper, which they later sold in Upper Hungary (today Slovakia) and Silesia. The third source is the account book of the Popplau family from the first decades of the sixteenth century. While Beringer and Hesse used the single-entry bookkeeping system, in the Popplau accounting book there are indications that double-entry accounting was used. Although the Popplau book itself did not use this system, it contains information indicating that double-entry bookkeeping was familiar in medieval Wrocław. The few known account books from the town were written primarily by members of the largest trading companies, but the ledger of the less wealthy Niclas Ritter also survived. According to Myśliwski, while many of the sources

were destroyed during World War II, many account books did not survive simply because merchants sought to guard their trade secrets.

Finally, the paper by Petr Kozák combines the two approaches, the focus on the king and the court and the focus on accounting. Kozák deals with the courtly accounts of Prince Sigismund Jagiello, who later became king of Poland. In 1499, Sigismund was granted the fiefdoms of two small duchies in Silesia, and later he was appointed to serve as governor of the whole territory. The courtly accounts from his Silesian period are a significant source on the basis of which to examine his rule, and they shed light on his personal position within the Jagiellonian dynasty. The accounts had specialized auxiliary books, but only one of them, the *Registrum curiensium* survived. It contains the names of his courtiers, their salaries, the dates of the beginning and the end of their service, and the number of their accompanying riders. As Sigismund's power and influence increased, his court expanded. At first, only his Silesian subjects served in the court, but later more and more courtiers appeared, and they nurtured his ambitions for the Polish and Lithuanian thrones. The accounts shed light on the functional, hierarchical, and even widespread structures of the court. There were the classic courtiers, the chamberlains, the pages and youngsters, and the functionaries of the court, such as the steward, the cupbearer, and the master of the kitchen. One even finds mention in the accounts of the lower members of the ducal household, like the barbers, the furriers, the falconers, the blacksmiths, the cooks, and the washerwomen. The source contains information concerning the parades and the guests who were diplomats or ambassadors, as well as other visitors who were entertained by jesters, lutenists, flautists, and dwarfs. The data contained in this registry casts light on the structure, costs, and colorful daily life of a royal court.

The fifteen papers in this volume offer many different points of view and approaches, but sometimes the lack of attention to detail gives rise to inconsistencies. For example, different authors use different terms for the same currencies (e.g. gulden/guldier), the same people (e.g. Nicholas of Gara/Miklós Garai), or the same settlement (e.g. Breslau/Wrocław). This is particularly confusing in the cases involving names, because a reader who does not know the history of the given country thoroughly may very well not understand the connection between the cases under examination, i.e. the bigger picture. Additional references to the other papers might have given the collection a greater degree of cohesion. Nevertheless, the editor's historiographical introduction gives a remarkable basic overview of the economic history of the Central European countries, and the schedules and diagrams also help make this information easily

accessible. This volume is a notable example of the importance of interregional and international research initiatives and the substantial contributions they offer to our understanding of the methods used by historians from the countries of the region and of their findings.

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Medieval Visegrád: Archeology, Art History and History of a Medieval Royal Centre. Volume 1. The Medieval Royal Palace at Visegrád. Edited by Gergely Buzás and József Laszlovszky. (Archaeolingua 27.) Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2013. 398 pp. Volume 2. The Medieval Royal Town at Visegrád: Royal Centre, Urban Settlement, Churches. Edited by Gergely Buzás, József Laszlovszky, and Orsolya Mészáros. (Archaeolingua 32.) Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2014. 272 pp.

In the historiography on towns in Europe, research on royal residences in the Middle Ages has always been prominent. In Hungary, along with Buda, Visegrád has been one of the cities that have been focal points of this research over the course of the past few decades. The city, which lies on the right bank of the Danube River, about 50 kilometers from Budapest, served as a seat of bailiffs in the Árpád era. Nonetheless, for a long time, it did not play a role of any great importance. This began to change when the House of Árpád died out in 1301. After two decades of harsh conflict over the title of king in a country that was splintering into fiefdoms, Charles I of Anjou acquired the throne. Charles I had the seat of the kingdom moved from Timișoara, a city safely distant from the center of the country, to Visegrád, in the heart of the realm. This decision was not without antecedents. The area had constituted the *medium regni* (“center of the realm”) in the Árpád era.

Charles I's decision led to a rapid rise in the importance of the city, and over the course of the fourteenth century the royal palace was built in Visegrád. This was followed by a period of gradual decline beginning in the early fifteenth century, as the royal seat and the administrative apparatus associated with it gradually moved to Buda.

The city lost its role as a seat, but both Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg and King Matthias continued to use it as an important residence, as evidenced by the ambitious construction work that was done in the royal palace.

From the sixteenth century until the liberation of Hungary from the Ottomans in the late seventeenth century, the history of Visegrád was shaped in large part by the Turkish occupation. In the midst of the almost continuous fighting, the royal castle was the only sight that managed to preserve any of its earlier importance. The city was gradually deserted, and the palace fell into ruins, its remains gradually covered by layers of dirt eroding from the hill atop which the castle perched. The actual site of the royal palace had been forgotten by

the time the city was gradually resettled in the eighteenth century. Thus, in the 1930s, it was something of a sensation when Frigyes Schulek came across the impressive ruins of the palace in the course of renovations to the royal castle.

Over the course of the past 80 years, the palace essentially has been undergoing continuous excavation, if with occasional interruptions. In 1995, the findings of these excavations were compiled in an English-language monograph. However, over the course of the past 20 years, substantial contributions have been made to our knowledge of the archeology of the palace and the city. This made it important to publish a new English-language work on Visegrád. This was an ambitious and significant undertaking. Seven authors wrote the chapters of the two-volume work, and the final manuscript was almost 700 pages long. The volumes include several hundred supplements that ease the understanding of the text (color photographs, floor plans, and maps). The chapters do more than simply present the archeology and history of the palace. They also offer an answer to a logical and important question: when Visegrád was used by the king as the royal residence and then, when the royal seat moved to Buda, what consequences did this have for the city and its development? It is worth noting that the discussion of the city's growth and history might have been more nuanced if the book had considered not simply the city and the palace, but also the royal castle at the top of the steep hill overlooking the Danube River, since the castle also may have exerted an influence on the development of the city.

The first chapter, which was written by József Laszlovszky, presents the royal palace. It can be seen as a kind of introduction which examines how the excavation of the Visegrád palace gave new directions and momentum to the scholarship on Hungarian seats and royal residencies. Since very few royal seats from the Middle Ages actually survived in Hungary, the state of the royal palace in Visegrád (which is accessible to researchers and yields rich findings) is particularly significant. Of the medieval royal seats that have been thoroughly studied by archeologists (Visegrád, Buda, Esztergom, and Székesfehérvár), Visegrád is perhaps the one that best exemplifies, for future scholars and researchers, a kind of methodological archetype and point of orientation from the perspective of excavation and reconstruction.

After this introductory chapter, there are two longer and two shorter chapters by Gergely Buzás. The first of these chapters is one of the most important parts of the book and can be considered a kind of guiding thread. Buzás presents the most important archeological finds from the end of the thirteenth century (i.e. the period immediately preceding the construction of the palace) to the

end of the Middle Ages. He draws conclusions on the basis of these findings concerning the architectural history of the palace. The subchapters present the edifices that were built in the area of the palace, as well as the gardens, terraces, fountains, the royal chapel, and the garden walls. Well edited floor plans and spectacular reconstructive drawings offer a kind of time-line of the construction periods. Color photographs of the excavations make these visual materials even more engaging and informative. True, at first the floor plans are a bit difficult to get used to, and thus it is not always easy to identify the sites of the objects identified in the text, since the floor plans are not based on the customary north-south orientation, but rather are oriented on the basis of the location of the area with respect to the Danube River.

Buzás is consistently careful to present parallels in architectural history and art history to the various solutions that were adopted in the course of the construction of the palace. For instance, he informs his reader that the spatial arrangement used for the ensemble of edifices that were built over the course of the fourteenth century may well have been based on the construction work commissioned by the popes in Avignon, while in the case of the stone carvings, the influence of Czech, Polish, and Hungarian masters is prominent. In other words, stone masons and sculptors were brought in from the surrounding region, while the people who oversaw the construction projects came from farther away, for instance southern France. One discerns the influence of the architecture of southern France in a few other royal castles built at the time.

The book places considerable emphasis on the construction work that was done under the reign of King Matthias. In this period (the 1470s and 1480s), several symbolically important elements were added to the building ensemble. The most familiar is perhaps the Renaissance loggia in the inner courtyard. Interestingly, with regards to the actual structures of the buildings, one discerns elements of the late Gothic in the construction work that was done under King Matthias, while the carvings and other external adornments bear the stylistic marks of the Italian Renaissance. In all probability, the work was overseen by Chimenti Camicia. The fountains show the influence of Giovanni Dalmata and the famous Visegrád Madonna in the chapel shows the influence of Gregorio di Lorenzo.

From this point on, the book begins to fall apart a bit from the perspective of its structural coherence. The subsequent chapters do not seem to form a logical train of thought. The first of these chapters offers a functional reconstruction of the palace, followed by a presentation of the scientific preparatory work, which raises interesting questions from the perspective of the methodologies

of excavation (both chapters were written by Buzás). This is followed by chapters presenting the role of Franciscan friaries in the Middle Ages (by József Laszlovszky), the stove tiles that were excavated and the glass, metal, and ceramic findings (Edit Kocsis), and the reconstruction work that has been underway since the 1990s (some forty pages written by Zoltán Deák). We then do a kind of chronological 180 turn with a presentation of the ivory and antler findings (István Kovács).

We find ample compensation for the arguably haphazard structure of the book, however, in the high scholarly standards of the chapters. For instance, we learn of the Franciscan friary that was built very near the palace in 1425 (i.e. quite late) that it was founded by Sigismund of Luxembourg on the same principles as the Chapel of Saint Sigismund in Buda. Both were built in the parts of the cities inhabited and used by the burghers, i.e. in a kind of “collision zone.” In other words, the king expanded his zone of influence at the cost of the denizens of the city.

The chapter on the stove tiles of the palace (which is rich with illustrations) discusses the roles of the stove tile workshops that were active in the construction of the palace, which in the Hunyadi era showed the impact of masters from Bavaria. One also discerns influences from masters and workshops outside of Hungary in the ceramics, glass, and metalwork findings. Among the ceramics, for instance, one finds imports from Austria and Germany as early as the Anjou era. In the case of glasswork, until the end of the Middle Ages imports from Venice dominated. The metal, glass, and ceramic tableware was sometimes of extremely high quality, as were the ivory carvings that were found in the excavations.

The chapter on the functions of the various spaces of the palace merits particular mention for two reasons. First, the systematic presentation of the topographical elements and their functions (the hippodrome, the grand chamber, the bath, etc.) offers a far more nuanced and colorful picture of everyday life in the palace. Second, in its presentation of the individual spaces of the palace, the chapter also offers a very broad and broadly international overview of comparable edifices, made more informative and engaging by the photographs and floor plans that have been included. The chapter persuasively illustrates that in the construction of the palace in Visegrád, heavy use was made of international styles, ideas, and innovations. The first volume closes with a 70-page catalogue of findings, including an appendix of color photographs and precise descriptions presenting the objects and items that were found in the course of excavations in and around the palace.

The second volume focuses on the city. It is based largely on archeologist Orsolya Mészáros's recently published dissertation and book on Visegrád in the Middle Ages. In part for this reason, this volume is more consistent and logical in its structure than the first.

The first chapter, which was written by József Laszlovszky and Katalin Szende, offers a broad overview of the European and Hungarian antecedents to scholarship on residencies (*Residenzenforschung*), including the term itself and the frameworks and potentials of the inquiries.

Following this discussion of the ideas concerning scholarship in the residency cities comes a subchapter on the basic touchstones of early Hungarian urban development. The subchapter offers an excellent overview of the fundamental questions on the subject, and it contextualizes our knowledge of early Visegrád within this framework. Having taken numerous factors into consideration, the authors come to the conclusion that in the early stages of its history, Visegrád could not actually be considered a city. It only really began to grow in the 1320s, thanks to the presence of the royal palace and the use of the city as the royal seat.

The next major chapter of the second volume, which was written by Gergely Buzás, József Laszlovszky, and Orsolya Mészáros, offers an overview of the distinctive features of medieval Visegrád, including its government and economic life and the Church institutions found in the city.

The mechanisms of the government of the city can be studied on the basis of the 18 surviving city charters, which for the most part dealt with trade in land and which were sealed with a grand seal and then, beginning in the fourteenth century, with a small seal. According to these documents, there was a city council with one magistrate and 12 councilors. At the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, these roles were played primarily by merchants and artisans. However, the landed group (the so-called “comes”) was missing from the leading stratum of the city, though at the time this group usually played a prominent role in the more important settlements. Written sources indicate that until 1378, Visegrád had at least two large sections, a Hungarian district and a German district, and there were also burghers of Italian descent among its denizens. Nonetheless, the settlement still only had a single, united council. According to the authors, by the end of the fifteenth century, the city had become a royal market town. It might have been worthwhile, in order to support this contention, to have examined the transformation of the legal terms used in charters over the course of the Middle Ages (terms such as *civitas* and *oppidum*).

This chapter also includes a discussion of the handicraft industry, agriculture, and trade. Alongside the various occupations that provide for the basic needs of the population (food, textiles, etc.), artisans began to spring up who practiced occupations that addressed the wants of the people of the palace and the court (for instance glassmakers and ivory and metalworkers). The sources suggest that the artisans who worked for the palace came from abroad, while the other artisans of the city were locals. Historians have only scattered bit of information on which to base hypotheses concerning trade in Visegrád. Several storeowners were active in the city (so-called *patikárius* or “apothecary”), and in all probability they sold wares that had come from abroad or afar. Furthermore, in all likelihood the city had a national exemption from customs duties. Strangely enough, at the same time, we have no information whatsoever concerning the Visegrád markets in the Middle Ages.

With regards to agriculture, the agricultural conditions in the region were not ideal. Eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century maps confirm this. The agricultural plots were not large enough to provide for the entire population. The situation was better when it came to viticulture. From the perspective of farming and agricultural life, the city was not terribly developed. The chapter also discusses the churches in Visegrád. Of the many Church institutions that were present beginning in the Árpád era, the parish church of the Virgin Mary, which was found at what today is the main street of the town (“Fő utca”), and the Augustine monastery, which was excavated in what today is Szent László Street, may have played the largest roles in the topographic development of the city.

In the next chapter, Mészáros examines the privileges enjoyed by the city. The original charter granting the settlement its privileges has not survived, but there are persuasive arguments in support of the conclusion according to which there was such a charter, and in all likelihood it was equivalent to the privilege charter of Maros (today Nagymaros), which lies on the far side of the Danube and which was granted privileges in 1324. The chapter comes to a close with a summary of the decline of the city, also written by Mészáros. When it ceased to function as the royal seat, Visegrád declined in importance and its population also dropped. King Matthias attempted to reverse this process in the 1470s by granting privileges, but without much success, it seems.

The other decisive section in the book was also written by Mészáros. In this section, Mészáros offers some 50 pages of analysis in which she provides a description of the topography of the settlement, its basic layout, the system of

plots, and the network of roads. She bases her conclusions on data concerning land trade and archeological excavations.

