

MOHÁCS 1526–2026
RECONSTRUCTION AND REMEMBRANCE

ISABELLA JAGIELLON, QUEEN OF HUNGARY (1539–1559)

Edited by
ÁGNES MÁTÉ AND TERÉZ OBORNI

STUDIES



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Series editors
Pál Fodor and Norbert Pap

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Research Centre for the Humanities
Budapest
2020

The volume was supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences



Translated by Sean Lambert

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ISBN 978-963-416-214-8

ISSN 2676-895X

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Published by the Research Centre for the Humanities

Responsible editor: Pál Fodor

Prepress preparation: Institute of History, RCH, Research Assistance Team

Leader: Éva Kovács

Cover design: Imre Horváth

Page layout: Bence Marafkó

Printed in Hungary by Séd Kft., Szekszárd

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INTRODUCTION

This volume contains the papers regarding major events in the life of Isabella Jagiellon – her birth (1519), marriage (1539) and death (1559) – presented at a conference held in Budapest (February 28–March 1, 2019) commemorating the queen and is supplemented with studies written by others, primarily fellow historians, who did not participate in the conference.

Three monographs have been written about Queen Isabella of Hungary, each of which emphasized different aspects of her adversity-filled life.¹ We would like to supplement these comprehensive works with studies that shed light on individual aspects of Isabella's life and present the findings of newly conducted research regarding the queen.

The connection between the Jagiellonian dynasty and the Szapolyais, one of the major land-owning families in Hungary, was not of new origin in 1539.² The first wife of King Sigismund “the Old” of Poland was Barbara/Borbála Szapolyai, who bore the king two children – Jadwiga/Hedwig and Anna. However, Queen Barbara

1 Endre Veress, *Izabella királynő 1519–1559* (Magyar Történelmi Életrajzok). Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901; Małgorzata Duczmal, *Izabela Jagiellonka królowa Węgier*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2000; Alicia McNary Forsey, *Queen Isabella Sforza Szapolyai of Transylvania and Sultan Süleyman of the Ottoman Empire: A Case of Sixteenth-Century Muslim-Christian Collaboration*. Lewiston, USA–Queenstone, CAN–Lampeter, UK: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009.

2 John's mother, Hedwig of Cieszyn (1469–1521), established the Szapolyai family's Polish connection. In 1486, Hedwig – a member of the House of Piast by birth – married István Szapolyai, who served as the palatine (*nádor*) of Hungary from 1492 to 1499. Szapolyai died in the latter year, after which Hedwig managed the enormous Szapolyai estates. See Stanisław Sroka, *Jadwiga Zapolya. Piastówna śląska na Węgrzech w dobie panowania Jagiellonów*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Naukowe Societas Vistulana, 2005; Veronika Kucharská, *Ducissa. Život knázej Hedvivy v časoch Jagelovcov* (Libri Historiae Slovaciae, Monographiae XII). Bratislava: Post Scriptum, 2014; Tibor Neumann (ed.), *A Szapolyai család oklevéltára I. Levelek és oklevelek (1458–1526)* (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek, Okmánytárak). Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2012; and Tibor Neumann, ‘Dózsa legyőzője – Szapolyai János erdélyi vajdasága (1510–1526)’, *Székegyföld* 18:11 (2014) 93–107.

died in 1515. In 1537, Hedwig married Joachim II Hector, Elector of Brandenburg³ and the gold tableware she received from her uncle the king of Hungary created a great sensation. Sigismund's second marriage to Milanese princess Bona Sforza produced more children, the first of which was Isabella.

At the height of his power, King Sigismund I, perhaps prompted by the Jagiellon–Szapolyai family connection, agreed to the marriage of his daughter Isabella to King John of Hungary – an idea that had periodically surfaced in both Polish and Hungarian political circles for years. The fact that the Kingdom of Hungary had already for decades been part of the Jagiellon sphere of influence via kings affiliated with the dynasty, the last of whom – Louis II – had fallen at the Battle of Mohács in 1526 could not have been a negligible argument in favor of the marriage. Following the death of Louis II, Sigismund “the Old” himself flirted for a short time with the prospect of assuming the Hungarian throne, though discarded this notion after finding out that his former brother-in-law, voivode of Transylvania John Szapolyai, had become a candidate to succeed Louis II. During the 1530s, King Sigismund continually extended significant support to John in the talks the latter conducted with Ferdinand I of the House of Habsburg regarding authority over the entire Kingdom of Hungary. Sigismund provided such support despite the fact that he himself had not adopted an anti-Habsburg position and attempted to reconcile the opposing parties.⁴

Friar George (1482–1551) played the leading role, followed by István Brodarics and Ferenc Frangepán, in the representation of John's interests during the final phase of the prolonged series of negotiations with Ferdinand I beginning in 1536.⁵ Archbishop of Lund Johann von Weeze (1489–1548), who had previously gained recognition primarily as a result of his diplomatic service for Charles V served as Ferdinand's chief negotiator. The presence of Johann von Weeze was a result of the fact that the Habsburg brothers regarded gaining control over the entire Kingdom of Hungary to be a joint affair.⁶ On February 24, 1538, King John signed a pact in Várad (Nagyvárad/Oradea, Romania) in which he agreed with

3 Joachim II Hector (House of Hohenzollern, 1505–1571), Elector of Brandenburg (1535–1571): commander-in-chief of the German imperial military forces that conducted an unsuccessful campaign to liberate Buda in 1542. See Árpád Károlyi, ‘A német birodalom nagy hadi vállalata Magyarországon 1542’, parts 1–5, *Századok* (1880) 265–299, 357–387, 445–465, 558–589, 621–655.

4 Gábor Barta, ‘Bevezetés’, in Gábor Barta (ed.), *Két tárgyalás Sztambulban* (Régi magyar könyvtár Források). Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1996, 7–61; Richárd Botlik, ‘Az 1531. évi krakkói alku. (Titkos megállapodás az I. Ferdinánd párti erdélyi területek katonai utánpótlásának kérdéséről)’, *Századok* 137:3 (2003) 579–601.

5 Ferenc Frangepán (1490?–1543): Franciscan friar, Archbishop of Kalocsa beginning in 1528, Bishop of Eger beginning in 1538 and diplomat for King John. Following King John's death, he became a supporter of Ferdinand. Pongrácz Sörös, ‘Frangepán Ferencz kalocsai érsek, egri püspök’, *Századok* 51:7–8 (1917) 429–471, 545–576; István Zombori, ‘V. Károly és a magyar trónviszályok (1529–1533)’, *Történelmi Szemle* 24:2 (1981) 615–626; István Brodarics (c. 1471–1538): royal chancellor (1526), diplomat for King John and Bishop of Vác (1537–1539); see Péter Kasza, *Egy korszakváltás szenttanúja. Brodarics István pályaképe*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2015.

both Ferdinand I and Charles V to share control over the kingdom.⁶ According to the Treaty of Várad, the Kingdom of Hungary would remain united under this system of dual authority until King John's death. The treaty stipulated that John and Ferdinand would recognize and address one another as king, that they would mutually defend the kingdom against both external and internal enemies and that the territory over which they ruled would be divided according to the *status quo*. The Treaty of Várad held out the prospect of reintegrating sovereignty over the Kingdom of Hungary, stipulating that following the death of John, his portion of the realm would come under permanent and irrevocable Habsburg rule – even in the unlikely event that a legitimate son was born to the childless king, who was over 50 years old and unmarried. According to the treaty, if King John I did have a son, the latter and his family would receive the “Duchy of Szepes” to be established on the longtime Szapolyai estate around Szepes Castle in the northern part of the kingdom as compensation. Ferdinand I signed the Treaty of Várad in Wrocław on June 10, 1538, and Charles V in Toledo somewhat later. King John's proposal of marriage to Isabella Jagiellon under pressure from his Hungarian and Polish counsellors and supporters placed future compliance with the conditions of the Treaty of Várad in serious jeopardy. On January 15, 1539, a gleaming delegation arrived to Kraków in order to escort the princess back to Hungary. On January 31, a symbolic wedding was held in the throne room of the royal palace in Kraków at which King Sigismund's vice-chancellor, Samuel Maciejowski, delivered the festive speech in the name of the Polish monarch. In early February, Maciejowski composed the royal declaration regarding the wedding: “...His Holy Royal Majesty is convinced that this new bond of friendship will connect not only both royal families, but the neighboring countries, Hungary and Poland, with much stronger ties and nearly steel-hard links.”⁷

Following Isabella's arrival to Hungary, the nuptials were held in Székesfehérvár on March 2, 1539, after which the royal couple and their entourage traveled to Buda for the wedding celebrations. Queen Isabella then established her residence at Buda Castle, though her new husband was soon called to Transylvania in order to settle a conflict between the voivodes whom he had appointed to govern this territory, István Majláth and Imre Balassa. King John was at a military camp in Szászsebes (Sebeș, Romania) when received the joyful news that Isabella had given birth to a son in Buda on July 7, 1540. The boy was named John Sigismund Stephen (János Zsigmond István in Hungarian) after his father, his maternal grandfather and either his paternal grandfather or the first king of Hungary, respectively. John Sigismund is generally identified as *Stephen* (Isztfan) in contemporary Ottoman Turkish sources, thus prompting many to speculate

6 Roderich Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge. Fürstentum Siebenbürgen (1526–1690)*. Wien: Adolf Holzhausen–Wilhelm Engelmann, 1911, 65–85.

7 “*Sacra Majestas Regia persuasum habeat, intercedente hoc novo amicitia sedere non solum utramque Regiam familiam, verum vicina quoque Hungaria & Poloniae Regna tanto firmiori nexu et ferme adamantino vinculo junctum iri...*” Wolfgang de Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transylvanicis*, vol. 1. Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782, 280.

that the boy had received this name at the request of Sultan Süleyman, although no evidence has been uncovered to support this hypothesis.