Mészáros' analysis is based on a collection of data found on pages 99–121. The data, which is based on written sources, concerns the location of the plots, their value, their history, and of course their owners. It is interesting in and of itself, since many of the individuals who are already well-known in medieval Hungarian history owned homes in Visegrád. Beginning in the 1420s, the national and court dignitaries, the archbishops of Esztergom, and the provosts all strove to take up residence close to Visegrád, where the king had established his seat. In many cases, they acquired several pieces of land in the settlement so that they would be able to bring their noble entourage with them. The offices filled by the familiarities and the figures of notability played a role in the development of the city's plot system and in its dynamic trade in land.

Mészáros uses this data to try to identify the groups of buildings that constituted the streets of Visegrád at the time and the two districts of the city. While the information is sparse, she nonetheless manages to identify the location of the Hungarian district (which today is the city center) and the German district (the area to the north of the Hungarian district, stretching all the way to the castle). She also concludes that the main street of which the other streets opened was the main axis of the settlement. It broadened into a market roughly in the area which today is the center of the town. Naturally, the remarkable detail of her reconstruction of the urban topography of the city notwithstanding, there are still some blank spots on the map. For instance, we do not actually know whether the city was surrounded by walls in the Middle Ages or not.

This analysis of the topographical features of Visegrád is followed by a collection of sources that has been very precisely compiled by Mészáros. This source collection, which is easy to use and offers an excellent illustration of the history of the city, contains complete transcriptions of 61 medieval Latin charters. It is followed by a summary with which the second volume comes to a close. The conclusions offered in this summary are entirely persuasive: the city bore witness to two periods of major development in the Middle Ages, and this was a peculiar feature of its history. In the fourteenth century, it underwent a rapid growth as the residency of the king and the royal seat. In the fifteenth century, it became a secondary residence, which led to a period of decline in its development. The presence of the castle, however, meant that Visegrád remained a royal seat and smaller regional center, and it also preserved its institutional system.

This monograph on the history of Visegrád, which has a tasteful cover and a rich array of illustrations, is the result of 80 years of focused and devoted work by archeologists and historians. It will allow scholars of rulers' residencies who do not read Hungarian to familiarize themselves with the most recent findings of the excavations that have been done in and around Visegrád, a city which stands out among the royal seats in Hungary in part because of the tremendous potential it offers for researchers. Thus, it will draw the attention of international scholarly forums to Hungarian scholarship on the royal residencies, while also allowing the community of Hungarian scholars and researchers to present their findings to the English-speaking world.

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Medieval East Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective: From Frontier Zones to Lands in Focus. Edited by Gerhard Jaritz and Katalin Szende. London–New York: Routledge, 2016. 265 pp.

Based on a conference held at Central European University in spring 2014, this volume presents fifteen essays exploring the potentials of comparative and contextualizing methods in the study of the medieval history of East Central Europe. The collection starts with three essays which discuss the inevitable though redundant question, “what is East Central Europe.” While Nora Berend (*The Mirage of East Central Europe: Historical Regions in a Comparative Perspective*) argues for a flexible understanding of historical regions and warns of the possibility of self-segregation of the relevant scholarship through emphasis on the idea that East Central Europe is a region apart, i.e. in its own right and non-comparable, Márta Font (*The Emergence of East Central Europe and Approaches to Internal Differentiation*) tries to define the region using the notion of “Europe in-between,” by which she hopes to help better integrate the “forgotten region” into comparative general medieval studies. Anna Kuznetsova (*The Notion of ‘Central Europe’ in Russian Historical Scholarship*) provides a brief overview of the political and scholarly use of the concept “Central Europe” in Russian medieval research. The editors astutely organized the following articles into four thematic blocks. The first contains two essays on political practices. Stefan Burkhardt (*Between Empires: South-Eastern Europe and the two Roman Empires in the Middle Ages*) analyses the characteristics of imperial rule in what he calls “inter-imperial regions.” Considering in particular the Kingdom of Hungary as one example of an “inter-imperial-power,” he suggests conceptualizing medieval East Central Europe as a set of regions between empires, though not as mere peripheries in-between, but “as laboratories whose leaders had the power to choose the best of both worlds” (p.56). Julia Burkhardt (*Negotiating Realms: Political Representation in Late Medieval Poland, Hungary and the Holy Roman Empire*) demonstrates the potential of comparative studies by briefly sketching the situation of political assemblies in East Central and Central Europe between 1490 and 1530. The second thematic block discusses religious space. By examining the connection between the monastic landscapes (of Hungary) and the burial places of dynastic rulers, József Laszlovszky (*Local Tradition or European Patterns? The Grave of Queen Gertrude in the Pilis Cistercian Abbey*) asks what the history of monasticism can contribute

to the debate on East Central Europe, while Beatrix F. Romhányi (*Mendicant Networks and Population in a European Perspective*) looks at the mendicant network using its international character and central organization in order to detect various patterns throughout Europe, thereby showing that the East Central European mendicant networks in fact did not follow a single, common (“East Central European”) pattern. From another perspective, Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen (*Friars Preachers in Frontier Provinces of Medieval Europe*) confirms that Dominican life in northeastern and (east) Central Europe was to a large extent comparable to Dominican life in other European provinces, though “frontier provinces” often developed distinctive characteristics, and on certain issues they adopted stances that differed from stances of the core provinces of the order. The third thematic block is devoted to urban space. Olha Kozubska-Andrusiv (*Comparable Aspects in Urban Development. Kievan Rus’ and the European Middle Ages*) analyses the development of urban centers, the emergence of autonomous urban communities, and the coexistence of different urban religious groups in the Russian principality of Halich-Volynia. Kozubska-Andrusiv contends that this example persuasively demonstrates the regional variety of Rus’ and brings “more precision into viewing this realm as part and parcel of medieval Europe.” Katalin Szende (*Town Foundations in East Central Europe and the New World*) presents a particularly innovative approach. She compares the newly founded towns of East Central Europe in the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries with newly founded Spanish towns in the Americas in the sixteenth century. She focuses on the patterns of organizing space by looking at the so-called grid-plan. She detects comparable strategies behind the implementation of such grid-plans, emphasizing that the planned regularity was intended first and foremost to ensure control over population and available resources. Michaela Antonín Malaníková (*Female Engagement in Medieval Urban Economy: Late Medieval Moravia in a Comparative Perspective*) focuses on the royal cities of Brno and Jihlava from the second half of the fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth century. Malaníková examines the situation of economically active townswomen. The fourth thematic block of the volume discusses aspects of cultural unity and diversity in East Central Europe. Béla Zsolt Szakács (*The Place of East Central Europe on the Map of Romanesque Architecture*) advocates the inclusion of East Central Europe in the overall concept of Romanesque art and architecture, while Anna Adamska (*Intersections: Medieval East Central Europe from the Perspective of Literacy and Communication*) considers East Central Europe as a particular “area of

transition between several models of culture” (p.226). Looking at medieval literacy and communication, she discerns several “intersections” of East Central Europe and the neighboring regions. Julia Verholantsev (*Etymological Argumentation as a Category of Historiographic Thought in Historical Writings of Bohemia, Poland and Hungary*) very briefly analyses how some Bohemian, Polish, and Hungarian narrative texts from the twelfth–fifteenth centuries make use of stories of origin and etymological argumentation in order to validate their narratives. Two pages of a sort of summary by János M. Bak (*What did We Learn? What is to be Done? Some Insights and Visions after Reading this Book*) conclude this inspiring volume, which has detailed bibliographies and useful illustrations. My only complaint concerning the simulating and very valuable contributions is that a few of the authors apparently have no knowledge of the relevant German research on their topics.

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Hogyan lett Buda a középkori Magyarország fővárosa? A budai királyi székhely története a 12. század végétől a 14. század közepéig [How did Buda become the capital of medieval Hungary? The history of the royal seat of Buda from the end of the twelfth century to the middle of the fourteenth]. By Enikő Spekner. Budapest: Budapesti Történeti Múzeum, 2015. 382 pp.

Buda became the capital of the Hungarian Kingdom at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and since then it always played a central role in the life of the country. For this reason, the scholarship on Hungarian medieval local history has consistently devoted considerable attention to it. Enikő Spekner, however, asserts that “research on the history of the royal center of Óbuda and Buda has been part of the research on local history, and, particularly with respect to the earliest period, it has not been the subject of individual studies” (p.12). In order to compensate for this shortcoming, Spekner examines the development of Buda from the end of the twelfth century to the middle of the fourteenth, and she tries to trace the initial stages of the process through which, by the beginning of the fifteenth century, Buda had become the economical and political center of the country.

Spekner has been pursuing research on the early history of Buda for a long time, and although she makes mention of the fact that this volume is a revised and extended version of her dissertation, to which she has added the most recent secondary literature published on the theme, I would not call it simply the summary of her findings. She places her research into the context of previous findings: she analyses the medieval understanding of various terms, such as “center” and “capital,” and she familiarizes her reader with the process through which the Árpád Era governmental centers developed, while also calling attention to the concept of *medium regni* (“center of the realm”) and *rezidenciatáj* (“residential area”), coined by twentieth-century Hungarian historians Bernát L. Kumorovitz and András Kubinyi respectively. Spekner poses the central question of the book in part on the basis of this train of thought: from what point can one regard a given royal center as the capital of a country? In order to offer an answer to this question, she examines when and for what reasons Óbuda, which (following Esztergom and Székesfehérvár) was the third settlement to emerge as a center in the *medium regni*, became a royal center. When and why was this royal center then transferred to the Castle Hill of Buda? Did Óbuda and

Buda exist as royal centers at the same time? And, finally, did Buda and Óbuda manage to keep some (or any) of their royal functions or their networks of connections with the government after the royal residency was transferred in the Anjou Period (the reign of the Anjou Dynasty lasted from 1301 until 1386 in Hungary). Accordingly, the volume is divided into two main parts, the first of which presents the development of Óbuda and Buda in the Árpád Era, while the second part discusses the relationship between Charles I; 1301–42), the first Hungarian king of the Anjou Dynasty, and Buda.

In her discussion of the early history of Esztergom and Székesfehérvár, Spekner lays particular emphasis on the fact that their central position was by and large the result of the significant role they played in the political, economical, and religious life of the country, and, consequently, she seeks to find the same underlying motives in the process through which Óbuda and then Buda acquired central positions. The process through which they obtained certain political functions can be traced, for instance, in the close relationship that developed between the *capitulum collegiae* and the chancellery, which gained importance during the reign of Béla III (1172–96), in the increasing frequency of the rulers' visits to Óbuda, and in various political events of the time. As Spekner argues, Óbuda acquired the status of royal center during the reign of Andrew II (1205–35), and Spekner asserts that under Béla IV (1235–70), who is generally referred to as the “second founder of the state” after the Mongol invasion, Buda formed part of the system of fortifications that was intended to safeguard the crucially important Danube Region and that it was a deliberate choice on the part of the king to set up his new seat on the Castle Hill of Buda. When dwelling on the professional debates about the foundation and the early history of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the castle of Buda, Spekner contends that Béla IV ordered a private chapel that would resemble the one in Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) or the one in Székesfehérvár to be built, primarily with the aim of emphasizing the sacral significance of the new royal center. Since in Hungary mints were usually located in royal residences, Spekner hypothesizes that the first mint in Buda, which also served as the first royal quarters there, the *Kammerhof* was established by Béla IV, and she notes the importance of Pest in the economic life of the country. Spekner concurs with scholars who share the otherwise not entirely persuasive notion that the István Tower was named after István, the eldest son and successor of Béla IV. Furthermore, she makes a connection between the foundation of the Rectorate in 1264 and the civil war between Béla IV and Stephen (1261–66). According to her reasoning, Béla

IV deprived Buda of the right to the free election of the major because of the special strategic importance of the city and in order to strengthen his position by directly appointing the leading official.

Spekner argues that the overall importance of the Castle Hill of Buda overshadowed Óbuda for good around the end of the Árpád Era, and she makes several claims in support of her argument. For instance, during the reigns of Ladislas IV (1272–90) and Andrew III (1290–1301), the last king of the House of Árpád, events of national importance took place in Buda. The law courts of the vice-palatine and of the seneschal were founded in the city, as was the permanent residency of the queens. Spekner emphasizes that, because Buda was a fortified stronghold, it became more important and prominent than Óbuda, and its central role became clear in the course of the fights for the throne that broke out after the House of Árpád died out. In her view, because of the changes that had taken place in the entourage of the ruler, Buda lost its character as a royal seat, and Károly took defensive priorities into consideration when he had his new residency established in Visegrád. At the same time, Spekner emphasizes that Buda did not become less significant, it remained the economic center of the country. As a kind of conclusion to her discussion, Spekner determines the tasks that await the next generation of scholars, including, for instance, a comparative analysis of the rulers' residencies in Central Europe and the always pressing need to ensure that the work and findings of Hungarian scholars become part of the emerging international body of scholarship.

The third major section of the book is the appendix, which contains the itinerary of Charles I, which was prepared by Spekner to facilitate an understanding of the complex relationship between Buda and Visegrád. In the itinerary, Spekner adopts the threefold division of the reign of Charles I that has become common in the secondary literature. The databases on the period of the struggle for the throne (1301–10) and on the time of consolidation (1324–42) are based primarily on charters, which she then supplements with various written narratives, diplomatic documents and the archontological data of the national high dignitaries. With regard to the period of battles to unify the country (1310–23), she takes the itinerary of Pál Engel as her point of departure, including the notes and corrections made by Gyula Kristó. In some cases, she changes it on the basis of her own insights. This modern, thorough, and highly accessible itinerary is indispensable to anyone studying the reign of Charles I. Spekner herself emphasizes that the itineraries are important resources in the study of political history, and she notes with pleasure that in recent decades more and more

historians have worked on compiling itineraries. She mentions in particular the work of Pál Engel and Norbert C. Tóth (*Itineraria regum et reginarum (1382–1438* [2005]) and Richárd Horváth (*Itineraria regis Matthiae Corvini et reginae Beatricis de Aragonia* [2011]). While the incorporation into the narrative of a queen's itinerary might have added interesting details and nuance, Spekner should not be faulted for the absence of such an itinerary. She compiled the database as a reference aid, and in her study of the relationship between Buda and the central power focuses very specifically on the movement of the ruler and his entourage. With regards to the compilation and use of itineraries, she emphasizes the importance of adopting a sufficiently critical approach. The itinerary is followed by a short summary in English, the indexes, and a reference section with two tables listing in a systematic fashion the publications of the courts of the palatines, the vice-palatines, the palatine magistrates, and the seneschals.

Every part of the book is based on a tremendous wealth of source materials. Most of this material consists of charters, to which Spekner adds the relevant information from the Hungarian historiography and hagiography on the Middle Ages, as well as information from Austrian, Czech, and Polish narrative sources. She also uses contemporary memoirs, biographies, and letters. She treats the sources with appropriate critical acumen, and she makes exemplary use of the perspectives and findings of works from the auxiliary historical sciences, for instance historical geography, sigillography, archontology, diplomatic history, and (first and foremost) archeology. She adds her own insights to the discussions of questions that are subjects of debate, even when simply expressing agreement not with a recent proposal, but rather with an earlier hypothesis, which she then supports with her own arguments.

In summary, Enikő Spekner has provided an extremely interesting discussion of the history of Buda's transformation into a capital. She offers a separate presentation of the growth and development of Óbuda and the city of Buda on Castle Hill, but she also emphasizes the mutual interactions of these two processes, and she also often draws the city of Pest into the discussion. Her book is not simply a comprehensive overview of the early history of Óbuda and Buda. It also fills a lacuna in the secondary literature on the subject because of the thought-provoking approach she had adopted to the subject. Her book constitutes a new work of fundamental scholarship on residency and city history in Hungary.

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Az esztergomi székeskáptalan a 15. században. I. rész. A kanonoki testület és az egyetemjárás [The Cathedral Chapter of Esztergom in the fifteenth century. Volume 1. Canonical body and university studies]. By Norbert C. Tóth. (Subsidia ad historiam medii aevi Hungariae inquirendam 7.) Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Támogatott Kutatócsoportok Irodája, 2015. 198 pp.

This book is the first volume of a tripartite book series which examines the fifteenth-century history of the most significant Hungarian cathedral chapter, the chapter of Esztergom. The first volume is dedicated to the personnel of the chapter.

It is important to emphasize that the overview offered by the author differs in several respects from the views shared in the earlier secondary literature on the ecclesiastical society of the period. The essential reference point for scholarship is a chapter written by Elemér Mályusz in 1971. Influential as his writing was, when formulating his argument, Mályusz disregarded the primary sources almost entirely. Over the course of the past two decades, several analyses have been published which concentrate on the individual composition of the Hungarian chapters (e.g. József Köblös, Tamás Fedeles). These studies have drawn the attention of researchers to some debatable aspects of the work of Mályusz.

The basic research that needed and needs to be done in order to arrive at an astute reassessment of Mályusz's view involves the (re)assembling of archontologies of the relevant institutions and the writing of prosopographies. Norbert C. Tóth has done systematic research in this field for several years now.

C. Tóth's work begins with a very important source, a canonical visitation in Esztergom, which was published by Ferenc Kollányi at the beginning of the last century. Kollányi dated the documents to 1397, but C. Tóth convincingly argues that they can be dated to the fifteenth century. When assembling the archontology, he also takes into consideration letters of advocacy (*litterae procuratoriae*) related to the famous tithe case of Sasad. These letters, which date back to 1451–60, list the names of altogether 54 canons. One of the publications contains the names of 37 beneficiaries, which (if one takes the Hungarian source base into consideration) can be regarded as unique. This signifies that almost 95 percent of the canons of the altogether 39-member chapter (to this, the canonical body of the king, the so-called *rex canonicus*, has to be added) were known at the

time of the charter's execution (April 3, 1459). With the consideration of two additional documents, this figure reaches 100 percent.

The volume consists of four main units. The first chapter provides a basic overview of the members of the chapter. The sources gathered by C. Tóth provide data on roughly three-fourths of the personnel of the chapter. During the period in question, members of a number of baronial families can be found among the members of the chapter. 26 percent of the members of the chapter were of aristocratic origin. 29.6 percent were from tenant peasant families, 18.5 percent were from market town families, and those who belonged to burgher families constituted only 9.3 percent of the members of the chapter whose origins C. Tóth could determine. This offers a picture that differs significantly from the image that emerges in the earlier secondary literature, since the proportion of people who were from serf backgrounds is much higher in the case of Esztergom than it was among the chapters in Transdanubia.

With his examination of the relationship between the origins of canons and the canonical body, C. Tóth has come to the conclusion that aristocrats gained the prebendarships on the highest levels of the church hierarchy. For the inhabitants of the market towns and for the burghers of the larger towns, every benefice was accessible with the exception of the position of grand provost, but for tenant peasants, the peak of their canonical careers was the position of a canon. Mobility within the chapters was almost completely determined by social origin. On the other hand, university studies may also have played an important role in determining whether or not one could climb one or more rungs on the ladder of social standing. Pluralism of beneficiaries within the chapter (*cumulatio beneficiorum*) (13 percent) remained low. However, within the group, the proportion of tenant peasants was significant (altogether six members).

The second chapter of the book, entitled “Parallel Lives: Canons in Esztergom in the fifteenth century” (pp.43–86), is actually a series of short articles and biographies of members of the chapter. In a number of cases C. Tóth corrects mistakes found in the earlier secondary literature. For example, he clearly shows that there were two László Dorogházis (father and son). The father worked as a public notary and as a notary of the Holy See in Esztergom. In 1484, he became a protonotary of the chief justice, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century he finished his career as a protonotary of the chief justice. His son obtained an academic degree in canonical law in Vienna. He then appeared in the sources (in 1475) as canon of Esztergom. He held this post until his death in the summer of 1489.

In the third chapter, which is the final analytical chapter of the book (pp.87–122), C. Tóth examines the university peregrination of the canons of Esztergom. The timeframe of his research has been extended here, as he analyzes the decades between 1390 and 1490. Within this period of time, altogether 65 canons of Esztergom attended universities abroad (most of them went to Vienna). Altogether 72.3 percent of them earned academic degrees. C. Tóth identifies a cultural recession in the chapter during the second half of the reign of King Mátyás. After a conspiracy against the king in 1471 organized by clerics, other chapters went through something similar (for instance chapters in Pécs, Oradea, and Alba Iulia).

Recent research suggests that the number of canons who continued their studies at universities was far less than the number of members of canonical communities whose existence can be demonstrated with exact data. Mályusz's interpretation is also flawed because foreigners were in fact underrepresented in Esztergom. Mályusz's contentions to the contrary can be seen as a symptom of national prejudice. In fact, canons did not have to be retaken from foreigners by Hungarian intellectuals.

The final chapter of the volume is a reference section, in which data on the beneficiaries of Esztergom between 1451 and 1460 are listed (pp.123–49). This is followed by eleven genealogical tables (pp.150–60). The book ends with an English-language summary and an index.

Norbert C. Tóth's book can be regarded as essential from several perspectives. First, he calls his readers' attention to the old and commonly known fact that general conclusions cannot be drawn without accurate and profound works of basic research. Second, the works of prominent scholars cannot be regarded as universal truth. Furthermore, ideas in the theoretical literature which may seem problematic have to be compared and contrasted with the original sources, as a historian must always adopt a critical approach. Thus, I must emphatically agree with C. Tóth contention that the reassembling of the archontological lists of the mediaeval Hungarian chapters is inevitable (indeed, I made this statement myself some 10 years ago). Now that this has been done, the construction of the prosopographical reference books is important, as only this can enable us to describe the characteristics of the central layer of Hungarian church society.

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Hybrid Renaissance: Culture, Language, Architecture. By Peter Burke.
Budapest–New York: Central European University Press, 2016. 284 pp.

While the Renaissance was defined and praised as the arrival of a new system of ideas and values opposed to the old medieval or “Gothic” world, the main idea of this book is to stress the importance of hybrid or mixed forms of art and thought in the era. In the written version of a lecture series initially held at Central European University and at other universities all over the world, Peter Burke presents hybridity in architecture, the visual arts, languages, literatures, music, law, philosophy, and religion. His goal is to think about the general problems of change and continuity in history.

The most interesting and innovative chapter of the book is the first one, which gives a definition of hybridization on all levels. Although Burke recognizes the impossibility of giving a clear definition of hybridity, he uses the term to denote not “something new that emerges from the combination of diverse older elements,” but “rather an umbrella covering a variety of different phenomena and processes.”

The Renaissance is defined in the book as a cultural movement that aimed to revive classical culture, but at the same time, many examples of hybridization discussed in the book do not have a “classical part,” for instance, in the case of religion, Christianity is claimed to have been adopted as part of a mix of traditional religions of other parts of the world. The chronological frames of the Renaissance are quite large, beginning in the fourteenth century and ending in the mid-seventeenth, and the geographical frameworks are particularly broad, as hybridization was seen, according to Burke, in its most clear forms on the edges of and outside of Europe.

Chapter 2 gives a short introduction to the history of the notion of hybridization in cultural studies and pays particular attention to the case of the Renaissance. Described with negative connotations (mixture, mishmash, eclecticism, aberration), hybridization was first condemned. Only later was it understood more as a coexistence of styles and attitudes, and recently it has been accepted as an intriguing interaction or interference among different paradigms. To distinguish specific territorial variants of the Renaissance, Burke uses the notion of “ecotype,” borrowed from Carl von Sydow. This term refers to different forms of adaptation of a model to a specific milieu and tradition. The term helps him distinguish different stages of interaction between Renaissance and “something else,” when after a period of infiltration of new elements, a crystallized state of a style emerges that can be characterized as a new ecotype.

Chapter 2 also deals with the locations where hybridization could occur: not surprisingly, for the most part these were spaces where works of art were commissioned: courts and cities, and also the frontier zones of European civilization. This is why, as part of Central Europe (the conflict zone between Christendom and the Muslim Ottoman Empire), Hungary offers several examples of hybridization: the use of Turkish weapons, clothes, or ornamental figures in architecture, for instance.

Chapter 3 deals with architecture, it contains the most obvious examples of mixes of styles: for instance, within Europe, the mix of Gothic and Renaissance, and on the European peripheries, the mix of Islamic or Turkish stylistic elements with the Renaissance, and in America or Asia, the mix of indigenous and European art. Burke notes that because of differences in climate, certain Italian Renaissance architectural elements were unfit for use in Northern Europe, and this also led to hybridization.

Hybridization in the visual arts (Chapter 4) of Europe was rather common, as is demonstrated by the use of grotesque and arabesque motifs in Renaissance works. One discerns a clear blend of Greek or Byzantine art and Renaissance art in, for instance, the work of El Greco. Outside Europe, there were three major trends in the hybridization of art: artistic production outside Europe for the European market; spontaneous acceptance of Western models, such as syncretic Mughal art; and the imposition of Western models on indigenous artists.

While Renaissance philologists attempted to restore the purity of classical Latin, in many cases mixtures of languages were used in everyday life. “Polluted” medieval Latin was still in use in many areas of life, and *commedie delle lingue*, macaronic Latin, or Rabelais’ use of numerous real and fictitious languages and dialects are evident examples of this mixture (Chapters 5 and 6). Rabelais is also discussed in Chapter 8, which reflects on the educational principles of Gargantua: although Rabelais was an adept of the Renaissance, he is regarded as medieval by Burke on the basis of certain features of his romances, and his oeuvre in general is regarded as a mixture.

Burke has a clear idea of the distinctions between “Gothic” or “Medieval” and the Renaissance in all aspects of arts. For instance, in historiography, he contrasts Froissart’s style with that of Leonardo Bruni, and he observes a mixture of both in Macchiavelli’s *Istorie Fiorentine*.

Hybridity often arises as a mix of the new and the old: Folengo, Rabelais, and Spenser are cited as examples of this. However, this type of mixture is evidently not a mixture of “Renaissance” and something opposed to it. For

Spenser, the old words he uses did not have a medieval connotation. Rather, he regards them as a treasure to be preserved. Another example is the Spanish genre of the picaresque novel, originating from the Arabic *maquamat* and stories of false beggars, of which there is evidence in the Iberian Peninsula from as early as the tenth century. This case indicates that medieval inspiration and medieval hybridity could *reappear* during the Renaissance, being present already in the *Libro de buen amor*, long before *Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Chapter 7 deals with mixtures of music and law, mostly depending again on specific local traditions that influenced the reception and reinterpretation of the Classical heritage. In philosophy (Chapter 8), the most important challenge was to harmonize Christian faith with ancient thought. The various attempts that were made resulted in systems such as Neoplatonism, humanist Aristotelianism, and Neostoicism. Syncretism in Jewish philosophy is presented through the examples of Leone Ebreo and Yohanan Alemanno.

In the field of religion (Chapter 9), hybridization in the Reformation is discussed mostly with reference to examples of mixed, Catholic and Calvinist or Lutheran communities in Europe. Attempts at syncretism are more surprising in cases of authors who had relationships with non-Christian religions as well: Burke presents Garcilaso de la Vega's (who was of Catholic, Spanish, and Inca origin) observations about the Inca cult of the Sun and its equivalents in ancient Syria. Burke also highlights that Christian missions generally led not to the simple conversion of the colonized people, but rather to certain kinds of conscious or unconscious syncretism. This occurred in southern India and in China, where the Jesuits had to adapt local teachings to their doctrines in order to be successful.

Protestant and Catholic Reforms were regarded by many theologians as means to purify local cults and beliefs, remnants of paganism: this is the reason for the frequent lack of tolerance for and even hostility to syncretism.

The coda of the book is an attempt to show forms of fighting against hybridity: many Renaissance authors and artists sought to establish or assert the purity of texts, styles, doctrines, and customs. The most important examples of forced purification are presented from Spain, probably as a reaction to the natural medieval mixture of Jewish, Arabic, and Christian cultures in the Iberian Peninsula.

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Versailles: Une histoire naturelle. By Grégory Quenet. Paris: Editions La Découverte, 2015. 225 pp.

Everyone knows Versailles—the palace and its gardens—and yet Versailles is not well known. Built by the French kings during the 17th and 18th century over an area previously owned by aristocratic families and religious communities, seat of the Court and the government from the middle of the 18th century until the French Revolution, it has played since then a secondary yet strongly symbolical role. A museum since 1837, it was the symbolic backdrop for many nineteenth- and twentieth-century political events. Rediscovered as one of the highlights of European art and culture in the early twentieth century with its gardens epitomizing the baroque style in European garden history, it has become one of the most visited monuments, with more than seven million visitors a year. The extensive restoration campaign, launched after the 1999 storm that devastated much of the park, foregrounds the figure of an all-powerful Louis XIV, who, by building the palace and its gardens, achieved his will to absolute dominion over men, territory, and nature.

Such an ideological reading of Versailles is still common, even in much academic writing. Yet art historical and historical research has long since demonstrated that the making of Versailles was a complex process, filled with trials and errors, with projects never completed or replaced by other projects. Recently, other areas of research have looked at this complex history: the piecemeal land acquisition policy to the workings of the complex administrative machinery that organized the building and the daily workings of the domain, the description of the scientific and technological prowess, the activities of humble actors such as gardeners and fountaineers. This recent and growing literature acknowledges Versailles not only as a site and symbol of power, but as a full-fledged human endeavour with its loads of wilfulness and incoherencies, and gives it a much welcomed historical depth.

Grégory Quenet's book, *Versailles: A natural history*, follows this recent historiographical trend. Quenet is a specialist of the history of environmental risks and a promoter of environmental history in France. His choice of Versailles as a case study was a double challenge, both of the traditional historical wisdom about Versailles, and of the realm of environmental history. What he proposes is “another history” (see the title of his introduction) of a Versailles that encompasses the whole entity, not only the palace and the gardens, but the much

larger hunting park and the streams of incoming and outgoing resources that were needed for the domain to function. Taking a typically environmental history stance, he shows how the persistence and resistance of the natural conditions of the site played an essential role in the shaping of the historical Versailles; and how the co-evolution of the (natural) site and the (human) developments involved many actors beyond the well-known decision makers, both humans and non-humans.

The demonstration is organized in four parts. The first part, entitled the “birth of Versailles”, describes the site before the large scale transformations brought by Louis XIV from 1660 onward: a swampy valley, good for game, but with little running water merely catering to the needs of a few scattered villages. The last part deals with the “death of Versailles”, the period following the French Revolution when most of the grounds were abandoned and sold. (What today is called Grand Parc is a mere 10% of the 8000 hectares owned by the king at the eve of the Revolution).