King John himself exuberantly announced the news of the birth of his son to the soldiers at the military camp, though was forced to retreat to his bed after taking his horse out for a spirited ride and his physical condition soon lapsed into a critical state. Farkas Bethlen historiographer (1639–1679) stated in his narrative of this episode that “an even more serious sickness overwhelmed him as a result of the lengthy journey, the fast riding and the immensely large problems.”⁸ When John realized that his condition would not improve, he instructed his relative and confidant, Péter Petrovics, Friar George and those of his counselors who were present to ensure that his royal heir would succeed him as monarch. King John died at 7 o’clock on the morning of July 21, 1540. The stipulations of his oral will and testament represented the annulment of the Treaty of Várad.

Queen Isabella of Hungary thus became a widow while living at Buda Castle in the company of the late king’s advisors just two weeks after giving birth to John Sigismund. Friar George arrived from Transylvania with a military escort soon thereafter, bringing the royal treasury with him.⁹ John’s remains were taken to the city of Székesfehérvár, where it was buried amid pomp befitting a king on September 15. Ferdinand I and the Viennese court learned about King John’s death in early August from a letter sent by Lord Chief Justice (Hung. *országbíró*) Elek Thurzó. In this letter, Thurzó advised Ferdinand to attempt to capture Buda Castle before the arrival of Friar George and other pro-Szapolyai lords.¹⁰ However, troops loyal to the deceased king arrived to Buda before Habsburg forces, thus preventing Ferdinand from taking the castle. In accordance with King John’s will and testament, Friar George convened an assembly of the Hungarian estates at Rákos Field, just outside the city of Pest, where in the middle of September they elected the two-month-old John Sigismund to succeed his father as king.¹¹ Isabella and Friar George were given guardianship over the infant king.

These were hard times for the young queen dowager as Ferdinand’s army arrived to Buda in order to enforce the stipulations of the Treaty of Várad that not only granted the Habsburg monarch possession of the city’s castle, but to all the territory over which King John had held sovereignty. Isabella was inclined to yield this territory to Ferdinand, though leading pro-Szapolyai political officials strenuously insisted that she refuse to do so. Sultan Süleyman cut this Gordian Knot in August 1541, when he arrived to Buda at the head of his army, seized

8 Bethlen, *Historia*, 321.

9 Antal Verancsics’s letter to Bishop of Transylvania János Statileo, Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania), August 15, 1540. László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6 (*Vegyes levelek 1538–1549*) (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 9). Pest: Eggenberger, 1860, 133–135.

10 Béla Iványi, ‘Buda és Pest sorsdöntő évei. (1526–1541)’, *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* 9 (1941) 54–55.

11 Bethlen, *Historia*, 344.

the castle and banished Isabella and her son to Transylvania. The queen thus became caught in the crossfire between the opposing forces in a fierce political struggle. Isabella and John Sigismund assumed important roles in Habsburg dynastic policy, while the Ottoman Porte also kept an eye on the queen and her son as well as on the new “sanjak” that Süleyman had accorded to them. The eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary that had come under the sovereignty of Isabella and John Sigismund embarked upon a new historical pathway leading to the creation of a new, independent country. Queen Isabella was forced to leave this realm, known as the eastern Hungarian Kingdom, during the summer of 1551. However, after returning from Poland in 1556, Isabella worked with renewed strength to organize the country that belonged to her son, elected King John II. The most influential figure associated with Isabella at this time was her late husband's close relative Péter Petrovics, a longtime supporter of the Szapolyai family who had paved the way for the return of the queen dowager and the young king from Poland. Petrovics subsequently remained in the queen's service until his death in October 1557. After returning to Transylvania, Queen Isabella maintained control over the main branches of internal governance and attempted to find a French wife of elevated stature for her son in order to strengthen his kingdom.

Isabella again established contact with Henry II of France, who via his envoy to the Sublime Porte had already in 1552 promised to support the queen in the fight against Ferdinand. According to some sources, the House of Valois king also held out the prospect of offering the hand of one of his three daughters in marriage to John Sigismund if he returned to his homeland and occupied the throne.¹² In 1558, Queen Isabella sent her trusted counselor, the erudite polyglot Kristóf Báthory, to the French court in order to transmit her request for protection from Henry II. Furthermore, Báthory asked the French king to help recapture the castles in Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania) and Lippa (Lipova, Romania) from the sultan, to send a 5,000-man mercenary army to Transylvania and to pay the cost of garrisoning this military force in the province for a period of five years.¹³ Henry II gladly received Báthory, promising Isabella's counselor that he would satisfy all the queen's requests. According to historiographer Farkas Bethlen, the king of France also proposed that young John II marry his sister. However, fellow historiographer Ferenc Forgách claimed that Henry II had offered the hand of his daughter Margaret to John Sigismund, while the king's envoy to the Sublime Porte, Jean Cavenac de la Vigne, proposed that the Szapolyai claimant to the throne marry a certain Renée de Rieux Princess

12 Letter of King Henry II of France to Queen Isabella, December 25, 1552. Mihály Hatvani (ed.), *Magyar történelmi okmánytár, a brüsseli országos levéltárból és a burgundi könyvtárból. II. 1538–1553* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica I; Diplomataria 3). Pest: Eggenberger, 1858, 361.

13 Kristóf Báthory (1530–1581): older brother of Prince of Transylvania and King of Poland Stephen Báthory, in whose name he governed Transylvania as voivode in the years 1576–1581. Báthory traveled to France during the winter of 1557–1558. See Ildikó Horn, ‘Báthory Kristóf uralmi rendszere’, in Judit Pál and Gábor Sipos (eds.), *Emlékkönyv Egyed Ákos születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2010, 143–148.

Chauteauneuf.¹⁴ Henry decided to send Pierre Louis Martinés to Transylvania as his envoy. In April 1558, Martinés arrived via Venice and Ragusa for a visit to Queen Isabella before traveling on to Constantinople. Diplomatic ties between Henry II and Queen Isabella subsequently broke off for unknown reasons.

Isabella's capital was established at the seat of the Diocese of Transylvania in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania). Here, the queen attempted to develop the kind of court life with which she had become familiar in Kraków and Buda. However, the court that Isabella created in Gyulafehérvár was more modest than those in the royal capitals of the kingdoms of Poland and Hungary: as Transylvanian Provost Antal Verancsics, one of the outstanding humanist scholars and historiographers of the mid-sixteenth century, wrote in a letter from Kraków in 1548: "The Transylvanian court is modest and better suited to those of more advanced age."¹⁵

In the 1540s, the queen frequently held balls at the court and happily arranged marriages between her ladies-in-waiting and Hungarian lords. Among her Polish courtiers, Isabella was most closely associated with Stanisław Nieżowski, who impregnated the queen several times.¹⁶ On such occasions, Isabella sought the services of her distinguished Italian physician, Giorgio Biandrata, who became part of the queen's entourage in 1544. Ferenc Forgách, a stern figure who never issued words of praise about anybody, declared that Isabella had caused much harm to the realm "as a result of her insatiable hunger for power, all her womanly depravities and the excessive licentiousness of her dissolute life." In another instance, he condemned the queen's "unbounded avarice and greed."¹⁷ Finally, Forgách wrote the following description of Isabella and John Sigismund: "She found great pleasure in music, dance, her single delight, and did not deign to go dancing with just any of her courtiers. She took to chilled wine, which she drank cold summer and winter, as much as she could bear... She indeed caused many great problems and left behind her a boy who in his upbringing and customs was very similar to her, though had degenerated in comparison to his father and all that is good."¹⁸

14 Bethlen, *Historia*, 615–618. Cf. Teréz Oborni, 'Le royaume des Szapolyai, du royaume de Hongrie orientale à la principauté de Transylvanie (1541–1571)', *Histoire, économie & société* 34:3 (2015) 65–77.

15 "Aula Transilvanica modica est, et graviori aetati magis accomoda." Antal Verancsics's letter to Johannes Kindler, Kraków, February 2, 1548. Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6, 293.

16 Ildikó Horn, 'János Zsigmond lengyel tanácsosa, Stanislas Nieżowski (1520 k.–1573)', in József Jankovics (ed.), "Nem sülyed az emberiség!..." *Album amicorum Szörényi László LX. születésnapjára*. Budapest: reciti, 2007, 1387–1392. www.iti.mta.hu/szorenyi60.html.

17 *Ghymes Forgách Ferencz nagyvárad püspök Magyar históriája 1540–1572* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 16), published by Fidél Majer, introduced by Ferencz Toldy, Pest: Eggenberger, 1866, 165.

18 "Choreis ac saltationibus unis suis deliciis mirum in modum se oblectabat, ut non vereretur cum quocumque aulicorum familiarium choreas ducere. Vino glaciato, quo aestate ac hyeme, quantum frigidius esse potuit, utebatur, interiora corruptit, et nondum agens annum omnino quadragesimum excessit. Sane magnorum et multorum malorum ansam praebuit. Sed et filium educatione, institutione

At the same time Isabella's secretary Antal Verancsics, who knew the queen more closely than anybody else, maintained a decidedly positive opinion of her. Verancsics always spoke and wrote about Isabella with great devotion and respect and expressed praise for the queen's erudition. In 1546, Verancsics wrote Giorgio Biandrata a letter in which he asked the Italian physician not to abandon his queen, whom he characterized as possessing a "rare virtue, purity and goodness."¹⁹ In a letter to Jan Tarlo, he described Isabella as "most gracious queen" (*reginam faventissimam*) and "our rare virtue and goodness Isabella" (*Isabellam nostram rara virtute et bonitate*).²⁰ Verancsics's fond words for Isabella reflect the warmth with which the Transylvanian estates received the beleaguered queen dowager after she had been expelled from Buda.