The second and third parts describe in detail what Quenet believes are the two of the most important factors of the development of Versailles: water and game management. The constant lack of sufficient flowing water was considered one of the main challenges of the site, and many projects were proposed to bring more flowing water to the fountains and the city (though only a few were realized). While historians have already studied these projects as feats of science and technology, Quenet chooses to look at the way the projects were implemented on the ground, and presents them as an ongoing negotiation process between the local social fabric, the environmental characteristics of the land and the administration in charge of the infrastructure—an approach simultaneously reflecting the local and the global power balance. He follows a similar approach in his treatment of hunting. In looking at the areas subjected to constant hunting pressure throughout the year, and subjected to many and often conflicting imperatives (forest management to encourage large game and fowl, wood production, agriculture and animal husbandry in the villages enclosed within the domain), he analyzes the evolution of hunting practices and grounds management as a play in which humans and animals are given equally important roles.

In his conclusion entitled “For an environmental history of France”, Quenet reframes the dual aim of his book: while it is a book on the history of Versailles—and as such, a book that cannot be ignored by any future study on Versailles—it is also a manifesto for environmental history. By choosing to study Versailles,

a most unlikely object from the point of view of his discipline, Quenet claims that all human endeavours are within the purview of environmental history and, more generally, that general history cannot dispense with the latter.

His conceptual framework is inspired by the work of the French anthropologist Philippe Descola and philosopher Bruno Latour. He proposes to leap over the “great divide” between humans and animals and write a “symmetrical history” where humans and non-humans are considered equal actors. In such an approach, the role of the “designers” recedes behind that played by what Latour calls a “collective”, acting on hybrid (natural and cultural) entities. For a reader coming to the book from the perspective of garden history, the narrative appears at times somewhat contrived. However, it brings to the fore the importance of looking at the material conditions in which gardens are created and continue to exist. Garden history is indeed making that turn: Quenet’s approach can be compared to that proposed by two historians and a landscape architect in their book on the gardens of Chantilly (Briffaud, Damée, and Heaulmé, *Chantilly au temps de Le Nôtre: Un paysage en projet* [2013]). Without using the conceptual framework of Quenet, they look at the process of the making of the gardens. Their book could also be considered as an exercise in environmental history, without the name; their stated affiliation, however, is garden history. The combined reading of the two books opens up a wealth of new questions enriching the dialogue between the two fields.

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Pázmány, a jezsuita érsek: Kinevezésének története, 1615–1616.

Mikropolitikai tanulmány [Pázmány, the Jesuit prelate: His appointment as Primate of Hungary, 1615–1616. A micro-political study]. By Péter Tusor. (Collectanea Vaticana Hungariae. Classis I, 13) Budapest–Rome: MTA–PPKE Lendület Egyháztörténeti Kutatócsoport, 2016. 459 pp.

The aim of this monograph is to explore the historical background of Péter Pázmány's (1570–1637) appointment as Primate of Hungary. Focusing on one of the most influential figures of Early Modern Hungarian Catholicism, this micro-political study is based on an exceptionally wide range of primary sources. One of its key features and unquestionable merits is its methodological awareness, reflected not only in the structure of the work but also in the narration and the critical analysis and interpretation of the relevant historical sources. This approach is consistently applied throughout the work. The monograph carefully investigates the motives for and circumstances of Pázmány's appointment as Primate of Hungary. Its greatest addition to the existing scholarship is the in-depth examination and detailed exploration of Pázmány's career, culminating in his appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom. Tusor's work also brings into focus why the Hungarian Jesuit had no choice but to quit the Society of Jesus and temporarily join another religious order.

The monograph addresses a subject that has been of outstanding importance and has long been discussed in Hungarian historiography. Furthermore, it corresponds to a state-of-the-art trend in international historiography as well. Although a great deal has already been written on the pontificate of Pope Paul (Borghese) V (1605–21), with particular emphasis on the diplomacy and the decision-making processes of the Holy See, it was German historian Wolfgang Reinhard who first adopted a micro-political approach to the history of the papal diplomacy. Thus, Reinhard proved the forerunner of a new school of historiography, and Tusor's monograph on Pázmány's appointment complements it nicely.

In addition to micro-political studies, it has now become increasingly popular in international historical research to unearth and publish diplomatic instructions written to the papal nuncios, who represented the Holy See in various European courts. Publications by Klaus Jaitner and Silvano Giordano offer examples of this trend. Moreover, the relevant contemporary historical research has also tended to examine seventeenth-century diplomatic relations, with

a particular focus on relations between the Habsburg dynasty and the Holy See. (The latest volumes of the series *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken* and the conference “Der Papst und der Krieg. Kuriale Diplomatie am Kaiserhof 1628–1635. Die jüngsten Publikationen der 4. Abteilung der Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland: Eine Bilanz (Il papa e la guerra Diplomazia curiale alla corte imperiale 1628–1635. Le pubblicazioni recenti della 4° sezione delle “Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland”: Un bilancio)” organized by the DHI in Rome in December 2016 can be referred to as examples.)

Although the monograph is primarily concerned with the historical background of the appointment of Hungarian Jesuit Péter Pázmány as Archbishop of Esztergom, the scope of the research on which it is based was not limited to this specific event. In fact, the work offers insights into various aspects of Pázmány’s appointment, and is intended for a diverse range of scholars who are curious about the history of the seventeenth century in general. For instance, in addition to tackling issues related to secular and canon law, Tusor also investigates the historical figures who masterminded diplomatic relations between the Habsburg Court and the Holy See in the aforementioned period. A precise review and critical analysis of the relevant primary and secondary sources enables him to present well-known historical facts and events from a new angle and to turn the spotlight on some lesser-known participants in seventeenth-century Habsburg and Vatican diplomacy, such as Cardinal Melchior Klesl, Chargé d’affaires Lodovico Ridolfi, Papal Nuncio Placido De Mara, etc.

With regards to the reasons for Pázmány’s appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom, Tusor has taken account of a wide range of political issues on the basis of seventeenth-century Habsburg and Vatican diplomatic sources. For example, he highlights the importance of the War of Gradisca between the Habsburg Empire and Venice (1615–17), an event that eventually resulted in the emergence of shared interests between the Habsburgs and the Vatican. While at first sight there appears to be no immediate connection between Pázmány’s appointment and this local conflict, the plans of Rome and Prague concerning the war indicate mutual interests that were deeper than either before or after the war. Pope Paul (Borghese) V almost launched a war against Venice in order to teach the Republic a lesson, and Habsburg diplomacy also made efforts to encourage the Papal State to enter into the struggle by providing either financial aid or direct military support. Politically, the Papacy focused increasingly on Italy in this period, and, for geopolitical reasons, the emperor was its most important partner in foreign affairs.

In his monograph, Tusor also sheds light on the relevance of the complications that surrounded the succession to the Habsburg throne, one of the most important issues of contemporary European power politics. As he points out, historical sources appear to confirm that Pázmány was deeply involved in the courtly power struggles induced by the issue of succession. Cardinal and Imperial Chief Minister Klesl was one of Pázmány's strongest supporters, and he could reasonably suppose that, with Pázmány's appointment, he would ensure the absolute loyalty of the new archbishop, one of the prominent leaders of Royal Hungary.

Although Pázmány's appointment as Primate of Hungary was supported by all key elements, i.e. the prominent figures in Papal and Habsburg diplomacy and the Hungarian Catholic and secular elites, several challenges arose and had to be faced. Clearly, the problem was not simply that the additional fourth vow of obedience to the Pope, which all members of the Society of Jesus were supposed to pronounce, at that time included a prohibition against occupying the position of a prelate. Difficulties also emerged due to the fact that, as a Jesuit, if appointed Archbishop of Esztergom, Pázmány would come into possession of the most important benefice of the Catholic Church in Hungary and thus would violate Act No. 8 of 1608, passed by the Diet of Hungary, which prohibited Jesuits from owning or possessing any kind of landed property in Hungary. As a consequence, Pázmány's appointment would have proved unlawful and void. In order to circumvent the aforementioned legal difficulties and become eligible to occupy the position of Prelate of Hungary, Pázmány had no alternative but to leave the Society of Jesus, and he temporarily joined the Order of the Somascan Fathers. Tusor shows that, contrary to the assumptions found in the early secondary literature, this step was made out of necessity, and not owing to the resistance of the Society of Jesus. Pázmány opted for the Somascan Fathers because he was supported by the Papal Nuncio to Prague, Placido de Mara, who had just established a Somascan college in the town of Melfi in southern Italy, where he had his episcopal See at the time. A religious order with a remote house under the supervision of the Nuncio could make Pázmány's preparatory period as a novice officially lawful but practically symbolic. Eventually, Pázmány did not complete his novitiate, because he spent only half a year as a novice of the Somascan Order before being appointed Archbishop of Esztergom. His appointment, however, which occurred on 28 September 1616, can be regarded as completely lawful according to canon law.

Tusor's research reinforces a central concept of micro-political research into the history of the Early Modern period, namely, that the main motive for political

nominations was to ensure absolute loyalty. Therefore, the prevailing patron-client system, which served as one of the foundations of European societies, needs to be taken into consideration when interpreting political nominations. Tusor's research suggests that Pázmány managed to occupy the position of Archbishop of Esztergom thanks at least in large part to the assistance of Imperial Chief Minister Klesl, who had a decisive influence on imperial decision-making at the time.

On the other hand, Tusor argues that Pázmány enjoyed the absolute confidence of the Pope as well, and this fact played an equally pivotal role in his appointment. There is evidence to suggest that the reason for the Pope's favorable opinion of Pázmány was the strong impression that the Hungarian Jesuit made on him during an audience on 5 January 1615. On this occasion, Pázmány gave a precise description of the religious and political situation in the Kingdom of Hungary at the time and called the Pope's attention to the importance of ensuring the succession to the Hungarian, Bohemian, and Holy Roman Imperial thrones. Tusor points out that, in the Roman Curia, Pázmány was regarded as a personality on whom Vatican diplomacy could rely to ensure a favorable outcome of the succession to the Habsburg throne, an issue that was referred to as "the most important issue for the entire Christianity" by Scipione Borghese, cardinal-nephew who controlled the papal Secretariat of State.

Another factor that needs to be taken into account is Pázmány's unshakeable loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty, which he considered the only conceivable protector of both his faith and his country. In light of all this evidence, it is of particular historical importance that the newly appointed archbishop succeeded in convincing the Protestant majority of the Hungarian diet to elect a Catholic Archduke from Graz, Ferdinand II, as king of Hungary in 1618. Pázmány also managed to arrange the succession of the Habsburg dynasty to the Hungarian throne without coming into serious conflicts with his patron, Klesl, who had been pulling strings for him to facilitate his career advancement.

The monograph also revisits several topics that are more loosely related to its main focus. For example, Tusor provides an overview of the Hungarian Catholic noblemen who furthered Pázmány's appointment as Archbishop of Esztergom, and he also sheds light on how Pázmány's ambition to found a university in Hungary fulfilled the expectations of the contemporary Catholic intelligentsia. Importantly, Tusor reexamines Pázmány's relationship with his predecessor, Archbishop Ferenc Forgách. Although historians had already taken notice of Pázmány's decisive influence on his predecessor, it was Tusor who first managed

to find sound evidence proving that Pázmány served as Forgách's confessor. Namely, he revealed a source in which Ridolfi, the Imperial Chargé d'affaires to Rome, alludes to Pázmány's important role as a confessor and policy-maker. In this position, Pázmány could indeed have exerted a considerable influence on his predecessor's "governance and methods" (p.31).

In conclusion, with this monograph Tusor, who has distinguished himself for his broad-based and penetrating research on church history, has made an outstanding contribution to historiography on the Early Modern era in Hungary.

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Habsburg post mortem: Betrachtungen zum Weiterleben der Habsburgermonarchie. By Carlo Moos. Vienna: Böhlau, 2016. 414 pp.

Carlo Moos' book on the afterlife of the Habsburg monarchy makes for fascinating reading, and it is certainly a must read for all specialists and students of Habsburg history. It is impressive in its erudition and style, and for the broad scope of themes and problems involved. And yet, it is also disappointing for readers hoping for a systematic presentation, convincing conceptualization, or coherent interpretation of the Habsburg legacy. One is tempted to view it as a huge notebook reflecting many years of research by a scholar with a deep interest in "all things Habsburg," from Mozart to Waldheim and from diplomatic to literary history. It may seem that Moos had planned to author a *number* of publications, and indeed he has gathered enough evidence to plan them ambitiously. Regrettably, no common method of analysis, conceptual attitude, or interpretative strategy has been applied to arrange all these fragments into *one* coherent book. The author seems well aware of this, and dutifully warns his readers of the "subjectivity" of his choices many a time, even though he apparently believes in some general (perhaps postmodern) consistency in his method.

The most original fragments of the book are several chapters in the first two parts (*Die politische Schiene* and *Habsburg-Nostalgie als soziopolitisches und soziokulturelles Phänomen*) concerning interwar Austria, and particularly its shaky first months. They are predominantly based on the author's archival research in the Austrian State Archives (the *Archiv der Republik* and the *Kriegsarchiv*), and they cover issues such as the Austrian argumentation and strategy during the peace negotiations in 1919, the interwar social democracy and the legitimist-monarchist movement, the legal situation of the Habsburg family and their properties after 1918, and the transformations of the monarchy's laws after its collapse. One caveat should be introduced here: Moos scarcely contrasts this information with other evidence or works of secondary literature, so we are left with a picture of the situation as it was seen by Austrian officials who produced the sources available in the Vienna archives. What I appreciate the most in the book is how it traces the evolution of attitudes of a number of lawyers, bureaucrats, and politicians who started their careers under the Habsburgs and adapted to the new situation after 1918 (and 1934 or 1938).

In the second and third parts of the book (*Varianten eines Kultur-Wegs*), Moos frequently jumps to present-day representations of the Habsburg legacy, such

as monuments, the tourist industry, cultural festivals, opera performances, and a number of museum exhibitions regarding Austrian culture around 1900. He also combines fragments concerning the situation of the Viennese working classes in the early twentieth century with fragments concerning the Habsburg legacy in literature and music. Apparently, the idea that brings all these fragments together is their relationship to the modern Austrian political identity, seen as a concept that combines the Habsburg, socialist, fascist, and post-World War II layers of political and cultural history.

Since I feel incapable of commenting on all the various problems Moos addresses in the book (or of identifying a coherent line of reasoning that connects them) and the occasionally controversial interpretations he offers, I limit my remarks to three critical or perhaps polemical observations. First, while reading the book I occasionally had the impression that Moos believes that some fundamental problems of the Habsburg legacy in the fields of political, cultural, and economic history he addresses have already been sufficiently researched (he does not specify where or by whom), and as he did not want to bore his readers with well-established interpretations, he went directly to the more detailed problems, which he found interesting. This attitude would work well if we indeed agreed that such an uncontroversial, commonly accepted interpretation (or “master-narrative”) actually existed, but I find this questionable. However, Moos’ narrative meets this standard only in the fragments based on his archival findings and the fragments concerning present-day historical memory in Austria. His choices and interpretations regarding the Habsburg legacy in literature and music are “classic” (Roth, Musil, Kafka, Schönberg).