In 1539, a princess whose Italian mother had prepared her for court life in the spirit of the Renaissance arrived to Hungary. Isabella, thinking of the example of her parents – King Sigismund I and Queen Bona of Poland – may have hoped that her marriage with King John would be fortunate, fruitful and enduring. With a little luck, Isabella may have followed the destiny of her mother. From her father and those in the Polish royal court who had once belonged to his household in Buda, Isabella may have learned that Buda and Kraków had sprung from common intellectual and cultural roots. With her marriage to King John, Isabella became the new lady majesty of Buda, a city that King Matthias Corvinus and Queen Beatrice of Aragon had established, had been built in the spirit of the Renaissance and over which Isabella's uncle Vladislaus II and cousin Louis II had ruled as kings. Isabella herself satisfied all of the expectations that existed toward royal princesses during the period: she was young, suitably cultured and was able to present her husband with a male heir as quickly as possible.

However, with the death of King John, Isabella almost immediately lost the security under which she could have grown into her role as queen. Isabella was thus unable to obtain a court outfitted according to her tastes and needs, she had no husband to whom she could give more children and over the following 15 years had to continually resign herself to the fact that others made the decisions regarding her destiny. Isabella's greatest treasure was her son, who became elected King John II and to whom, with the help of the Jagiellonian dynasty, she was able to provide a fortunate upbringing. The queen, exercising power in the name of her son, though almost independently, became an adult in a political sense during the final three years of her life. This is when Isabella received a taste of how her life may have been without early widowhood, Turkish

sibi similem, a patre atque ab omnibus bonis principibus degenerem reliquit." Forgách, *Magyar történiája 1540–1572*, 187.

19 "...tibi, mi Blandrata, consulerem... etiam te rogarem, ne istam rarae virtutis atque integritatis, liberalitatisque reginam destitueres..." Antal Verancsics's letter to Giorgio Biandrata, Kraków, September 28, 1546. Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6, 214.

20 Antal Verancsics's letter to Jan Tarlo, Gyulafehérvár, March 7, 1547. Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6, 250.

conquest, discord among the Hungarians and other historical circumstances that manifested themselves following the death of King John.

Although Isabella did not have the long and tranquil life that she had envisioned at the time of her marriage, she did indeed have an interesting life as she was forced to confront the above circumstances. Isabella was the last queen of Hungary who had been united in marriage to the monarch of a Buda-based kingdom, and despite all the hardships, she ended her life in the realm to which her marriage and coronation oaths connected her – and not as Mary of Hungary, the childless and widowed governor of a distant province, Beatrice of Aragon, who returned to her homeland and spent the final years of her life as a lonely witness to her family's destruction, or the later Habsburg queens, who died in Vienna, far from what seemed to them to be a distant province of the monarchy. At the time of Isabella's death, her son ruled over Transylvania and the similarly prosperous eastern territories of the old Kingdom of Hungary, while her brother, Sigismund II Augustus, had ascended to the throne of Poland. Her sister Sophia had become the Duchess of Brunswick–Lüneburg, while her other two full sisters were awaiting marriage and her half-sister, Hedwig, had become the Electress of Brandenburg. Given the circumstances, Isabella ended her life with everything around her in order. Although she died unexpectedly at a young age, she lived according to her abilities in the age in which she was destined to live.

The present volume highlights a few aspects of Isabella's interesting life in the hope that a new monograph regarding the queen might be published with international cooperation within the next few years. The studies appearing in this book have been divided into five chapters. The first chapter ("Wedding") deals with the wedding of Isabella and King John I of Hungary in the early spring of 1539. Historian *Péter Molnár* considers the circumstances surrounding the arrival of Isabella to Hungary, the wedding ceremony, the coronation and the wedding celebrations, thus enriching the history of the nuptials between John, traditionally known in Hungarian scholarly literature as the "last national king," and his young bride with previously unknown details, specifically those pertaining to the participants in the wedding and coronation ceremonies and the pomp that surrounded the wedding celebrations in both Székesfehérvár and Buda.

Literary historians wrote the following two studies in the chapter. *Ágnes Máté* analyzes the *epithalamia* composed for the royal wedding in light of Isabella's Italian ancestry with particular attention to the historical female figures originating in classical culture that the authors of these works depicted as examples for the new queen to follow. According to Ágnes Máté, the fact that Isabella was related to the unfondly remembered Beatrice of Aragon influenced her reception in Hungary; moreover, she was forced to confront prejudice stemming from the international reputation of her mother, Queen Bona Sforza of Poland, throughout her entire life. *György Palotás's* study focuses on the poetry competition in Kraków, examining the poems written by authors in the service of the Polish and Hungarian kings, specifically the manner in which they followed antiquity-era patterns. Palotás

highlights the Mihály Verancsics's wedding song, which deals exclusively with King John. These studies are based on Latin-language texts that had received little previous attention from the authors of both Hungarian and Polish scholarly literature.²¹

The second chapter ("Memory") is composed of the studies of two art historians. *Karolina Mroziiewicz's* study, which features 13 appended illustrations, represents the most comprehensive examination to date of the portrayal of Queen Isabella from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth century. Mroziiewicz initially surveys depictions of that which can be connected directly to the queen's life: Isabella as the daughter of her parents and the marriageable scion of the Jagiellonian dynasty; royal widow; the mother of an elected king, John Sigismund; and, finally, as a departed sovereign who died as governor of Transylvania. After these follow portrayals of Isabella from the nineteenth century that were (re)created primarily in the Hungarian memory and which hardly existed in Poland. The depictions examined in this study appear in a uniquely diverse array of forms, including book illustrations, images on book bindings and medals, paintings, the queen's tomb and even on a nineteenth-century calendar. In the other study contained in this chapter, *Péter Kasza* and *Gábor Petneházi* examine the presentation of Queen Isabella formed in Daniele Barbaro's contemporary drama *La Pena* and in the works of historiographers from the period. In the first part of this study, Gábor Petneházi, deals with the unfortunate figure of Isabella, while in the second part, Péter Kasza focuses primarily on the responsibility of the queen for the fall of Buda as reflected in historical sources. *Susanna Niiranen* closes this chapter with an investigation of the naming customs of the Vasa and Jagiellon families via the life of Isabella Vasa, the daughter of Queen Isabella's sister, Queen Catherine Jagiellon of Sweden. Niiranen hypothesizes that Catherine named her daughter, who died in early childhood, after her late sister Isabella, thus also recalling her maternal grandmother Isabella of Aragon. The tomb of Isabella Vasa can still be seen at Strängnäs Cathedral in Sweden. Niiranen's study connects the present volume to recent research dealing with the lives of Queen Isabella's sisters Catherine and Sophia and their cultural significance in the Kingdom of Sweden and the Holy Roman Empire, respectively.²²

Four historians have contributed studies to the third chapter ("Foreign Relations"). These studies place the 20 years of Isabella's life that connected her

21 Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedz (eds.), *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999.

22 Almut Bues, 'Art Collections as Dynastic Tools: The Jagiellonian Princesses Katarzyna, Queen of Sweden, and Zofia, Duchess of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel', in Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Adam Morton (eds.), *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800*. London–New York: Routledge, 2016, 15–36; Almut Bues, 'Dynasty as a Patchwork House, or the (Evil) Stepmother: The Example of Zofia Jagiellonka', *The Hungarian Historical Review* 8:4 (2019) 669–694; Natalia Nowakowska (ed.), *Remembering the Jagiellonians*. Abingdon–Oxon–New York: Routledge, 2019; Katarzyna Kosior, *Becoming a Queen in Early Modern Europe, East and West*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

to Hungary – not all of which she spent in the country – into an international context. In the first study of this chapter, coauthors Zoltán Korpás and János B. Szabó conduct a comparative survey of sixteenth-century military actions that were aimed at the conquest of various provinces in Europe and compare these operations with the 1551 occupation of Transylvania by Habsburg troops. Mónika F. Molnár subsequently explores the significance of Queen Isabella's Italian origin, specifically the ambition to rule stemming from the family background and upbringing of Bona Sforza that can be observed in the life of Isabella and, partially, in that of her son as well. Isabella also acquired her fondness for Renaissance culture from her mother and had the greatest opportunity to cultivate this appreciation during her short return to Gyulafehérvár (1556–1559), albeit to a more modest degree than had been possible at the court in Kraków. Also of great significance in Isabella's life was the fact that she left Transylvania in the hands of an Italian military leader, Giovanni Battista Castaldo, with whom the queen was able to discuss the extraordinary political situation that existed at the time in her mother tongue. Physician Giorgio Biandrata was the most famous figure among the Italian members of Isabella's court. However, Mihály Balázs's examination of Biandrata's activities in Transylvania appears not in this chapter, but in the fifth and final one of the book. *Stanislava Kuzmová's* study focuses on the difficult period – which proved to be temporary – in Isabella's life when she and her young son withdrew from Hungary to Poland and were forced to rely on political-diplomatic and material assistance from the family into which the queen had been born. Kuzmová cites a large number of previously unpublished archival sources in her presentation of talks between Ferdinand I and Isabella and Queen Bona and Sigismund II Augustus concerning the queen of Hungary. The author of this study also sheds light on how the life of Isabella (and that of her son) may have taken a completely different course if the widowed queen had married Ernst of Bavaria (1500–1560), who would have left the priesthood for her sake. The great success of Queen Isabella's life occurred with the birth of her son, who during their period of residence in Poland was increasingly regarded as a potential successor to his uncle on the Polish throne. As *Stanislava Kuzmová* shows in her study, the fact that Isabella always remained Queen Bona's favorite child played a significant role in her ability to retain her relatively favorable position. *Szymon Brzeziński* points out in his study that Isabella enjoyed an unprecedented degree of freedom from a diplomatic perspective as well during the final years of her life, after breaking away from Friar George's high-handed tutelage. This study introduces data regarding Queen Isabella's numerous special envoys, who originated from various territories under the authority of the Hungarian crown and from the Kingdom of Poland as well.

The studies in the fourth chapter ("Governance") deal with certain questions pertaining to the state organization that took place on the territory of eastern Hungary over which Queen Isabella and her son ruled. *Teréz Oborni* outlines the governing framework – which was established at the common diets of Transylvania and the counties lying to the east of the Tisza River – within which the new country began to operate. The author offers a detailed

description of the political conflict that developed between Queen Isabella and Friar George, highlighting the decisive role that Friar George, the predominant figure in the eastern part of Hungary, played in governance and making political decisions as well as in compelling Isabella to abdicate in 1549. *Zsolt Bogdándi* then examines the new institutions that Isabella reorganized following her return to Transylvania in 1556, among them the supreme judicial forum known as the Royal Court of Justice (*Királyi Tábla*), specifically the body's personnel and procedures. The author also describes the operations of the places of authentication (*loca credibilia*) that functioned during the final years of Isabella's reign. *Emőke Gálfi's* study demonstrates how after returning to Transylvania from Poland Queen Isabella came to recognize the economic and political significance of cities in her realm, particularly that of the capital city of Gyulafehérvár. Isabella granted numerous economic-type privileges to these cities, notably confirming the status of Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) as a free royal-city. Finally, *Liviu Cîmpeanu* describes via events that took place in the largest Transylvanian Saxon city, Nagyszeben (Sibiu, Romania, Hermannstadt in German) the difficulties that arose as a result of the Castaldo-led Habsburg military takeover of Transylvania and that the lack of success may have been due to a shortage of money. In this study, Cîmpenau analyzes the Habsburg attempt to modernize the arsenal in Nagyszeben in detail.

The fifth chapter ("Lords of the Queen's Reign") introduces some of Queen Isabella's most influential supporters. *Mihály Balázs's* study surveys the life of Giorgio Biandrata, focusing on the important role he played in the service of the queen and her son, elected King John II – not only as a physician, but as a creator of the religious diversity for which Transylvania became famous. *Klára Jakó* investigates the life of Isabella's envoy to the Sublime Porte, János Szalánczy, particularly the diplomatic activity he conducted on behalf of the queen. Szalánczy represented Isabella's interests not only in Constantinople, but in negotiations with the Romanian voivodes as well. *Szabolcs Varga's* study deals with the political and military career of Péter Petrovics, one of Isabella's most devoted supporters and counselors. Sources show that Petrovics – a close relative, presumably the cousin, of King John – stood at the queen's side throughout the 1540s and himself came into conflict with Friar George during this period. Following the return of the Szapolyai family to Transylvania in 1556, Isabella appointed Petrovics to serve as her governor. Among all her longtime supporters, the queen was willing to retain only Petrovics in such a high-ranking position. Petrovics, who sympathized with Lutheranism and, later, Calvinism, died in the autumn of 1557, soon after the return of the Szapolyais to Transylvania.

The editors would like to thank the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) Section of Philosophy and Historical Sciences for permitting them to hold the conference that served as the basis for this volume as one of its highlighted events at the headquarters of the MTA in Budapest. We would also like to thank the Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, which at the time operated under the auspices of Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the

MTA International Conference Organization Fund for providing the financial resources needed to hold the conference. We are also grateful for the financial help provided by the Waclaw Felczak Foundation. In addition to our authors, we would also like to express our thanks to Enikő Békés, who accepted our invitation to serve as session chairperson during the conference, and Natalia Nowakowska (University of Oxford), who in addition to carrying out the duties of chairperson delivered the key-note address at the conference. Finally, we would like to thank the “Mohács 1526–2016: Reconstruction and Remembrance” project of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences “Excellence Cooperation Program” (KEP-1/2017) for providing financial support that helped to ensure that this volume could be published as the first English-language volume of its series.

Budapest, March 15, 2020

The Editors

WEDDING

Péter Molnár*

THE CORONATION OF QUEEN ISABELLA – MARCH 2, 1539

INTRODUCTION

Although numerous features of Hungarian coronations that developed during the late Middle Ages survived after this period as well, the Ottoman capture of the city of Székesfehérvár in 1543 represented the beginning of a new era in the history of the investiture of monarchs in Hungary. The final coronation of the “Fehérvár era,” which took place on the same day as the wedding between Isabella Jagiellon and King John I, is rarely mentioned in academic literature. This lack of attention may be due to several factors. The coronation of the king's consort counted as a less important event than the royal investitures, although beyond evoking the prestige of the court, it also contained a pragmatic political message in light of the fact that royal marriages served to form and strengthen political alliances. (However, in those instances in which the wedding and the coronation were separated from one another in time and perhaps space as well, the former ceremony received greater attention.) Data pertaining to the regulation of the coronation of queen consorts and the order and words of the invocations pronounced during them goes back to the time when the basic structure of royal investitures took form with the permanent connection of anointment and coronation at the court of Charles the Bald (ruled 840–877). The investiture of the consort of the king or emperor even along with this remained a kind of concomitant to the actual coronation. The former constituted a simplified version of the latter. Whereas a series of prayers and invocations referring to the multilayered role of the king or emperor accompanied the bestowal of certain royal insignia, the words of equivalent formulas attending the lesser number of *insignium* conferred to the royal consort defined her role as support for the monarch and intercession on behalf of the subjects of the realm (with surprisingly little reference to the birth of heirs to the throne).¹ Furthermore, the coronation of the royal consort did not prove to be indispensable

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¹ Janet L. Nelson, ‘Early Medieval Rites of Queen-Making and the Shaping of Medieval Queenship’, in Anne J. Duggan (ed.), *Queens and Queenship in Medieval Europe. Proceedings of a Conference*

even in those monarchies in which such an investiture of the sovereign had been solidly established.

The general features outlined above provide a clear depiction of the secondary character of the coronation of the royal consort, which exercised an exponential influence on research conducted amid the meager source attributes in Hungary. Whereas we have access to the basic data regarding the coronation of monarchs beginning with that of the second coronation of Charles I on June 15, 1309 (precise date, church at which the ceremony was held, the identity of the principal celebrant), in the case of the coronation of queen consorts, complete data exists only with the investiture of Barbara of Cilli, the second wife of Sigismund of Luxembourg (ruled 1387–1437), on December 6, 1405. (There is only sporadic – and mostly indirect – data regarding such ceremonies from before the latter year. It is not even certain that the wives of King Louis the Great [ruled 1342–1382] were ever crowned.²) The fact that kings Vladislaus I (ruled 1440–1444) and Ladislaus V (ruled 1440/1453–1457) died unmarried did not serve to improve the chances of holding such ceremonies in Hungary for a period of four generations from the 1405 coronation of Barbara of Cilli to the investiture of Isabella Jagiellon in Székesfehérvár in 1539. The first wife of King Matthias Corvinus (ruled 1458–1490), Catherine of Poděbrady, died in 1464, shortly before their planned coronation, which was obviously to have taken place jointly. With regard to the coronation of queen consorts during the period in question, abundant data – in the form of surviving detailed accounts – exists only with regard to the 1476 coronation of the second wife of Matthias Corvinus, Beatrice of Aragon. Only one detailed account of the wedding and coronation of the consort of Vladislaus II (ruled 1490–1516), Anne de Foix-Candale, has survived – and in the case of other such ceremonies not even that many. We know little more than basic information about the 1438 coronation of King Albert (House of Habsburg, ruled 1438–1439) and his wife, Elizabeth of Luxembourg (who was the daughter of Sigismund of Luxembourg and Barbara of Cilli), the 1521 coronation of Louis II³ (ruled 1516–1526) and his wife, Mary of Hungary, and the 1527 coronation of Ferdinand I (ruled 1526–1564) and his consort, Anna of Bohemia and Hungary. With regard to the previously

held at King's College, London, April 1995. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997, 301–315, mainly 306–312.

2 In the following work, the author automatically assumes that the first wife of Louis the Great, Margaret of Luxembourg (died 1349), was crowned and that her coronation took place on the presumed date of their wedding: Éva Teiszler, 'Luxemburgi Margit magyar királyné koronázásának körülményei', in Tamás Fedeles and Zsolt Hunyadi (eds.), *Szent Márton és Benedek nyomában. Tanulmányok Koszta László emlékére* (Fontes et Libri, 3.). Debrecen–Szeged: FIKP "Magyarország a középkori Európában"–SZTE Középkori és Kora Újkori Magyar Történeti Tanszék, 2019, 499–521, mainly 516–521.

3 On the child-coronation of Louis I, see Karolina Mroziewicz, 'The King's Immature Body. Representations of Child Coronations in Poland, Hungary and Bohemia (1382–1530)', in Karolina Mroziewicz and Aleksander Sroczynski (eds.), *Premodern Rulership and Contemporary Political Power: The King's Body Never Dies*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017, 139–167, esp. 144–166.

mentioned investiture of Barbara of Cilli, we have access exclusively to the basic information.