Second, and perhaps more importantly, I was disappointed by Moos’ striking ignorance of the non-German context of the Habsburg legacy. Among his 1620 bibliographical entries, five per cent at most refer to non-German texts, the majority of them by Italian authors (Moos is a specialist in modern Italian history). To be sure, the reason for this is not linguistic: there are hundreds of publications on all corners of the Habsburg monarchy currently available in English and French, and yet Moos decided to ignore almost all of them. With the exception of his ventures into Italy and his native Switzerland, his few excursions into some non-German lands of the monarchy (perhaps slightly more than five per cent of the book) are disappointingly superficial. All he has to say about the Habsburg legacy in Hungary, for example, is a sketchy narrative of King Charles’ failed attempt to regain his royal prerogatives in 1921, a concise biography of Miklós Horthy, and some comments on Hungary’s current prime

minister Viktor Orbán's nationalist policies (he provides us with a much more detailed description of his trip to Charles' grave in Madera). One cannot avoid having the impression that Moos does not much care for the non-German lands of the monarchy, considering them merely as a footnote in Habsburg history. Certainly, every author is entitled to be biased and selective in his or her own way. However, in this case one is tempted, sadly, to conclude that Moos is himself a perfect product of the Viennese legacy he analyzes and criticizes: the one that viewed Hamburg, Berlin, and Zurich as important points of reference in Habsburg history, included a ritual complaint against the Hungarians, and completely ignored all other non-German lands of the monarchy—and the one, to be sure, that contributed the most to the Habsburgs' downfall.

Third, and finally, the more Moos repeats that his approach is “far from any Habsburg nostalgia,” the more the reader begins to doubt him. It is evident from his numerous counterfactual speculations (such as “what if” Austria-Hungary had not declared war on Serbia in 1914, or if Rudolf or Franz Ferdinand had ascended to the throne) that he believes that “it would have been better if Austria-Hungary had not broken up,” which in my opinion qualifies as the most characteristic symptom of Habsburg nostalgia (and I cannot see a reason to be ashamed of it). Apparently, the reasons for Moos' nostalgia and his reluctance to admit it are ideological. He poses as a devoted liberal democrat who cannot forgive the Habsburgs their inclinations for autocracy and, more importantly, their awkward fall, which he rightly views as the precondition for Hitler's (and other vehement nationalists' and dictators') rise to power. Moos seems to be aware that blaming the Habsburgs for their enemies' successes is a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* mistake. And yet he cannot fully refrain from viewing virtually all of these successes as consequences of the Habsburgs' downfall, culminating in the hysterical enthusiasm for the *Anschluss*, which Moos regards as the actual end of the Habsburgs (quite a controversial interpretation from the non-Austrian point of view). All things being equal, this attitude makes him a subconscious successor to the early twentieth-century liberals that Ernst Gellner characterized in his *Wittgenstein, Malinowski, and the Habsburg Dilemma*: the liberal who does not have to look up to the Habsburgs as their only ally against the aggressive “village green” admirers any longer, but who still remembers that the monarchy at least attempted to play this role at one time, and therefore prefers it over any of its successor states.

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Zensus und Ethnizität: Zur Herstellung von Wissen über soziale Wirklichkeiten im Habsburgerreich zwischen 1848 und 1910. By Wolfgang Göderle. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2016. 331 pp.

The mutual construction of censuses and ethnicity/nationality/nation in the nineteenth century has intrigued historians for long (Labbé, “Die Grenzen der deutschen Nation im Raum der Karte, der statistischen Tabelle und der Erzählung” [2007]; Silvana Patriarca, “Patriotic Statistics” [1996]). The mutual construction of censuses and empire has been a similarly intriguing subject matter that, in contrast, has hardly been fully explored. Numerous studies on the British Empire have examined, in a Foucauldian fashion, how statistics became an instrument of power in the mid-nineteenth century. Its strength came from its efficiency as a scientific and administrative tool, which was able to generate new social realities. Censuses erased old social inequalities and produced new ones, and constitute therefore a good case in point. This was particularly visible in the colonial empires, where they became a double-edged sword. Anti-colonial nationalists in India turned population statistics into a weapon against foreign rule (Cohn, “The Census, Social Structure and Objectification in South Asia” [1987]).

This is but an intimation of an impressive field of studies (most of them monographs dealing with fifty to one hundred years of the history of statistics and their uses) that changed the old triumphalist narratives about scientific progress into stories about statistics as instruments of domination and political struggle. These new statistical histories focused on France, Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, and Germany. Countries farther to the east, including the Habsburg Monarchy, have been absent from this panorama, despite a number of truly innovative studies on certain periods and administrative areas of statistics and land measurement. National compartmentalization of historical research may be one of the reasons for the lack of more unified perspectives that address the Monarchy as a composite polity.

This brief digression is necessary to show what a laudable enterprise the monograph written by Wolfgang Göderle on roughly sixty years of census history in the Habsburg Lands (from 1848 until 1910) is. His book promises to bridge the manifold fractures of Habsburg historiography. It addresses the contingencies of statistical professionalization with an analysis of the composite and multinational Habsburg polity. The narrative relies both on published

sources as well as newer research, and the reconstruction of the sophisticated statistical process is in itself impressive. The methods combine ANT (actor-network-theory) with concepts of New Imperial History. As the focus of the book is defined by the conceptual triangle “empire” (the Habsburg Monarchy)—“census”—“ethnicity,” it is crucial to understand these three concepts in order to understand the book itself.

It has become a commonplace in the more recent statistical research that each state was statistical in its own way. But what kind of state was the Habsburg conglomerate? This is the subject of the first, introductory chapter. The concept of the nation-state is insufficient for a narrative of the history of nineteenth century Europe in general or an analysis of the dynamics of the multinational Habsburg state in particular. Göderle shares the emerging standpoint of recent historical writing that characterizes the Habsburg Monarchy as an empire (Bartov and Weitz, ed., *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* [2013]; Komlosy, “The Habsburg Monarchy (1804-1918): Imperial Cohesion, Nation-Building and Regional Integration” [2014]; Rieber, *The Struggle for the Eurasian Borderlands: The Rise of Early Modern Empires to the End of the First World War* [2014]; Buklijas and Lafferton, “Science, Medicine and Nationalism in the Habsburg Empire from the 1840s to 1918” [2007]). The common denominator of recent conceptualizations of empire has been territorial and social heterogeneity (Burbank and Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* [2010]). Göderle also anchors the notion of Habsburg “statehood” to territorial and social “diversity.” Accordingly, the key function of census taking was the instrumentalization of representations of heterogeneity by a self-imposing central administration (pp.14, 17–20, 21–23).

One might find this a weak definition. Heterogeneity is namely also the core feature of the Early Modern Habsburg composite state (Elliott, “A Europe of Composite Monarchies” [1992]). To what extent and where and when the Monarchy assumed imperial qualities in contradistinction to the Early Modern composite state is yet to be clarified. Göderle is aware of the historical contingencies of Habsburg statehood, but he avoids further conceptual discussions. He correctly refers to the Austro-Hungarian Compromise as failure of the central power by 1867, yet he names the resulting formation a “parliamentary empire” (p.211), the Cisleithanian and Transleithanian halves of which pursued different approaches to manage their internal heterogeneity.

Three subsequent chapters unfold as a dense and erudite discussion of the history of Cisleithanian statistics as one of incomplete professionalization.

The actor-network theory is used as a new frame for the interpretation of this history. The analysis posits the census as a chain of transformation, engaged both with scientific professionalization and the need to meet the demands of an increasingly sophisticated administrative network. The study reconstructs the history of statistical practice as a contingency-ridden scientific process. It rightly identifies late nineteenth century statistics as a mixed bag, determined by the conflicting demands of scientific objectivity and social control, the latter manifest above all in the production of ethnic categories.

Chapter two shows the circulation of information between and beyond the administrative spaces with a chronological focus on the first half of the ‘long’ nineteenth century. Statistical signification is seen as a chain of reversible “translations” of “things” (people counted and categorized by the census) into words (numbers and statistical categories and the material-institutional environment in which these implements are crafted and used). The focus is on the Central Statistical Office in Vienna and its staff. The chapter reconstructs the “statistical technology” of “reduction” (of the individual traits of the inhabitants) and “amplification” (the arrangement of the population into homogeneous categories) through which the public administration and the military attempted to describe and prescribe the local social space and constituencies since Joseph II. Göderle convincingly argues that census taking was a learning process with many setbacks both for the bureaucrats and the ordinary citizens, and it was a process in which the meaning of the statistical categories had to be negotiated, whether in the case of land measurements, census taking, or affixing numbers to houses.

Chapter three carries the analysis into the late nineteenth century, and here the narrative changes into one about institutionalization and the professionalization of population statistics. While the early version of statistics was anchored in a cameralistic vision of society, late-nineteenth statistics pursued scientific objectivity as its primary goal. Whereas the generation of Karl von Czoernig and even Adolf Ficker were indebted to an encyclopedic vision of the state, the subsequent generation of Theodor Inama von Sternegg placed statistical practice on mathematical footing and urged a mechanistic epistemology of the social world. The International Statistical Congresses at the mid-century played no minor role in the standardization of statistics and their institutionalization as a science that operated with huge data banks. Math was also lucrative: computation enabled the use of machines, which helped economize staff costs.

The fourth and last chapter deals with ethnicity, which established itself as a resilient statistical category on both shores of the Leitha. Its meaning was transformed, but neither fully captured nor destroyed by methods of scientific objectivity. Göderle explains the persisting “ethnic knowledge” of the system by referring to its capacity to reproduce social difference. The chapter tracks the changing meaning of ethnicity since Czoernig’s ethnographic map of the empire from 1857 until the census of 1910. An entire subchapter is dedicated to each decennial census, and it constitutes another wonderful reference work and even teaching material for all historians of Austro-Hungarian statistics. Ethnicity is understood as a synonym for nationality, the meaning of which had acquired racial and increasingly racist dimensions by the 1880s. The Gipsy Conscription in Cisleithania and Transleithania are offered as examples. They demonstrate a shared practice on both sides of the Leitha River to reproduce social difference and therefore hierarchies within the multiethnic population.

To what extent can the findings of the analysis of Roma conscription be generalized? Was nationality statistics only a means of domination or also a means of empowerment for the nationalist movements across the lands of the Monarchy? The closing section could have linked the analysis to the initial discussion about the imperial quality of the Habsburg Monarchy, but it does not. It discusses instead solely the definition of ethnicity as an entity possessing an autonomous dynamics of signification, a Latourian “actant.” It reinforces a lingering impression while reading the book, namely that the parts about ANT theory and the analysis about imperial “domination” (and possible resistance to it) do not really connect. Without a substantive discussion of collective identification via censuses in the Habsburg Monarchy, the conclusion comes as an unsatisfying and abrupt ending. But the book nonetheless remains a valuable contribution to the emerging debates on “science” and “empire” in the Habsburg colossus.

Borbála Zsuzsanna Török
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Gewalt und Koexistenz: Muslime und Christen im späotosmanischen Kosovo (1870–1913). By Eva Anne Frantz. Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016. 430 pp.

Since the turn of the nineteenth century an emergent genre of scholarly and popular literature directed a growing readership to Southeastern Europe and its tantalizing episodes of violence. While variations on this storyline have complicated the ways in which such examples of violence have been explained, for the most part the literature is dominated by the tensions between distinct religious communities. Fortunately, there has been a steady stream of useful works of scholarship that have at least tried to temper the determinism associated with this popular notion of the Balkans as a region perpetually on the edge of violent conflict. For the most part, scholars with greater sensitivity to the Ottoman Empire's more dynamic social and cultural context have provided the challenge to conventional wisdom.

Drawing on her important 2014 dissertation (University of Vienna), Eva Anne Frantz adds to this nuanced reading of the Balkans. Identifying an approach to interpretations of the sometimes bloody exchanges in the region in more complicated ways, she suggests that episodes of violence between seemingly neatly delineated religious groups paradoxically offer the best chance to challenge conventional wisdom. Indeed, the descriptions of clashes by Austro-Hungarian and a few Italian and British travelers become especially valuable sources for the study of Kosovo in 1870–1913. As aptly explained in the latter part of the book, Kosovo is a region that has undergone rapid demographic, geo-strategic, and economic change. While Frantz neglects the economic side of the changes in the region in her book (which is virtually identical to her dissertation), she is to be commended for her judicious survey of the literature up to 2012 and her use of extensive archival work in Vienna to offer a more guarded understanding of what is happening in the region.

Ultimately, with considerable space dedicated to the generic survey of the region's varied geographical and cultural diversity, the reader, and in particular a newcomer to the study of the Balkans in the period, would do well to explore the first three-fourths of the book. In this respect, Frantz offers an accessible text for novices curious to learn more about the rich heritage of the region as a case study of the ways in which categories used to distinguish seemingly different groups of peoples are less reliable than is often suggested or implied. Indeed,

large sections drawing on the path-breaking scholarship of Maurus Reinkowski and Nathalie Clayer, in particular, help Frantz emphasize the pitfalls of blanket assertions concerning the parameters of these rival ethnic and religious groups.

The particularly rich examples found among the Albanian-speaking populations of the Ottoman province of Kosovo constitute the primary focus of the book. The ample use of illustrations drawn from various Austrian archives and collections adds a reassuring sophistication to the inquiry, which readers of various levels of expertise will find appealing. More crucial are the heavy doses of extended quotes from mostly Austrian archival sources. These first-hand accounts of events in the region allow the reader to follow Frantz's interpretation of the deeper complexities of the violence within ethno-linguistic groups and adopt more contingent conclusions concerning the instrumentalist views of violence presented here. However, because it relies almost exclusively on testimonials of Habsburg officials, the professional historian might well object that this otherwise well-crafted work suffers from a lack of an Ottoman perspective and any explicit engagement with the large body of scholarship on the productive characteristics of violence.

For this, Frantz is largely left to do the heavy-lifting herself in making a nuanced challenge to the still dominant references to violence observed by her sources. I would give the overall results a cautious and qualified "thumbs up," but with the caveat that more needs to be done. The book is a keen, intelligent, and intuitive first start that can go much further theoretically to bring the amply documented case of late Ottoman Kosovo into a larger discussion on the productive roles of violence. For instance, the work of Veena Das on violence and human subjectivity begs for integration into the insights drawn by Frantz. As it reads now, it is a somewhat shallow engagement with this theorizing of violence (and the larger problems with ethno-nationalist and sectarian categories). The result is a book with limited appeal to those interested specifically in the history of the Balkans at the time.

Like all dissertations produced in Europe's oldest programs, Frantz's inquiry contains the required, but perhaps unadventurous, survey of mainstream literature on ethno-nationalism and identity politics. This time-consuming (for the reader) exercise could easily have been excised altogether to accommodate a bolder assertion in the book that violence is itself constitutive of more ambiguous social alliances. As Frantz discovers, the occasionally competing groups which emerged as primary agents of historic change in the region (by way of violent exchanges with others) were shaped by local inter-religious group

interactions. This insight crucially upsets the ways in which scholars in the past normalized what we have come to understand as “Albanians.” Here the value of Frantz’s contribution deserves a wider audience with perhaps a translation of the core parts of the book into English to ensure a broader readership. The most interesting and innovative sections, alas, are delegated to the last two chapters, as the rest of the book is dominated by a more generic survey of the scholarship. Regrettably, the first four chapters distract the reader from the real interpretive gems this work offers in the last quarter of the book.

In similar fashion, the book offers no opportunity to engage Ottoman studies more usefully. Much can be drawn from Frantz’s cases, but they could have been more directly inserted into a larger discussion on Ottoman affairs as studied by a growing list of sophisticated young scholars. Here, the administration of Kosovo is almost read in isolation from the larger Ottoman dynamics, which unfortunately reinforces a geographic divide in how scholars still train students to read the transnational contours of Ottoman experiences. Moreover, this violence in Kosovo resonates in important ways throughout the larger Eastern Mediterranean world, and some discussion of this could have reinforced the larger points made in the last quarter of the text.

Isa Blumi
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Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions. By Ali Yaycioglu. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016. 364 pp.

“Backed by a few reformist bureaucrats, a petty ayan in the small Balkan city of Hazergard launched a coup, deposed the sultan and enthroned a new one, in short order becoming grand vizier with extraordinary powers” (p.189). This story is about a provincial notable (ayan), Mustafa Bayraktar, in the early 1800s Ottoman Empire. He then orchestrated an agreement, known as Deed of Alliance, with the new sultan in September 1808. How this could have happened and what it means in world history are the central problems of *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions*, the new book by Ali Yaycioglu, professor of Ottoman history at Stanford University.

Yaycioglu inserts the extraordinary chain of events of 1807–1808 and the Nizam-i Cedid (“New Order”) reforms that preceded them into two large historical frameworks: the regional context of the transformation of the Ottoman provincial power structure in the eighteenth century and the global context, encompassing the American War of Independence, the French Revolution, and Napoleonic Europe.

The great conceptual challenge of this grand analysis and deep microhistory is the idea of popular sovereignty. Can we detect the rise of (a type of) popular sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire in the late 1700s? Whose representative is Bayraktar, a notable? This is a question that has occupied professional Turkish and non-Turkish historians of the Ottoman Empire since at least the 1950s, as Yaycioglu underlines (p.234).

In order to answer this question, Yaycioglu returns to the classic theme of provincial notables in the Ottoman Empire of the late eighteenth century. Joining—and also challenging—revisions of Ottoman political history, such as those by Ariel Salzmann, Baki Tezcan, Frederick Anscombe, and Karen Barkey, Yaycioglu argues that defeats and weak central structure transformed “the vertical empire [...] to a horizontal and participatory one” (p.2), and that the reform that was enforced by the sultan resulted first in a counter-revolt and then in a “constitutional synthesis” of provincial notables (p.4)—the Deed of Alliance, signed in September 1808 in Istanbul by the new sultan, Mahmud II, and the notables. Here, three alternative modes of reform come together: what Yaycioglu calls the “order of the empire” (top-down reform), the “order of

the notables” (partnership), and the “order of communities” (participation of the public). He notes the “oligarchic character” of the Deed and argues that it carried a new conception of the state as a “collective enterprise” of provincial notables and the dynasty (pp.234–36). Thus, “the partners of empire” are the notables, and this book is, in essence, an analysis of the conditions that produced this partnership.

The first conventional point Yaycioglu challenges is the interpretation of the janissaries. Borrowing the idea of Cemal Kafadar, who suggests looking at janissaries as having become a social movement or at least a social-urban network by the seventeenth century, Yaycioglu considers them as claiming representation on behalf of the larger population in the early 1800s (p.162) (French revolutionaries, who sided with the janissaries, certainly looked on them in this way [p.56]). This assumption transforms the image of the janissaries as “reactionary forces” into a complex social phenomenon that was well integrated into urban society. In Chapter 1, Yaycioglu shows that Sultan Selim III’s reforms (the New Order) excluded the janissaries from the new imperial vision by establishing new, reformed army units—which were “only” army units (p.41), as opposed to the urban/civilian networks of the janissaries.

For someone like the author of this review, who is specialized in the history of the later decades of the nineteenth century, Chapter 2 brings important historical material and arguments. Continuing a historiographical tradition of researching provincial notable families (for Arabists, Albert Hourani first announced their importance in the 1960s), Yaycioglu highlights them as “natural leaders” of local communities turned state-appointed “managers.” The argument, based on extensive archival evidence, is that there was a “localization,” a “monetization,” and a general “vernacularization” of imperial governance in the provinces in the late eighteenth century (pp.79 and 89). This is a closer look on what Karen Barkey theorized as an ayan “protomodernity” highlighting the transformation in Ottoman property relations. An informal system emerged parallel to the formal imperial structure, and it empowered local strongmen to negotiate with the center (Yaycioglu uses the idea of “bidding”) and thus to see the empire as “an enterprise,” but—and this is a serious but—this system was never institutionalized (pp.113–4).

Although Yaycioglu promises in Chapter 3 to show that “communities are active participants” in politics (p.117), in fact, this part of the book unearths the relationship between local communities and their notables. Despite great insights (for example, that the kadi court was a space and institution in which “the

community speaks to the empire” [p.115]), this chapter is a continuation of the notable theme. Yaycioglu shows that in the 1770s, “ayanship” became an office (thus the original Arabic plural a‘yan [notables] in the Ottoman administrative language became a noun in the singular, such as in the phrase “Ismail, the ayan of Ruse”), and this state office was on and off in the 1780s–1790s (p.127, pp.135–38). This part of the book is the weakest point of the otherwise elegantly constructed general argument. The author uses the local “election” of the ayan as evidence of collective participation in politics in the late eighteenth century. This would mean that communities participated in imperial politics through the ayan. The author thus almost entirely identifies politics with the person of the ayan. Second, the political idea conveyed by the English terms “election” and “elected persons,” used by Yaycioglu throughout, does not adequately describe the Ottoman *ihiyar eyledikleri* (p.135), which is perhaps closer to the original Arabic meaning of “the chosen/preferred ones” from the verb, “being chosen.” The question of representation certainly opens many avenues for further research.

The last two chapters are eminent microhistographical reconstructions of the events of 1807–1808 and a magnificent analysis of the Deed of Alliance, with attention duly paid to perception of the Deed in later historiography in Turkey and outside it. Here, the great insight is the causal explanation of change: first, a coalition of janissaries and notables against the New Order (May–June 1807); then a new coalition of notables with New Order partisans (fall 1807–summer 1808); and, finally, the janissaries and urban Istanbulite’s counter-reaction (November 1808), possibly sanctified by the new sultan’s tacit agreement. There are two less exposed actors in the background: “the urban crowd”—the people of Istanbul, who appear mostly in their association with the janissaries—and the Russians, who try to realize their interests in both Wallachia/Moldavia and in the imperial capital itself. This complex crisis culminates in late September 1808, when some groups of notables and their top figure, Mustafa Bayraktar, convene to sign the Deed of Alliance with the young Mahmud II. However, the Deed, which secures the “partnership” of notables, does not protect Bayraktar, who soon dies during the violent revolt by the janissaries and the urban population in November 1808 (pp.198–199).

In its use of archival sources and its conceptual framework, *Partners of the Empire* embodies superb scholarship. It speaks to fundamental questions—popular sovereignty and the commensurability of European political developments. The emphasis on the Ottoman figure—the provincial ayan—and

his imagined “partnership” in the empire is a significant contribution to our knowledge. At last, we now have a detailed exploration of their world.

Still, there are limitations. Although Yaycioglu does his best occasionally to point to Damascus, Mosul, and Cairo, his story is a story of Ottoman notables in Anatolia and what is today Bulgaria/Romania/Greece, the provinces that were close to the imperial capital. There are statements to be questioned, for instance, the claim that Mehmed Ali Pasha in the Egyptian province was ethnically Albanian, even though there is no evidence for this widespread myth; and in general, we are offered no explanation as to why the 1807–1808 events in Istanbul were largely effects of the provincial situation in the European parts of the empire. Perhaps the Russian connection is more important than we thought. The emphasis on differing regional trajectories is somewhat missing.

Finally, as any good book does, *Partners of the Empire* leaves the reader with additional questions. Does the notable “partnership” truly reflect un-institutionalized popular sovereignty? Does this conceptual framework, somewhat echoing new British imperial studies (empire as corporation), adequately describe the case of the Ottomans in the Napoleonic age? From a *longue durée* perspective, what other ways would be available to reframe this age in a non-Western conceptual vocabulary?

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The Making of the Greek Genocide: Contested Memories of the Ottoman Greek Catastrophe. By Erik Sjöberg. (War and Genocide 23.) New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. 266 pp.

The scholarship on the massacre of the Ottoman Armenians in World War I has born witness to rapid developments in the past decade. Historians have examined the causes, courses, and consequences of the genocide, including important facets, such as details of Young Turk wartime demographic policy, Armenian experiences of victimization and resilience, and international responses to the genocide. This new scholarship has also challenged the conventional understanding of the genocide as a binary Turkish-Armenian issue. Non-Turkish perpetrators such as Kurds and non-Armenian victims such as Assyrians, Yezidis, and Greeks have also been taken into consideration in this new trend. Detailed examinations (David Gaunt, ed., *Massacres, resistance, protectors* [2006]; Tessa Hofmann, ed., *The genocide of the Ottoman Greeks* [2011]) have sketched, with vivid empirical evidence, a more complex picture of Christian victimization in the Ottoman Empire. In some provinces, all Christians were targeted from the outset; in other provinces, only Armenians were; again in others, a mosaic of persecution continuously shifted throughout the World War I. The arguments might be reconcilable: yes, the Armenians were singled out across the vast country for complete annihilation, and yes, although not necessarily planned by Istanbul, the mass murder of Syrians and Greeks quantitatively and qualitatively may well have reached genocidal proportions. In short, the 1915 genocide, like most genocides, was a multi-layered process of destruction with a broad range of victims.

Erik Sjöberg has written a dense, varied, and admirable book on the memories of the Greek genocide in the Ottoman Empire during World War I. *The Making of the Greek Genocide* examines how the idea of the “Greek genocide” emerged as a contested cultural trauma with nationalist and cosmopolitan dimensions. The book asks how and why the concept of an Ottoman-Greek genocide began, developed, and polarized discourses inside the Greek-American community and Greece. Six very diverse chapters address a set of issues, all of which revolve around the production of knowledge and memory of the destruction and disappearance of Greek-Orthodox Ottomans during World War I. Chapter 2, for example, discusses the transition from authoritarianism to political pluralism in Greece, and its impact on the contestation of nationalist narratives. It argues

that in the 1980s, the Pontian Greeks lobbied for recognition of their wartime fate as a “right to memory,” in an attempt to establish the community as genocide victims. This set the tone for further discussions on the victimization of Greek Orthodox Ottomans during World War I.

Chapter 3 moves forward to the 1990s and examines how the genocide debate became a bone of contention between the Greek left and the Greek right, due to the two camps’ differing interpretations of the Asia Minor catastrophe: the left saw it as a consequence of the brutal Greek occupation of Anatolia, while the right traced the Turkish genocidal intent to the pre-war period. Sjöberg demonstrates how Greek socialists and nationalists vigorously debated the historicity of the events, as well as interpretations of the events, and arrived at diametrically opposed conclusions. Chapter 4 provides more context for Greek discourses on genocide by discussing how Greek activists saw other genocides, such as the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust, as a template, a comparison, and a foil for formulations of their own claims of genocide. Both of these other genocides are relevant for the Greek historical experience: the Armenian genocide as a contemporaneous historical context for the Greek genocide and the Holocaust as a genocide which Greek populations witnessed, as their Jewish neighbors were deported to be gassed in Auschwitz-Birkenau. On the one hand, Greek nationalists saw Holocaust memory as an imposition that distracted from their own history; on the other hand, other activists saw these cases as an opportunity to articulate more inclusive, cosmopolitan concerns.

The last two chapters are the most global in terms of their relevance. Chapter 5 explores how Greek Americans adopted the genocide narrative and shaped it according to diaspora concerns of ethnicity, cultural assimilation, and communal competition. The chapter focuses on Thea Halo’s famous novel *Not Without My Name*, which deals with issues of memory, narrative, and identity as it pertains to the fate of Halo’s Assyrian and Greek family during the genocide. The book was influential in bolstering a diasporic social movement that aimed to have the Greek genocide recognized in the American public domain, as the Armenian and Jewish catastrophes had been recognized. Orientation and validation of ethnic identity in diaspora played a role in this process, as did “trauma envy” or “victim competition.” Despite these efforts, the Greek genocide remains a controversial issue in American public discourse. The final chapter centers on international academic recognition and the efforts by activist academics to have the victimization of Greeks and Assyrians appended to and amalgamated with the Armenian genocide in conferences, publications, curricula, and public

debates. Sjöberg discusses, with precision and equanimity, how some academic research in area studies (especially in the United States) has often functioned as an extension of diasporic power and influence. When the issue of recognition of the Greek genocide became the subject of exchanges among genocide scholars, the results of these exchanges were ambivalent: whereas some scholars forcefully argued for including the Greek experience as genocide, others were more cautious and called for more research, not more advocacy.

The Making of the Greek Genocide is a thoughtful, well-written, and original contribution to the scholarship on the politics of memory in the aftermath of mass violence. Sjöberg treats themes as wide-ranging as cultural trauma, diaspora politics, ideology, national identity, etc. His breadth of reading and use of Greek-language sources and critical treatment of the different positions in the (often polarized) debates add significantly to the quality of the book. From time to time, the book dwells on topics that could have been discussed in half the space that it takes, but this is a minor quibble. One can only hope that future publications on the Ottoman Greek catastrophe take Sjöberg's arguments seriously.

Uğur Ümit Üngör
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Keletre, magyar! A magyar turanizmus története [To the East, Hungarian! A history of Turanism in Hungary]. By Balázs Ablonczy. Budapest: Jaffa, 2016. 296 pp.

Balázs Ablonczy's *Keletre, magyar!* provides a timely and intriguing overview of the idea of the East in Hungarian culture, with a clear focus on Turanism as a specific form of reflection and public sensibility. Turan, a key concept in the Hungarian Orientalist vocabulary and a central notion in the book under review, refers in the first instance to the Central Asian steppe north of Iran. Beyond the purely geographical meaning, the word has acquired linguistic and wider cultural and political meanings, and it has been often used to refer to pre-historic times. As Ablonczy rightly emphasizes, Hungarian Turanism has been similarly multifaceted. In his introduction, Ablonczy enumerates ten distinct ways in which the expression has been employed in Hungarian culture (pp.15–16).

Keletre, magyar! provides engaging sketches of key Turanist personalities, their ideas, and oeuvres. Moreover, it covers their joint agendas, forms of cooperation, levels of official support, and broader societal impact. Ablonczy displays strong interest in the major associations that shaped the history of Hungarian Turanism, but he also explores several influential individuals who were active outside these institutions. While he agrees that the key to greater liberty and prosperity in modern Hungary was successful adoption of Western institutional forms, and Turanism has essentially been an ideology based on the rejection of these institutions, he argues that it would be judgmental and premature to view the latter merely as the nationalistic illusions of a failed imperialism. As the book argues, imperial notions may have played a role in Hungarian Orientalism, but the dominant form of this Orientalism had little to do with colonialism and much more to do with the idea of kinship. The dominant idea in modern Hungary has indeed been that the ancestral homeland of the Hungarians was somewhere in the East.

More generally, Ablonczy views the popularity of the Eastern idea in modern Hungary as a reaction to the tensions deriving from the Hungarians' Eastern origins and Western role models and as an attempt to escape their widely acknowledged linguistic isolation. The questions concerning their linguistic and ethnic kinship have indeed both been heavily contested, and not infrequently, if misleadingly, conflated. The debates on kinship have tended to be dominated, as Ablonczy highlights, by ethnographic and linguistic arguments, and relatively few professional historians have actually gotten involved in them.

The book begins by recounting the prehistory and birth of the Turanian idea. Ablonczy shows how early “proto-Turanian” ideas displayed a marked sympathy for the Persians, which was increasingly replaced after 1848 by new affinities for the Turks, especially among advocates of Hungarian independence. Ablonczy concludes that Turanism emerged when various threads were woven together, including debates on the origins of the Hungarians and their language, the program of Hungarian expansion in Southeast Europe and the Middle East, the fashion for the Orient, the awakening of “Turanian” people, various scholarly developments (such as the emergence of Oriental Studies further West), and the discourse on originality, authenticity and ancientness (p.46). The book thus shows that there was clear political will behind Turanism, but also a scholarly framework inspired, perhaps above all, by the theories of the German philologist and orientalist Max Müller. Turanism had a brief moment of scholarly relevance in the early twentieth century.