As we will see, the coronation of Isabella and relevant source attributes can be classified in a group formed by the investitures of her cousin, Anna of Bohemia and Hungary, Mary of Hungary and Elizabeth of Luxembourg. However, let us first take a look at the primary features of research regarding the coronation of queen consorts in Hungary! The investiture of queen consorts during the “Fehérvár era” has for the most part been overlooked in research on coronations in Hungary. Emma Bartoniek laid the foundation for academic research in Hungary regarding coronation ceremonies, though initially devoted no attention to the investiture of royal consorts.⁴ Although Bartoniek’s synthesis bears the title *A magyar királykoronázások története* (History of the Hungarian Royal Coronations), her survey of the Habsburg era did examine the issue of the investiture of queen consorts as well.⁵ Bartoniek provided no grounds for expanding the topic of her book in this way. This may be explained by the fact that Bartoniek became familiar with the accounts of coronations that took place during the era in question in a volume published by Márton György Kovachich, an important source-researcher from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This volume, entitled *Solennia inauguralia...*, begins with a contemporary account of the 1527 coronations, which took place on successive days, of Ferdinand I and his wife, Anna of Bohemia and Hungary, and continues to include accounts of the investiture of queen consorts even if they did not essentially occur at the same time as that of the king.⁶ Emma Bartoniek was apparently unable to leave the fertile ground of this lucid and enjoyable early-modern source material fallow, though this unfortunately did not induce her to examine the medieval coronations of queen consorts – not even in the two instances in which relatively comprehensive accounts of such events survived. Erik Fügedi proceeded in a peculiar manner, investigating the institution of the queen consort and even briefly the subject of the coronation of queen consorts in his survey of “the powerful” in Hungary during the late Middle Ages, though mentioning nothing whatsoever about the investiture of queen consorts in his scholarly study.⁷ Attila Zsoldos, who researched the history of the institution of the queen consort during the era of the Árpád dynasty, collected the sporadic

4 Emma Bartoniek, ‘A koronázási eskü fejlődése 1526-ig’, *Századok* 51:1 (1917) 5–44, particularly 16–27 and 40–41; Emma Bartoniek, ‘A magyar királyáavatáshoz’, *Századok* 57:7–10 (1923) 247–304. Although no time frame is identified in the title of the latter work, it only touches upon the Habsburg era. *Ibid.*, 300–301.

5 Emma Bartoniek, *A magyar királykoronázások története*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1939, 120–121, 127, 141–143, 148, 148–149, 150–151, 159–160, 166. In the case of the final two double coronations (1867, 1916), the author wrote only about the coronation of the king. *Ibid.*, 167.

6 Martinus Georgius Kovachich (ed.), *Solennia inauguralia Serenissimorum ac Potentissimorum Principum utriusque sexus, qui ex augusto stirpe Habsburgo-Austriaca Sacra Corona apostolica in Reges Hungarorum, Reginasque periodo tertia redemiti sunt*. Pest: Typis Matthiae Trattner, 1790.

7 Erik Fügedi, *Uram, királyom... A XV. századi Magyarország hatalmasai*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1974, 77–79; Erik Fügedi, ‘Coronation in Medieval Hungary’, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* (New Series) 9:3 (1980) 159–189.

data testifying to the existence of the coronation of queen consorts during the eighth century, though – due to the absence of substantive sources – could not write very much about these ceremonies.⁸ Géza Pálffy's study examining the theme of coronation banquets from the appearance of relevant data until the end of the seventeenth century served to renew research on coronations in Hungary in several regards. In this work, Pálffy considered the coronations of both kings and queen consorts and rightfully ignored the 1526 period-ending that from this perspective is artificial.⁹

Research in Hungary on coronations in the country during the medieval and early modern periods has thus shown very little interest in the ceremonies connected to royal consorts. The academic literature in which such ceremonies have been examined have focused mainly on the coronations of Beatrice of Aragon and Anne de Foix-Candale as well as the courts of their era and their representations related to political power. This is not surprising in the case of the well-documented coronations of Beatrice and Anne. However, in the biographical monograph that Endre Veress wrote about Queen Isabella, he devoted considerable attention to her 1539 coronation ceremonies in Székesfehérvár even though no detailed accounts of this event have survived.¹⁰ At this point, we must mention the greatest paradox with regard to the historiography dealing with our theme. On the one hand, the sources that Endre Veress uncovered in the course of research for his book on Queen Isabella proved to be very comprehensive. I am indebted to the research contained in his biographical monograph on the queen despite my criticism of this work expressed below. On the other hand, this book contains many romantic "genre scenes" that are either unsupported by the identified sources or are the result of a *belles-lettres*-like elaboration and augmentation of data from this sources.¹¹ In the present study, I will make another attempt to reconstruct the events that took place in Székesfehérvár in 1539 via criticism of the narrative that Endre Veress presented in his book and which György Laczlavik has repeated with minor modifications in a recently published work.¹²

8 Zsoldos Attila, *Az Árpádok és asszonyaik. A királynői intézmény az Árpádok korában* (Társadalom- és művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok 36). Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézet, 2005, 18–23.

9 Géza Pálffy, 'Koronázási lakomák a 15–17. századi Magyarországon', *Századok* 138:5 (2004) 1005–1101. The latter author briefly examined Isabella's coronation based on György Laczlavik's subsequently cited summary of this event. Pálffy, 'A magyar királynék koronázása a mohácsi csatát követő évszázadokban', *Veszprémi Szemle* 17:4 (2015) 7.

10 Endre Veress, *Isabella királyné, 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 44–50.

11 *Ibid.*, 36, 37–38, 40.

12 György Laczlavik, 'Várdai Pál esztergomi érsek egyházfői tevékenységének vázlata', in Bálint Lakatos and Márton Zarnóczki (eds.), *Archivarium historicorumque magistra. Történeti tanulmányok Bak Borbála tanárnő 70. születésnapjára*. Budapest: Magyar Levéltárosok Egyesülete, 2013, 481–482; György Laczlavik, *Kettős pecsét alatt. Várdai Pál esztergomi érsek, királyi helytartó (1483–1549)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2014, 62–63. I will henceforth cite the latter version, which may be regarded as definitive, and refer to the previous one only in various notes.

THE TIME AND PLACE OF ISABELLA'S CORONATION

After all this, let us take a look at what we know about the 1539 crowning of Isabella with regard to the above-listed basic data pertaining to coronations.¹³ Among the currently known relevant sources, a memorandum that papal legate Cardinal Aleandro wrote on March 9, 1539, in which he describes important information that he obtained during talks with the sovereign conducted earlier that day, provides us a conclusive date for the event. During Cardinal Aleandro's talks with Ferdinand, the monarch mentioned the letter that his envoy to the wedding and coronation, Niklas Graf von Salm the Younger, had sent from Buda on March 4 stating that the coronation had taken place in Székesfehérvár the previous Sunday, that is, on March 2.¹⁴

The fact that Veress refers to the latter date as the Sunday of *Reminiscere* suggests that, in addition the above-cited source, he relied partially on an exaggeration-filled document published by Lajos Kemény entitled “*János király számadása*” (Account of King John) to determine the date of Isabella's coronation. The latter document contains a list of valuables received as gifts during the final three years of the king's reign, identifying dates and the functions of the gift-givers and on rare occasion the location as well. The uncommonly long list of gifts listed on the 1539 date identified as *Dominica Reminiscere* obviously captured Veress's attention. The latter religious holiday held on the second Sunday of Lent took place on March 2 in the year 1539.¹⁵

Endre Veress identified the “cathedral” of the Virgin Mary as the location of the wedding and coronation.¹⁶ This is, of course, self-evident in light of the history of queen-consort coronations in Hungary during the late medieval period, though János Zermegh (c.1504–1584), who presumably witnessed Isabella's coronation, unmistakably refers to this location as well in the couple of sentences that he wrote in his memoirs about the events that took place in Székesfehérvár in 1539. Zermegh's comments regarding the coronation, which Veress cited in his work, will be examined in detail below.¹⁷

13 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 44.

14 Walter Friedenburg (ed.), *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, 1st ed., 1533–1559, vol. 4, *Legation Aleanders, 1538–1539*, second half. Gotha: Perters, 1893, 350: “*Dicit [scil. rex] accepisse litteras datas die 4 hujus a comite Salm, quod coronata fuisset regina Hungariae in Alba Regali, ...et quod ipse comes interfuerit cum aliis baronibus; sed quod eadem die, scilicet dominica praeterita discesserit Budam versus remanseritque Ioannes cum regina, cum qua ea die quasi privatim consumavit matrimonium.*” At my request, Dr. András Oross, the Hungarian archival delegate in Vienna, searched for this March 4 letter in the fonds of the Österreichische Staatsarchiv, though could not find it, suggesting that it has permanently disappeared. I would like to thank Dr. Oross for his assistance.

15 Lajos Kemény Jr., ‘János király számadása’, *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:12 (1889) 191.

16 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 44. For a correction of the appellation of the church according to canon law, see Laczlavik, *Kettős pecsét alatt*, 62.

17 Ioannes Zermegh, *Historia rerum gestarum inter Ferdinandum et Ioannem Vngariae reges, usque ad ipsius Ioannis obitum*. Amsterdam: Jacobus Lepidius, 1662, 96: “*Rex cum Regina templum ingrediuntur.*” The reference to churches without giving a specific name in cities with several

THE CORONATING PRELATE

Endre Veress came to the resolute conclusion that the head of the Catholic hierarchy in Hungary, Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várday, who was incidentally a supporter of Ferdinand, presided over both the wedding and the coronation, although the author could have handled the source upon which he based this conclusion with greater caution.¹⁸ The source in question was a memorandum that Cardinal Aleandro wrote on February 11 in which the papal legate recorded the important aspects of a long discussion held with Archbishop Várday. According to Aleandro, Várday mentioned during their conversation that King John had asked him to conduct the coronation of Isabella, though this source does not specify that any final decisions were made with regard to this matter.¹⁹ György Laczlavik, who was able to use the critical edition of the correspondence of Bishop of Vác István Brodarics, built his conclusions upon more certain foundations.²⁰ In the postscript of a letter that Bishop Brodarics wrote to Elek Thurzó on February 19, the prelate treats the impending arrival of the Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várday to conduct the coronation of Isabella as an established fact.²¹ Although there are no sources confirming that Várday actually presided over the coronation, we may conclude based on Brodarics's letter to Thurzó that it is highly likely that the archbishop indeed officiated at the ceremony. However, there still remain two important questions that did not emerge in the work of Endre Veress – nor apparently elsewhere – with regard to the role of the Archbishop of Esztergom in Isabella's March 2, 1539, coronation even though these questions seem to be unavoidable in light of the previous Hungarian practice. The first of these questions: why did the Archbishop of Esztergom conduct the coronation during the late medieval period – and presumably before this as well – when the Bishop of Veszprém, who generally served as the queen's chancellor, was invested with the right to crown queen consorts?²²

churches always indicates the most important church in the city. Thus the "Fehérvár church" always refers to the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Among surviving sources, Miklós Istvánffy, who followed Zermegh's text, was the first to identify the latter church as the site of Isabella's wedding and coronation. However, this may have been the product not of his own information regarding the given event, but of well-known historical practice. Nicolaus Isthvanfi [Istvánffy] Pannoni, *Historiarum de rebus Vngaricis libri XXXIV. Coloniae Agrippinae: Antonii Hierati, [1622], 223.*

18 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 44; for the reference, see *ibid.*, note 2.