A Turanian Association was founded in Budapest in 1910. Originally, the term referred to a more general interest in Asian things. The question of the kinship of the Hungarians became its exclusive concern only in the 1920s. The Association had three major groups among its members: leading public personalities, scholars and activists, and a few artists. This was also reflected in the program of the association, which was a combination of broadly imperial political and economic goals, strictly scholarly aims, and larger cultural agendas. The Association gained additional prestige when Austria-Hungary was allied to both the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria during World War I. It even acquired offices within the House of Parliament as it came under the mandate of the Ministry of Culture. The period between 1916 and 1918 constituted the peak of its activities, when, rather exceptionally in its history, Turanism belonged to the dominant stream of Hungarian nation building and contributed to the development of imperialistic visions. Characteristically, the first Hungarian cultural institute abroad was opened in Istanbul in 1916. Moreover, stipends were awarded primarily to Turkish students to pursue their education in Hungary at the time.

After the end of the Great War and the dismantling of the Kingdom of Hungary, Turanism was propagated by three parallel organizations with partly overlapping agendas, and it came to serve as an expression of anti-Western resentment. At the same time, as Ablonczy shows, the prestige of Turanism decreased under the regency of Horthy, and not simply because many of the scholars involved did not represent Oriental Studies. Turanists may have

been successful in organizing public lectures, language courses, and scholarly expeditions, as well as in publishing journals, but they were much less successful in managing governmental plans, and they played a rather limited overall role in shaping internal and foreign policy; the international reorientation of Hungary towards Finland, Turkey, or Japan remained moderate, with Turanism by and large restricted to a rightist and extreme rightist slogan.

If the Turanist ideology might thus be considered a political failure in interwar Hungary, it nonetheless exerted an influence on notable achievements in culture and art, Ablonczy argues. While it may have produced no great literature, Turanism inspired the buildings of István Medgyaszay, the interior designs of Ede Toroczkai Vigand, and the sculptures of Ferenc Medgyessy, all of which managed to sublimate the Eastern origins of the Hungarians in an appealing manner. They ought to be considered lasting achievements, Ablonczy maintains, temporarily abandoning his scholarly tone. Moreover, the connections to Finnish and Estonian culture peaked in the inter-war period, when (contrary to the popular wisdom of today) the Finno-Ugric idea was still very much part of the Turanian package. As Ablonczy shows, radical Finno-Ugrists in fact played key roles in the leadership of the Association until 1944, and the journal *Turán* published over 1,500 articles on Finno-Ugric topics.

If this was a fair and balanced assessment, more critical but similarly precise is Ablonczy's evaluation of Turanism in Hungary and its potential "Turanian" allies as profoundly asymmetrical. The desired strengthening of Hungarian links to Turkey and Finland, the two potentially most important partners, proved mutually incompatible. Furthermore, while Turanism was relatively widespread in Turkey, members of the second, more radical generation of Turkish Turanists were even less interested in Hungarians than the first. They rather followed a pan-Turkish path, focusing on Turks in Europe and Asia, and they often considered religious differences a divisive matter (this was a question of considerable importance, and the book would have done well to have devoted more attention to it). Thus, Hungarian Turanists were able to count on few international partners, and they tended to be perceived sharply negatively further West.

The book closes with intriguing though more impressionistic chapters on developments since 1945. As Ablonczy highlights, the large majority of Turanists were acquitted in 1945–46; their Turanist engagement was in fact hardly ever part of the accusations against them. After the major Turanist organization was disbanded in 1947, the state security apparatuses of communist Hungary,

somewhat surprisingly, seem to have pursued no special investigation of Turanist networks. As Ablonczy shows, Turanian ideas may have been deprived of public support in the postwar decades, but they were reproduced not only in emigration but to some extent also within Hungary. The various paths and dilemmas of Turanists within Hungary during these decades are explored through biographical sketches of László Bendeky, Gábor Lükő, and István Mándoky, as well as the admittedly rather atypical example of Adorján Magyar.

Certain elements of Turanist thinking were thus preserved throughout the decades of communist rule, while others were further radicalized. As Ablonczy explains, as the Finno-Ugric theory was canonized via linguistic arguments, non-conformists started to denounce it from the position of political opposition and “national science.” Some of them, especially those in emigration, even began to propagate the supposed connection between the Hungarians and the Sumerians. Ablonczy argues that this is how the current opposition between Finno-Ugrists and the propagators of a “nationally conscious Eastern idea” emerged.

The dominant trend of Westernization after 1989 at first left Turanism marginalized, but its impact would visibly increase in the early twenty-first century. The radical rightist political party Jobbik and the “Eastern opening” of the Fidesz-led government after 2010 both played on Turanian notions. This may have seemed like a widespread cultural and political revival, however, in more recent years, the political tide has again turned against Turanism, Ablonczy concludes.

Keletre, magyar! represents a rare and somewhat unusual combination, of which Ablonczy has emerged as a leading proponent in his native Hungary. While the book is based on considerable original research and important novel findings, the genre Ablonczy employs is essentially that of popular scholarship. This combination is certainly not without pitfalls, however. He ultimately manages to provide a stylish, accessible, and well-documented account without merely reproducing well-canonized knowledge. While Balázs Ablonczy agrees that many forms of Turanism have been based on a sense of loss and frustration and have proposed radical and illusionary solutions, the laudable scholarly-public agenda of his book is to broaden the scope of Hungarian intellectual and cultural history and thereby incorporate long neglected phenomena in an empathic but far from uncritical manner.

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The First World War and German National Identity: The Dual Alliance at War. By Jan Vermeiren. (Studies in the Social and Cultural History of Modern Warfare 47.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2016. 458 pp.

The impact World War I had on the development of different nationalisms and nation-building processes has recently become an important topic in the international historiography. The new book by Jan Vermeiren fits well into this trend, as it discusses how the close wartime alliance between imperial Germany and the Habsburg Empire changed the concept(s) of German national identity between 1914 and 1918. It analyzes the published accounts and private papers of different Austrian and German political actors and intellectuals about German nationhood, and it shows how the ideas on which these actors and intellectuals touched in their writings influenced decision-making processes both in Berlin and Vienna.

Vermeiren's volume is divided into eight major chapters. In the first part, he examines portrayals of Austria in the German national discourse between 1871 and 1914. He reinforces the conventional understanding of this period, and he argues that it was dominated by the Protestant state-centered concept, which saw imperial Germany as the continuation of the Prussian Kingdom. This mostly overwrote the regional antagonisms, and it paid limited attention to the ethnic Germans living outside the borders of the empire. The second chapter examines the effects of the outbreak of World War I on this traditional perception of German nationhood. It argues that immediately after the assassination of Franz Ferdinand, sympathy for the Habsburg Empire grew. After the hostilities had begun, the military alliance between the two powers was presented not only as a product of shared interests, but also as a culturally and historically rooted special friendship. Although this concept of "Niebelungstreue" contains many motives of the latter "Großdeutsch" ideology, it was almost always extended to non-German ethnic groups, mostly to the Hungarians. In these texts the Habsburg Empire was presented as a German-dominated, but multi-ethnic state, whose existence was necessary for Germany and the stability of Central and Eastern Europe.

In the next chapter, Vermeiren explores how perceptions of Austria-Hungary changed among the German elites during the war. He argues that in the beginning of the conflict the idea of the "Austrian Miracle" dominated the

discourse in both empires. According to this narrative, the outbreak of conflict led to the “miraculous” and immediate reconciliation between the different nationalities of the Habsburg Empire. This positive picture was not really shared by most of the political and military leaders during the later phases of the war. They were often dismissive of the performances of the Habsburg soldiers (especially the Czechs) and concerned about the fragile construction of the empire.

The fourth chapter turns to how the wartime alliance led to a reinterpretation of German historical traditions concerning the Habsburg Empire. It focuses on the public commemorations on Bismarck’s 100th birthday (1915), the 50th anniversary of the Austro-Prussian war (1916), and the new image of the Holy Roman Empire among Catholic intellectuals. Vermeiren discusses, for example, the commemoration of 1866, and he examines the shift from the victory of Königgrätz to the peace treaty of Prague. The latter was presented in the propaganda as the opening act of fruitful cooperation between the two empires.

The book then examines the development of the famous *Mitteleuropa* debate, with a focus on the motives of different authors and their views on the ethnic Germans’ role in the planned post-war order. Vermeiren also analyzes the impact these ideas had on the reformulation of the German war aims. In the sixth chapter, he discusses the relationship of the German political elite to the Kingdom of Hungary. Vermeiren argues that Berlin considered the Magyars its most reliable non-German ally. Consequently, the German political leadership neglected the complaints of right-radical circles, and it never criticized Hungary’s assimilation policy against, among others, the ethnic Germans of the country.

In the next chapter, Vermeiren analyzes various concepts of the Polish nation state. He presents the factions and fault lines within the Austro-Hungarian and German elites concerning the visions of the future of Poland. Vermeiren clearly demonstrates how security concerns and ethnic aspects, together with foreign policy calculations, influenced the various authors and decision-makers. He examines how these factors overwrote national considerations and ultimately hindered the establishment of the Polish state until the end of World War I. Finally, Vermeiren considers the debates concerning the ethnic problems of the Habsburg Empire. He discusses the different solutions proposed by German and Austrian intellectuals about the radical reformation of the Habsburg Empire after the end of the war.

Jan Vermeiren’s book concludes with the observation that the concept of “Großdeutschland,” i.e. the unification of every ethnic Germans in one state, did

not really prevail during World War I. He refutes the traditional right-wing claim (accepted by many post-1945 historians) that the common experience in World War I united the German people across the borders. He demonstrates clearly that, in 1914–1918, the Greater German fervor was almost always overwritten by practical political considerations. The stability of Austria-Hungary as an ally was more important to the Imperial military and political leadership than the interests of ethnic Germans in Central Europe. Also, the visions of liberal intellectuals, including the vision of a new *Mitteleuropa*, were more a challenge to Prussian state centrism than a program for the unification of all Germans in one state. The war undeniably raised awareness of the German minorities of Central Europe, however, the *völkisch* concept of nationhood became dominant, but not exclusive, only after the shock of military defeat. In this sense, Vermeiren argues, the idea of the Anschluss in 1918–1919 was more a product of “Realpolitik” in Berlin and Vienna than a consequence of a wartime ideological development.

Vermeiren’s book is a well-written and carefully argued study, based on several different types of sources, many of which have remained underexplored in the secondary literature. His conclusion concerning the impact of military defeat on German nationalism fits well into the recent trend in historiography, which locates the origins of interwar political developments in the immediate post-1918 turmoil. Vermeiren’s analysis is not restricted to an examination of different intellectual concepts. He also demonstrates clearly how the various wartime ideas influenced (or in fact did not influence) the decision-making processes in Berlin and Vienna. Although the volume’s main focus is the German Empire, it breaks with the narrow state-centric approach and examines the changing character of German nationalism in its broader Central European context. It examines the views of Austrian, Hungarian, and Slavic politicians and intellectuals, and it explores Germany’s relationship to the other ethnic groups of the region.

This broad perspective naturally poses some limitations. Unfortunately, Vermeiren does not discuss more extensively the views of the local German elites in the contested multi-ethnic regions like Tyrol or Transylvania, though such analyses could have shed light on the complex interactions between local narratives and the *völkisch* ideas, and they might also have helped explain the presumed radicalization of these regional elites after 1918. Furthermore, he sometimes relies on memoirs written in the interwar period (for instance, views on the Károlyi party discussed on p. 201). In such cases, Vermeiren would have done well to have paid more attention to the ways in which the military defeat

and the subsequent revolutions influenced these retrospective narratives about the wartime alliance.

These minor problems notwithstanding, Vermeiren's monograph constitutes an excellent contribution to the modern cultural and social history of World War I. His findings concerning the development of German nationalism add significantly to the scholarship on German history and the changing character of nationalisms in Central and Eastern Europe.

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Edvard Beneš: Un drame entre Hitler et Staline. By Antoine Marès. Paris: Perrin, 2015. 502 pp.

Edvard Beneš (1884–1948) was undoubtedly a key player on the Czech and European political stage between the end of World War I and the outbreak of the Cold War. Beneš became Czechoslovakia's foreign minister in 1918 and then president in 1935, and thus it is hardly surprising that his name is linked to crucial events in Central European politics, including the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, interwar diplomacy, the Munich conference of 1938, the expulsions after World War II, and the establishment of communist regimes in Central Europe. In 2015, the Paris-based publisher Perrin released the first academic biography of Edvard Beneš in French. The author, Antoine Marès, is professor at Paris 1 University (Sorbonne), and he is one of the most respected specialists on contemporary Czech and Central European history. The biography is the culmination of three decades of research on Beneš' personality, life, and career.

The book is essentially a political biography that privileges the description and analysis of struggles for power, negotiations, networks, and political concepts. This approach is fitting, since Beneš' life was dominated by politics. His World War II secretary Jaromír Smutný went so far as to describe his boss as a “machine for working and thinking, without human feelings” (p.420). In his narrative, Marès links Beneš' professional activities and the international position of the Czechoslovak Republic. In his depiction, Beneš appears as the incarnation of Czechoslovak diplomacy and as a “seismograph” of the political upheavals in Europe. By emphasizing the larger political context, Marès seeks to pass historical judgment on Beneš' masterpiece: the Czechoslovak Republic. Thus, Marès' work is part of the ongoing debate over the nature of the Masaryk-Beneš “democratic” regime (pp.432–34).

The book is divided into three chronological parts. Part 1 (“History of an Ascent”) describes the early years of Beneš, including his exile during World War I (pp.21–118). Part 2 (“Architect of the Foreign Policy of Prague”) covers his 17-year-long tenure at the head of the Foreign Ministry (pp.121–227). Part 3 (“Times of trials”) covers Beneš' presidential years between 1935 and 1948. This final part, which examines the most tragic years of Beneš' life, makes up nearly half of the book (pp.231–412).

Although Beneš remained in the governmental sphere for nearly three decades, Marès builds his narrative on the concept of ruptures. He associates

the most important moments of Beneš' life with changes in social, political, and strategic contexts. Beneš, born to a middle-class family, suddenly found himself at the top of the social pyramid in 1918–19 thanks to the outcome of World War I. According to Marès, Beneš, who was initially a monarchist, became a republican during World War I and finished his political career as a promoter of the Soviet model. His vision for the architecture of the region evolved in parallel: after supporting ideas of Habsburg federalism at the beginning of the century, he then believed in the radical independence of Czechoslovakia in the interwar years, and, finally, he supported a strong orientation towards the Soviet Union in the 1940s. In this cocktail of constant transformations, Marès identifies two key phases: the “glorious” period before the Munich “trauma” (1938) and the subsequent “catastrophic” period (pp.413–15).

Beneš was and remains a controversial figure. He is both a symbol to be admired and the target of sharp criticism. Marès places himself in close relation to the works of the Prague-based “Society of Edvard Beneš,” which he describes as a “besieged fortress” which is “attached to the values of parliamentary democracy and nationalist convictions” (pp.428–29). Despite the declared authorial intention not to descend to hagiography (p.413), Marès offers grandiose characterizations of the second Czechoslovak president, describing him for instance as “the embodiment of the Czechoslovak democratic model” (p.433) and even “the cornerstone of Europe’s defense of democracy” (p.422).

Marès admits that Beneš himself believed his destiny was to act as the leader of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Czech politician, according to Marès, had a deep inner conviction in his own infallibility (p.277) and showed “extreme optimism” (p.253). This vision of himself as a Messiah of sorts pushed him to adopt controversial political methods. As Marès claims, during the presidential election campaign of 1935, for example, Beneš bribed some MPs in order to secure their votes (p.235). However, Marès concludes that Beneš was guided not by a thirst for power or money (pp.117, 243), but by “wider national interests” (p.184). At the same time, Marès suggests that these personal qualities contributed to the failures Beneš began to face beginning in 1938. According to Marès, Beneš misjudged the intentions of the leading geopolitical players in Central Europe, such as Berlin, Paris, and Moscow. Until 1938, he remained convinced that Nazi Germany was not interested in attaining the Sudetenland, but would rather attack Austria and Poland. He believed that Berlin would prefer to rule over the whole of Czechoslovakia or, if that proved impossible, to leave the Sudeten Germans inside the republic as an instrument of pressure from

within (p.230, 250). Beneš also overestimated the French security guarantees for Czechoslovakia, formalized in the 1924 treaty (p.278). His third fatal mistake lay in his “naïve” expectation that Moscow, which became the military hegemon in Central Europe in 1944–1945, would refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. This illusion may have been dispelled, according to Marès, after the Soviet takeover of Carpathian Rus (p.355).

Marès traces in detail the changes in Beneš’ views on national issues in Czechoslovakia. He is depicted as a supporter of the “czechoslovakist” ideology, which provided privileges for the Czechs and Slovaks, but marginalized the remaining third of the population of the country (p.158). According to Marès, Beneš favored the union of the Czech and Slovak lands mainly for geopolitical and demographic reasons. He was allegedly not averse to the idea of assimilating the Slovaks (p.265). Referring to the Sudeten Germans, who outnumbered the Slovaks in the Czechoslovak Republic, Beneš, according to Marès, ceased to recognize them as compatriots on the eve of the Munich conference. He secretly proposed to his Western associates to hand over around 2 million of them, together with some of their territories, to Germany (pp.280–83). Beneš’ determination to put an end to the Sudeten question grew during the war; however, until December 1943, Beneš adhered to the idea of combining human transfers with territorial transfers (p.344). As of 1944, Beneš sought international support only for the expulsion of the Germans and the Magyars (pp.350–51). When Czechoslovak sovereignty was restored, the deportations targeted close to 3 million Germans, and Marès characterizes them as a paradoxical triumph of Hitler’s ideas of ethnic cleansing. Nevertheless, Marès seems inclined to justify the postwar treatment of the Sudeten Germans as “the lesser evil,” which supposedly allowed the maintenance of “civil peace” in Czechoslovakia (pp.369–72).

Built on Czech and French archival sources, the book *Edvard Beneš: A tragedy between Hitler and Stalin* synthesizes Marès’ original findings and the conclusions of other Beneš biographers. Marès does not ignore Beneš’ critics, but he ends up producing a rather distorted, apologetic portrait. Also, the book dwells on the “heroic-tragic” episodes of Beneš’ life (his struggles in World War I and World War II), but does not cover his interwar activities in similar detail. Marès portrays a rather stereotypical image of Beneš’ undertakings as Foreign Minister in the 1920s and 1930s as the protagonist of the triad consisting of the Little Entente, France, and the League of Nations. Last but not least, the book contains a few small factual errors, typos, and some confusion in the references.

Despite these limitations, the book certainly deserves the attention of historians of international relations and of Central Europe. Marès achieves the aim of writing a biography which continuously mirrors the most complex political and social upheavals in Central Europe in the first half of the twentieth century. In addition, Marès' insights into Beneš' life, including his childhood, his relationship with his wife Hana, and his health issues, provide a more human image of this historical figure than the typical literature on diplomatic history. Finally, the book contributes to a better understanding of the many factors that shaped interwar decision-making in Prague through the prism of Czechoslovak-French political relations. Marès thus enriches our current understanding not only of Edvard Beneš' life and career, but also of crucial social and political stakes during the "European civil war."

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Unified Military Industries of the Soviet Bloc: Hungary and the Division of Labor in Military Production. By Pál Germuska. Lanham: Lexington, 2015. 328 pp.

With his *Unified Military Industries of the Soviet Bloc*, Hungarian historian Pál Germuska has made an important contribution to the historiography of Eastern Europe during the Cold War. Subtitled *Hungary and the Division of Labor in Military Production*, the monograph examines the workings of economic and military cooperation within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) and the Warsaw Pact (WP) from the perspective of a smaller Eastern European country. Germuska rightly stresses that the “majority of works dealing with the military industry of the Soviet Union do not even mention other Warsaw Pact-COMECON member states” (p.xiii). Treating Hungary’s integration into both organizations from the angle of the military industry, Germuska has identified an intriguing and long overdue inroad into both organizations. He thus successfully addresses a significant hiatus in the “post-second World War history of Hungary’s national economy,” which “cannot be analyzed or understood without considering the international power dynamics and foreign economic relations that prevailed” (p.xii).

Germuska’s perspective allows him to address a number of issues, which are crucial to an understanding of Cold War Eastern Europe, such as military and economic integration, specialization, the relationship between the Soviet Union and the other WP/COMECON countries, and the increasing scope for maneuver of smaller WP/COMECON members. These are all important themes, which deserved further attention in scholarship. Hungary is an excellent starting-point for a new assessment of the dynamics of the COMECON and the WP, because it was very (pro-)active in both organizations. Tracing the Hungarian role in the division of labor in military production from the foundation of the COMECON in 1949 to the collapse of both the COMECON and the WP in 1991, Germuska paints a compelling picture not only of the manifold initiatives of the country but also of its growing assertiveness.

In six chronological chapters, Germuska charts the development of Eastern European economic and military cooperation from a Hungarian perspective. The important topics addressed include the restructuring of the COMECON in the early 1950s, the foundation of COMECON’s Military Industrial Standing Commission and its incipient specialization from 1955 to 1963, the organizational

reforms and burgeoning dissent in the WP in the 1960s, and the surfacing conflicts of interest in the 1970s. Although the main developments in the 1980s are treated in less detail due to a scarcity of available archival sources, Germuska still succeeds in explaining how “[t]he international political tension and economic difficulties of the early 1980s served to heighten the interdependence of COMECON countries” and enhance “conflicts of interests between the energy-exporting Soviet Union and energy-importing member states” (p.237).

Germuska is very sensitive to the conflicts and different interests of the countries participating in both organizations, which, according to him, grew in intensity in the 1970s and 1980s. Despite its relative brevity, the chapter dealing with the 1980s proves particularly fascinating. It shows simultaneously how Gorbachev had “begun to declare privately that the program of socialist integration was dead,” while the Soviet Union publicly “advocated the notion, obviously inspired by the economic integration in Western Europe, of establishing a common COMECON market” (245–47). In the meantime, Hungary was the strongest critic of this idea, “espousing the introduction of an open market-economy” instead (p.247). Meanwhile, the process of integration into Western European institutions ultimately seemed the more alluring objective to the former Soviet satellites after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. This Westward turn of the Eastern European members sealed the fate of both the COMECON and the Warsaw Pact in June and July 1991.

The book prioritizes an analysis of foreign economic relations over the international power dynamics. With meticulous research drawing on materials found in a wide range of mostly Hungarian archives (from which he quotes extensively), Germuska unveils an enormous amount of information about other Warsaw Pact countries, too. Moreover, the wide time-span from 1949 to 1991 enables him to trace the evolution of both organizations, while offering the reader an overview of the development of Eastern European cooperation in the Cold War from a novel perspective. The broad time sweep combined with the meticulous research guarantees a detailed treatment of the topics at stake, but it also requires a lot of background knowledge from the reader.

Germuska convincingly analyzes the interplay between the COMECON and the Warsaw Pact. This is a very thought-provoking issue on which little research has been done. It reveals parallel developments in the two organizations and also instances of miscommunication between them. With the Warsaw Pact as the military engine, most topics related to the military industry were, in fact, discussed within the COMECON, which therefore takes center-stage in this

book. Germuska even claims that “cooperation in the area of military industry [...] perhaps constitute[d] the most effective facet of the organization’s activity” (p.269). This is, in itself, a very interesting observation, since the COMECON has hardly ever been treated from a military perspective before.

This book offers more than a portrait of Hungary’s role in the Soviet bloc’s military industrial complex. By charting Hungary’s position within the Soviet bloc’s military industries, Germuska defies the conventional image of the COMECON and the WP as Soviet monoliths, which solely existed to further Soviet interests. On the contrary, from the 1960s onwards, both organizations became steadily more multilateral, and Hungary took an increasingly pro-active role in them within this broader context. The book thus shows not only that there was an extent of Eastern European integration, something which has often been questioned or simply ignored, but also that the history of Eastern European integration was much more complex and multi-layered than has usually been claimed. Germuska accordingly does not fall into the trap of adopting a teleological approach, which would falsely assume that both organizations were doomed to fail.

Germuska’s book therefore tallies with a recent trend in New Cold War History, which revises the role of Eastern European countries in international organizations, while deemphasizing the role of the Soviet Union. He may still conclude that despite “signs of hegemonic cooperation based on mutual interests [...] the imperial outlook remained predominant all the way until 1989–90” (p.287), but his monograph nevertheless successfully shows that neither the COMECON nor the Warsaw Pact were mere monoliths, and their histories were much more complex and intriguing.

Germuska does an admirable job showing that cooperation within the military industry was an important driving force in the development of the Soviet bloc’s economic integration. His sophisticated treatment of the new archival sources allows for a nuanced approach to and a subtle analysis of Eastern European cooperation. Simultaneously shedding new light on Hungary’s national economy and on Eastern European cooperation during the Cold War, it is a must-read for those who wish to understand the post-World War II history of Eastern Europe in its full complexity.

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The Warsaw Pact Reconsidered: International Relations in Eastern Europe, 1955–69. By Laurien Crump. New York–London: Routledge, 2015. 348 pp.

At a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact (WP) in Bucharest in 1966, the personal secretary of Andrei Gromyko, the USSR's minister of foreign affairs, commented on the interaction in this socialist international organization: "It used to be very easy [...]: the SU proposed something, and the other socialist countries adopted it without discussions. Now it is no longer that simple. Every [country] has its own opinions.' He added that 'this is very good, [...] but we lose too much time" (p.191). His remarks epitomize the themes and aim of Laurien Crump's history of the WP from the mid-1950s to the end of the 1960s. The volume tells the story of how this institution of the Soviet bloc gradually turned into an arena for the affirmation of its members' national interests, how it morphed from being supposedly an instrument of Moscow's hegemony into a multilateral socialist forum. Crump goes even further and deals with two additional topics: the relationship between WP and *détente* (the Conference for European Security and Cooperation) and WP's attitude toward the Global South.

Crump offers a fresh narrative about the WP starting from an original premise. Rather than telling a story based on a "hegemon" vs. its "satellites," her central point of reference is the issue of sovereignty. The book documents the massive shift in terms of intra-bloc dynamics when Nikita Khrushchev replaced the Cominform with the WP in 1955, which signaled the transition from an inter-party organization to an intergovernmental one: "a window of opportunity [had opened] to make their voices heard in a multilateral platform" (p.24). The new framework was obvious during subsequent crises of what was called the international communist movement: the Hungarian Revolution and the subsequent Soviet intervention, the Albanian-Soviet and the Chinese-Soviet splits, and the second Berlin Crisis. Khrushchev became reluctant to deal unilaterally with intra-bloc problems. In the case of Hungary, he consulted in October 1956 with party leaders from Czechoslovakia, the GDR, and Bulgaria. The decision about the second invasion in Hungary was taken only once Imre Nagy accepted the end of single-party rule. Crump emphasizes that Khrushchev could not use the WP to support Soviet intervention in Hungary. Therefore the crisis "highlighted what the WP was not" (p.37).

Crump connects the analysis of the various splits and rebellions within the WP. Albanian separation from Moscow precipitated the Sino–Soviet divorce (p.65), which in its turn was a defining lesson for Romania’s counter-hegemonic stand within the organization (p.74). The latter also triggered a clarification of individual stands among other WP members. This argument is enriched by reminders of the non-European side of the story. The role of China and other Asian socialist countries (Vietnam, Mongolia, North Korea) in influencing dynamics within the WP is consistently highlighted. Crump argues that the deepening of the Sino–Soviet split, to the extent that the two communist giants came very close to full-scale war in the border clashes of March 1969, “drove the WP in the arms of Western Europe” (p.292).

During 1960s, the WP appeared to be in continuous crisis, since its members disagreed on the goals and scope of the alliance. Crump shows how the disagreements were not mainly between the USSR and the rest. The central triggers of dissent were the relationship between Romania and the GDR or Poland, tensions between Poland and the GDR, and, last but not least, Czechoslovakia’s search for autonomy and “socialism with a human face.”

Unsurprisingly, Crump allocates significant space to the Prague Spring and the Soviet bloc’s attitude toward it, and she develops a novel take on a well-trodden topic. In contrast to the existing secondary literature, she draws a distinction “between *multilateral* decision-making by several WP countries and *Warsaw Pact* decision-making” (p.216). From this standpoint, Czechoslovakia’s invasion was not under WP command. It was, to use Crump’s pun, “a coalition of the willing” (p.235).

Crump is careful to draw further important distinctions here. She points out that “at the heart of the disagreements between Romania and the other WP members lay a different interpretation of the concept of ‘flexibility’” (p.161). The former wanted liberty of action inside the alliance, while the latter sought a clearly structured alliance that would give the WP more discretion in dealing with the outside world. She also shows how all European Soviet allies attempted to encroach on the WP agenda by pushing their priorities to the forefront. This was the engine of the organization’s multilateralization and professionalization (e.g., the gatherings of deputy ministers of foreign affairs or military reform).

The volume’s most innovative insight, however, lies in its emphasis on the relationship between the WP and the Helsinki process, which defined the timeframe that followed the end point of Crump’s volume. From Adam Rapacki’s initiative at the UN in 1964, the Bucharest declaration in 1966, or the

Budapest appeal in 1969, WP dynamics were essential to the consolidation of European security and cooperation and to “the multilateralisation of détente” (p.296). She sets herself apart from previous authors by insisting that “it was not the Helsinki Process that served to emancipate the WP members from the Soviet grip ... instead, the multilateralisation of the WP had facilitated the WP members’ autonomous stance within the Helsinki Process” (p.290).

There is one connection that Crump does not sufficiently highlight: the search for cohesion-cum-sovereignty within the WP was catalyzed not only by Western European integration, but also by the rise of the Global South in the 1960s. As János Kádár remarked in 1964, around the same time that the group of 77 at the United Nations was taking shape, “the foreign ministers of the NATO countries get together and consult; so do the foreign ministers of the Arab, African, and Latin American countries. We are the only ones who cannot get together. Why? What is happening at this session is a crying shame” (p.139). By the end of the 1960s, the WP acquired enough *modus operandi* to strengthen its members’ position within pan-European cooperation. This captivating volume would have benefited indeed from a stronger focus on how the Global South was one of the avenues along which state socialisms found their way into what Mikhail Gorbachev later called “the common European home”.

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