19 Friedenburg (ed.), *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, 1st ed., vol. 4, 290, 291.

20 Laczlavik, 'Várday Pál esztergomi érsek', 481, note 12. In this study, Laczlavik integrates the contents of the Aleandro memorandum used by Veress and contained in the work cited in the note above with the Brodarics letter contained in the work cited in the note below.

21 *Stephanus Brodericus Epistulae* (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Medii Recentisque Aevorum. Series Nova 16), edited by Péter Kasza. Budapest: Argumentum–Magyar Országos Levéltár, 2012, 587 (28–29), no. 341. "*Saltem misissetis ad nos reverendissimum dominum Strigoniensem coronandae reginae causa.*"

22 Texts stipulating the right of the Bishop of Veszprém to crown queen consorts in the late Middle Ages: charter of Archbishop of Esztergom György Pálóci dated December 31, 1437 (thus one day before the double coronation of King Albert and Elizabeth of Luxembourg) in

At this time, Márton Kecseti – who lived a notoriously secular lifestyle – occupied the office of Bishop of Veszprém. Kecseti could thank Tamás Szalaházi for his appointment and, just as the latter, steadfastly remained a supporter of the Habsburg king.²³ Following the Treaty of Várad (1538), the fact that Kecseti was not at that time – and perhaps not even later – ordained as bishop, thus making it impossible for him to conduct pontifical ceremonies including the coronation of the sovereign and his spouse, may have represented an even greater impediment.²⁴ Moreover, in early 1539 the bishops who were actually in possession of their seats in the part of Hungary under King John's control had not received papal confirmation, which Pope Paul III granted just a couple of weeks after the ceremonies in Székesfehérvár.²⁵ In the part of Hungary under Habsburg control, Bishop of Győr Ferenc Újlaki received papal confirmation at essentially the same time as his pro-King John colleagues, while Bishop of Veszprém Márton Kecseti and Bishop of Nyitra (Nitra, Slovakia) Ferenc Thurzó may have never received such confirmation (both Kecseti and Thurzó left ecclesiastical service and finished their careers as married men). Among the prelates on the other side, King John could choose between only Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várdai and Bishop of Zagreb Simon Erdődy. Isabella's fiancé made the self-evident decision to turn to the top official in the Catholic hierarchy of Hungary,

which the primate acknowledges that his predecessors had crowned Queen Mary of Hungary (1382–1395) and Queen Barbara of Cilli – even though the right to conduct queen-consort coronations belonged to the Bishop of Veszprém – and states that he would agree to have the holder of the latter office, Simon Rozgonyi, crown Elizabeth. Jenő Gutheil and László Kredics (eds.), *Veszprém város okmánytára. Oklevelek a veszprémi érseki és káptalani levéltárakból (1001–1523)* (A Veszprémi Egyházmegye múltjából 18). Veszprém: Veszprémi Érseki Könyvtár, 2007, 200–201 (no. 127); December 18, 1502, charter of King Vladislaus II in which the monarch stipulated that Archbishop of Esztergom Cardinal Tamás Bakócz had not infringed upon the right of the Bishop of Veszprém to crown queen consorts when he had conducted the coronation of Anne de Foix-Candale because the incumbent bishop, Gergely Frangepán, had not yet had himself ordained. *Ibid.*, 462–464 (no. 277). Péter Kasza appears not to be clear about this situation in the note he attached to the passage quoted in note 21 above. Brodericus, *Epistulae*, 587, see note 7.

23 For a summary of Kecseti's activities as Bishop of Veszprém, see Gyula Erdélyi, *Veszprém város története a török idők alatt*. Veszprém: Egyházmegyei Nyomda, 1913, 10–20.

24 On January 1, 1543, King Ferdinand asked Pope Paul III to retroactively authorize the ordination of elected Bishop of Veszprém Márton Kecseti and, in light of the situation that prevailed in the diocese, to cancel the *annata* that was due on this occasion. Vince Bunyitay, Rajmund Rapács and János Karácsonyi (eds.), *Monumenta ecclesiastica tempora innovatae in Hungaria religionis illustrantia*, vol. 4. Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1902–1912, 180–181 (no. 142). Géza Pálffy mentions Kecseti's lack of ordination without citing a source in 'Koronázási lakomák'.

25 The confirmation bulls were prepared in accordance with May 30 and June 9 decisions of the papal consistory. See Friedenburg (ed.), *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, 1st ed., vol. 4, 74–75, note 1. Ferdinand continued to impede the delivery of the bulls, which were dispatched via Cardinal Aleandro, who was responsible for issues related to King John, and thus had to pass through Vienna. After the death of King John, the Pope instructed his legate to deliver the documents to the Habsburg king, who transmitted papal confirmation only to his ally, Bishop of Eger Ferenc Frangepán. For the most detailed examination of this theme and relevant source citations, see Pongrácz Sörös, 'Frangepán Ferenc, kalocsai érsek, egri püspök', *Századok* 51:9–10 (1917) 560–561.

whose predecessors had already conducted the coronation of queen consorts. Bishop Erdődy incidentally did not attend the ceremonies in Székesfehérvár.²⁶ The makeshift solution of asking Bishop of Przemyśl Stanisław Tarło, who had accompanied Isabella from Poland to Hungary, to preside over the coronation may have emerged as a possibility. In fact, “borrowed” bishops – first from Hungary and then from Poland – had crowned the kings of Bohemia in 1458 and 1471. However, conducting the ceremony without the participation of the competent prelates would have served to cast doubt on its validity.

WEDDING AND CORONATION: CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TWO CEREMONIES AND THE QUESTION OF THE OFFICIATING PRELATE

Since there is no data showing otherwise, one may presume that the Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várday – with approval from Ferdinand and the papal legate – presided over both the coronation and the wedding of John and Isabella. With this we have arrived to the second question regarding Várday's role. King John not only had to decide who among the scant “supply” of prelates at his disposal would crown his wife, but also if the same officiant would perform the wedding and whether the two ceremonies would take place at the same time and place. Sources show that after the year 1405 the coronation of queen consorts in Hungary was generally separated from the wedding ceremony and that in the single earlier instance in which these ceremonies took place on the same day and at the same place, the same prelate conducted both of them.²⁷ The wedding between Sigismund of Luxembourg and Barbara of Cilli took place at the estate of the bride's father, Hermann II, Count of Celje (died 1435), in Zagorje (Croatia) several weeks before the coronation in Székesfehérvár, while the weddings of Beatrice of Aragon and Mary of Hungary took place at the royal capital in Buda shortly after their coronations.²⁸ Only the wedding between Vladislaus II and Anne de Foix-Candale occurred on the same day of the coronation. In this case, the nuptials were held at the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Székesfehérvár just before the coronation, though wedding celebrations took place in Buda as well.²⁹ It is not known who conducted the royal wedding ceremony in 1405. However the identity of those who presided

26 Erdődy wrote a letter in Csázma (Čazma, Croatia) the day after the coronation: Emil Laszowski (ed.), *Monumenta Habsburgica Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae, Slavoniae*, vol. 2, 1531–1540 (*Monumenta spectantia Slavorum Meridionalium* 18). Zagreb: Dioničke, 1916, 424–425 (no. 426).

27 The royal couples Albert and Elizabeth (1438) and Ferdinand and Anna (1527) had already been married by the time of their joint coronations.

28 Antal Pór and Gyula Schönherr, ‘Az Anjou-ház örökösei’, in Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *A Magyar Nemzet Története*, vol. 3. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1894–1898, 471; József Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon*, vol. 4. Pest: Mich és Eisenfels, 1852–1856, 488–492; Pál Tóth-Szabó, *Szatmári György prímás (1457–1524)*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1912, 250–251.

29 Attila Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás. Anna királyné 1502-es fogadtatásának ünnepei Észak-Itáliában és Magyarországon*. Máriaesnyő: Attraktor Kiadó, 2016, 142, 144–146.

over these ceremonies in the last quarter of the fifteenth century and the first quarter of the sixteenth century is known: papal legate Cardinal Gabriele Rangoni in 1476; papal legate Cardinal Pietro Isvalies in 1502; and Archbishop of Esztergom György Szatmári in 1522.³⁰

King John essentially followed the 1502 precedent when he had both ceremonies held at the main church in Székesfehérvár. However, the monarch's decision was likely based on some pragmatic consideration rather than conscious observation of previous practice. Perhaps the archbishop whom John had engaged to conduct the ceremonies did not want to spend much time at the side of his erstwhile sovereign and the prelate's quick return to Vienna (from where he had departed) explains why the two ceremonies were held so hastily one after another.³¹ Regardless of how things stood, the chosen order of the events – with the exception of the 1502 precedent – offered more restricted representative opportunities than those connected to the previous ceremonies. Since a “common” bishop had appropriated the right to crown queen consorts, the transfer of the prerogative to conduct royal weddings at approximately the same time to another prelate could have served to elevate the rank of the series of celebrations. Yet in this regard, it was precisely the 1502 events that were the most festive in Hungary until that time. In this year, two cardinals (the papal legate and the Archbishop of Esztergom) celebrated the two ceremonies separately on a single occasion. However, contrary to Matthias Corvinus or even Vladislaus II, King John could not even dream that the Roman Curia would honor him with two legates in the rank of cardinal. Following a visit in the spring of 1535, one of the papal chamberlains, Girolamo Rorario (alias *Hieronymus Rörer*), visited the Buda court again – as an *ad hoc*, thus not resident, nuncio – only at the end of 1539.³² In light of all this, the extremely likely “dual casting” of Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várday may have been a makeshift solution.

30 Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon*, vol. 4, 491; Tóth-Szabó, *Szatmári György prímás*, 251; Antonín Kalous, ‘Papežský legát Pietro Isvalies a svatba Vladislava Jagellonského s Annou z Foix’, in Eva Doležalová and Petr Sommer (eds.), *Středověký kaleidoskop pro muže s hůlkou. Věnováno Františku Šmahelovi k životnímu jubileu*. Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové Noviny, 2014, 545–552. Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 61–62. In the latter work, Györkös questioned the validity of the data that Kalous published in his study to support the conclusion that Cardinal Pietro Isvalies officiated at the wedding and at the same time criticized Fügedi, who contended that the coronation of Hungarian queen consorts took place according to the *Pontificale Romanum*. Cf. Fügedi, *Uram, királyom*, 77. In fact, the passages to which Györkös referred all pertained to Anne's coronation, not to the wedding. The grammatical structure of Pierre Choque's account republished by Györkös serves to conceal the person of the officiating prelate: Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 142. This is therefore compatible with Kalous's new data, which can naturally be found in the *Rituale Romanum*, the book containing the Roman ritual connected to the administration of sacraments that can be conducted by any priest. This should not have been confused with the *Pontificale Romanum*, which is a collection of rituals that only bishops can conduct.

31 Pál Várday was still in Vienna on February II: see note 20. Niklas Graf zu Salm the Younger left Buda on the night after the coronation and wedding, thus he obviously participated in the events held in the city. See note 14.

32 Vilmos Fraknói, *Magyarország egyházi és politikai összeköttetései a római szentszékkal*, vol. 3. Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1903, 43, 54–58.

According to Endre Veress, the marriage was the first ceremony to take place on March 2, 1539, and this was followed by the coronation of the queen consort. Veress imagined the latter ceremony to have taken place based on the model of the coronation of kings: following the anointment, the archbishop would have asked those present if they sanctioned Isabella's coronation; following the affirmative answer to this question, King John – with help from his chancellor, the secular authority István Werbőczy – would have placed the Holy Crown on the head of the new queen of Hungary.³³

However, the appearance of the *ordos* containing the order of both the coronation of kings and queen consorts from the very beginning were intended to signal important differences in the two ceremonies, showing the coronation of queen consorts to be fainter replicas of the coronation of kings. This is how things developed in Hungary as well. In the two instances in which details are known, those in 1476 and 1502, only one question was asked rather than the customary three posed during the coronation of kings. In 1476, the palatine (*nádor*) of Hungary asked this question to Matthias Corvinus, while in 1502, Archbishop of Esztergom Cardinal Tamás Bakócz turned to the *populus fidelis* that filled the church. In 1476, secular potentates placed the crown on the queen's head (perhaps along with the Bishop of Veszprém who was celebrating the Mass), while with regard to the 1502 coronation, the impersonal language that Pierre Choque used to describe the event perhaps refers to Archbishop Bakócz.³⁴ The customs therefore changed, the given solution perhaps depending on the personal prestige of the central figure.

The most absurd element of the above-cited words that Endre Veress wrote about the coronation of Isabella was that the Holy Crown was "issued" to the Hungarian queen consort.³⁵ Attila Györkös incorrectly asks if the Holy Crown may have been used in the coronation of queen consorts in the late Middle Ages.³⁶ The king's crown was certainly not placed on the heads of Elizabeth in 1438, Beatrice in 1476, Anne de Foix-Candale in 1502, Mary of Hungary in 1521 and Anna of Bohemia and Hungary in 1527.³⁷ We also have data showing that

33 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 48, note 2. Here the author followed the account by György Szerémi royal chaplain for kings Louis II and John I, and wrote about the 1526 coronation of the latter king. Cf. Gusztáv Wenzel (ed.), Szerémi György... *Emlékirata Magyarország romlásáról 1484–1543 (De perditione regni Hungarorum)* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica, II; Scriptorum, 1). Pest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1857, 137–139; Vilmos Fraknói and Árpád Károlyi (eds.), *Magyar Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Hungariae 1). Budapest: Ráth Mór, 1874, 20–21.

34 Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon*, vol. 4, 487; Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 142.

35 This element is omitted in the following work, which follows Veress in its narrative of Isabella's coronation: Laczlavik, *Kettős pecsét alatt*, 63. Endre Veress made it clear at the beginning of his biography that he believed that the Holy Crown was used in the coronation of Hungarian queen consorts, thus including Isabella: Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 3.

36 Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 62.

37 For information regarding Elizabeth's crown: Josef Deér, *Die Heilige Krone Ungarns* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften, 91). Graz–Wien–Köln: Böhlau-Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1966,

the following kings wore the Holy Crown during the coronation of their wives: Matthias in 1476; Vladislaus II in 1502; and Ferdinand I in 1527.³⁸ As far as I know, there is no information regarding Queen Isabella's own crown.

THE CORONATION CEREMONY: THE SOURCE EVIDENCE

Endre Veress attached the single source citation to his unrealistic description of the placement of the Holy Crown on the head of the coronated.³⁹ This source was János Zermegh's previously mentioned memoirs, which among the surviving narrative texts provides by far the longest description of the days in Székesfehérvár, though which the information written in the Veress-cited passage does not at all reflect. György Laczlavik, having obviously noticed this, wrote that Endre Veress had reconstructed the events based on the account of Jacobus Ferdinandus Bariensis, the physician of Queen Bona Sforza of Poland.⁴⁰ Veress indeed mentioned the work that Bariensis wrote at the time of Isabella's wedding, though took only the glorification of the bride from this text.⁴¹ Bariensis did not, in fact, write a single word about the events in Székesfehérvár, briefly mentioning only the wedding in Buda among the celebrations that took place in Hungary.⁴² Thus we would nevertheless do better to turn to János Zermegh and the text that he actually wrote. Comparison of the couple of relevant lines that Zermegh wrote with the parallel remarks in the great historical synthesis of baron Miklós

239–241. For Beatrice's crown, see above all: Peter Eschenloer, *Geschichte der Stadt Breslau* (Quellen und Darstellungen zur schlesischen Geschichte 29), edited by Gunhild Roth. Münster: Waxmann, 2003, 995, 997. For the crown of Anne de Foix-Candale: Györkösi, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 139, 141–142; illustration 15. For the crown of Mary of Hungary: Orsolya Réthelyi, '...Maria regina... nuda venerat ad Hungariam... The Queen's Treasures', in Beatrix F. Romhányi, Enikő Spekner and András Végh (eds.), *Mary of Hungary, The Queen and Her Court, 1521–1531* (Budapest History Museum, 30 September 2005–9 January 2006, Slovenská národná galéria, 2 February–30 April 2006). Budapest: Budapest History Museum, 2005, 124, 127, note 30. For the crown of Anna of Bohemia and Hungary, see above all: Adam Franciscus Kollar (ed.), *Casparis Ursini Velii De bello Pannonico libri decem*. Vienna: Trattner, 1762, 38.

38 See the sources cited in the previous note regarding Beatrice and the two Annes. Pálffy, 'A magyar királynék koronázása', 12. In spite of the fact that Pálffy also ascertained the lack of sources bearing witness to this, he still proposes this to be a late-medieval antecedent to the substantiated 1573 custom according to which the Holy Crown was touched upon the shoulder of the queen consort during her coronation. However, the authors of the detailed sources regarding the coronation of Beatrice and Anne de Foix-Candale would have hardly failed to mention such a lengthy series of events involving the removal of the Holy Crown from the king's head. Although Ursinus Velius provided only a short description of the coronation of Anna of Bohemia and Hungary, he does highlight the difference between the two crowns and thus would obviously have not have overlooked the act in question had it taken place.

39 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 48, note 3.

40 Laczlavik, *Kettős pecsét alatt*, 63.

41 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 45.

42 Jacobus Ferdinandus Bariensis, *Epistola de fœlici connubio Serenissimi Vngariæ regis Ioannis et S. Isabellæ, Poloniæ regis filiæ, et de meritissimis utriusque Serenissimi Sigismundi Poloniæ Regum, ac Reginæ Sforciæ laudibus, Necnon et totius Poloniæ Regni*. In *Regia Vrbe Cracouiensi*, 1539: "Celebrabuntur (ut dicitur) fœlices istæ ac Regiæ nuptiæ hic partim, Budæ partim."

Istvánffy (1538–1615) and the extensive compilation of count Farkas Bethlen historiographer (1639–1679) promises to be instructive. The works of Istvánffy and Bethlen obviously reflect the influence of Zermegh. (Gianmichele Bruto [1517–1592], the historiographer of Prince of Transylvania and King of Poland Stephen Báthory, was demonstrably familiar with Zermegh's memoirs, though reduces what the latter wrote about the 1539 Székesfehérvár wedding and coronation to mere mention of these events.)⁴³

Zermegh ⁴⁴	Istvánffy ⁴⁵	Bethlen ⁴⁶
<i>Erant in campo Albensi iussu Regis tentoria aliquot erecta, ubi Rex Reginam et Legatos opperiebatur. Qui ubi advenissent, salutato Rege, benigne et jucunde, praesertim autem Regina, amanterque sunt excepti. Illinc reditum ad urbem est. Altero die, qui fuit Dominica Invocavit, Rex cum Regina templum ingrediuntur, Sacra fiunt, Regina Dexamate insignitur, jurat uterque in fidele et Sacrosanctum jus matrimonii. Actis demum Deo Optimo Maximo gratiis, egressi templum, magno cum gaudio epulantur;</i> <i>resonabant ubique diversa musica instrumenta Regalia, virginalia, lutinae seu testudines, cytharae, tibiae, buccinae, tympana: ita ut praeeorum sono et strepitu vix proximi cujusque hominis verba audiri possent.</i>	<i>Erecta erant in campo Albano aliquot tentoria Phrygii operis, eleganter acu picta, Sulimani ac Ibraimi, dum floreret, munera, in quibus Iohannes sponsam excepit: ac post iunctas dexteras, et mutuos, haud tamen prolixos sermones, reditum in urbem est: celebratisque singulari pompa nuptiis, primo die Solis, qui in Quadragesimae initium incurrit, in templum diuae Deiparae virginis itum est: ibique peractis sacris noua nupta rite coronata est. Deinde absolutis, quae ad praesens necessaria esse videbantur, Budam reuersi sunt: et ibi per multos dies, tripudia et ludi, ac caetera, quae in eiusmodi pompis fieri vulgus amat, omnia in regium morem continuata.</i>	<i>...in cujus [scil. Albae Regalis] campo erecta erant aliquot tentoria Phrygii operis, eleganter acu picta, in quibus Rex sponsam praestolabatur, ibique eam excepit, ac post iunctas dexteras, mutuis colloquiis institutis, una cum illa urbem ingreditur, ibique nuptias simul et coronationem conthoralis suae rite peragit; inde Budam revertuntur, ibique tripudia et ludi, ac caetera in ejusmodi actibus peragi solita Regali more continuantur.</i>

It is clear from both a philological and political perspective that Farkas Bethlen exclusively used Miklós Istvánffy's text and did not gain access to János Zermegh's memoirs even though they had already appeared in print. Whereas the pro-

43 János Mihály Brutus, *Magyar Históriája*, vol. 3 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 14), edited by Ferencz Toldy and Iván Nagy. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 15.

44 Zermegh, *Historia rerum gestarum inter Ferdinandum et Ioannem Vngariae reges*, 96–97.

45 Istvánffy, *Historiarum de rebus Ungaricis*, 223.

46 Wolffgangi de Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*, vol. 1. Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782, 288.

Habsburg Istvánffy focused on the Ottoman vassalage of King John in connection with the tent erected on the “field” in Székesfehérvár, the Transylvanian historiographer Farkas Bethlen omitted this allusion, though he expressed no doubt about the Turkish origin of the tent – about which we find nothing in Zermegh’s text. Neither did Bethlen refer in his work to the intimate first meeting between King John and Isabella that János Zermegh described in his memoirs. Although Bethlen did recount the clasping of hands mentioned by Istvánffy, he left out the passage regarding the hasty transaction of the meeting.

However, Bethlen was not sufficiently alert, when he adopted the malignantly ambiguous term *rite* that Istvánffy used to describe the coronation. Although the words that Zermegh wrote about the loud acclaim following the coronation would have likely been well-received among those at the Transylvanian court, Farkas Bethlen was unable to introduce this fact to them since the pro-Habsburg Istvánffy had failed to mention it to his readers. Bethlen could accompany the royal couple to Buda only via Istvánffy, though of course did not repeat the remark the latter made about the “vulgar” nature of the amusements that took place there. One may therefore conclude that the couple of sentences that appear in the work of Farkas Bethlen regarding the celebrations held in Székesfehérvár in 1539 have no independent value as a source.⁴⁷

Aside from the political insinuations listed above, Miklós Istvánffy’s text seems in a few cases to be independent from that of Zermegh. However, even in these instances we cannot speak of information that can be traced back to other – verbal or written – sources. We may observe this only when Istvánffy adopts – in rephrased form – Zermegh’s erroneous specification of the date of the event one week before it actually occurred.⁴⁸ Istvánffy appears to have on several occasions rationalized the text of Zermegh’s memoirs. For example, he names the church at which the rite took place⁴⁹ and places the sequence of the ceremonies – which Zermegh certainly transposed – in the correct order. According to Zermegh’s account of the event, the Mass (*sacra fiunt*) followed the coronation, then the wedding took place and, finally, something that we may interpret to be the *Te Deum*. Istvánffy adopts the Mass-coronation sequence from Zermegh, though omits the illogical wedding–*Te Deum* that follow them. The entire Mass could naturally not have preceded the coronation because according to all *ordos* regarding the coronation of kings or queen consorts, following the anointment the sovereign and/or his consort received Holy Communion wearing royal vestments (with the royal insignia having been removed as a display of respect). At the same time, Hungarian practice entailed some instances

47 The author of the following work did not recognize that, with regard to this theme (and apparently in other instances as well), Farkas Bethlen obtained the information from Zermegh’s text only via Istvánffy: Pál Svéda, *Bethlen Farkas Históriája (1526–1571)* (Specimina Dissertationum Facultatis Philosophiae Regiae Hungaricae Universitatis Elizabethinae Quinqueelesiensis 129). Pécs: Kultúra Nyomda, 1938, 20.

48 For the correct date see note 14.

49 See note 17.

in which most of the Mass was performed before the coronation.⁵⁰ The *Te Deum* – which according to the order of coronation ritual was performed either after the enthronement that followed the placement of the crown on the head of the coronated or after the Mass – was unlikely performed twice in a single sequence of ceremonies. It would have been strange to repeat this following a wedding that had perhaps been left to take place after the coronation. The previously mentioned 1502 precedent⁵¹ is less determinant with regard to the order of the wedding and the coronation than the logic of things: after all, this was a matter of investiture of the royal consort and for this to happen a wedding must have taken place. For Istvánffy, who was familiar with court ceremony, the cited text in Zermegh's memoirs may have seemed muddled, thus prompting him to discontinue the narrative after the coronation.

As János Zermegh revealed in his memoirs, he had worked for nearly a decade as a kind of personal secretary for Szaniszló Váraljai, the King John-appointed Provost of Székesfehérvár and the superintendent of the coronation church. However, shortly after the 1539 celebrations in Székesfehérvár, he left this position to undertake service for the pro-Habsburg Elek Thurzó.⁵² Although Zermegh does not explicitly mention that he was in Székesfehérvár during the early days of March 1539, his employment at this time and several passages contained in his memoirs suggest that he indeed was in the city then. It is worth noting that he did not write about the ceremonies in Buda, whereas other contemporary sources consistently provided accounts of them. All sources that recounted details regarding the reception of Isabella before the events in Székesfehérvár can be attributed to Zermegh's description of this incident. Only from Zermegh can we learn that King John and Isabella met for the first time one day before the ceremonies, that is, on Saturday, March 1.⁵³ Only he provided an account of the boisterous clamor that greeted the royal couple as they emerged from the church and attended the "public festivity" that took place on the streets of Székesfehérvár.⁵⁴ (Based on Zermegh's description, we

50 If we remain on the subject of the coronation of queen consorts, then this is precisely what we encounter in the case of Beatrice of Aragon: Eschenloer, *Geschichte der Stadt Breslau*, 995; the Saxon account: Friedrich Albert von Langenn, *Herzog Albert der Beherzte, Stammvater des königlichen Hauses Sachsen*. Leipzig: [s.t.], 1838, 521–522; for the report of Palatinate envoys, see Jacobus Bongarsius (ed.), *Rerum Hungaricarum scriptores varii, historici, geographici*. Frankfurt: apud heredes Andreae Weheli, 1600, 356. The first two sources place the coronation before the *Sanctus*, while the latter source places it before the *Agnus*.

51 The organizers of the 1539 ceremonies were not necessarily aware of this precedent and Istvánffy was certainly not aware – as he could not have seen a royal wedding take place in Hungary on the same day as the coronation of a queen consort during his active years.

52 For the first mention of Zermegh's service for Prevost Szaniszló: Zermegh, *Historia rerum gestarum inter Ferdinandum et Ioannem Vngariae reges*, 59; description of entering the service of Elek Thurzó: *ibid.*, 97.

53 Endre Veress did not use this evocative scene, because he placed the first meeting of the engaged couple at another time and place – again erroneously.

54 I suspect that Endre Veress identified the *Te Deum* as the music that accompanied the public procession because he had failed to take note of the fact that Zermegh clearly stated between his reference to the *Te Deum* (*Actis demum Deo Optimo Maximo gratis*) and his description of the

might suspect those in question to have been the participants in main-square amusements rather than those who attended the coronation banquet.) One might conjecture that the vivid description contained in the text may merely reflect a talent for writing and that as an employee of the provostship he could not have otherwise acquired too much information from his colleagues either – while in the meantime his obligations may have called him elsewhere. Zermegh clearly attempted to flaunt his – not overly refined – knowledge of Latin in his identification of the musical instruments, some of which can hardly be associated with a street event.⁵⁵ However, an author who had acquired his information retroactively would have produced a very fragmentary and – with regard to the ceremonies that took place in the church – imprecise text. It might perhaps be more worthwhile for us to imagine that Zermegh's tasks for the day in question connected him to the outdoor events.

Among the sources describing Isabella's wedding after Zermegh, the detailed and relatively lengthy passages examining these themes stand out in royal chaplain György Szerémi's *Epistola*, a work that he wrote somewhere between 1554 and 1557, thus only a few years after the celebrations in question had taken place. As we have seen, although Endre Veress regarded Szerémi's (distorted) portrayal of the 1526 coronation of King John I to be a suitable starting point for the reconstruction of the similar ceremonies that took place in 1539, he totally ignored what the royal chaplain wrote expressly about the latter events.

Veress's skepticism is legitimate insofar as Szerémi's interpretation of genuine data regarding the coronation of queen consorts assumed the form of statements that literally could not be taken seriously. However, his unjustified decision to omit the account of the royal chaplain in his presentation of the 1539 celebrations in Székesfehérvár is unacceptable. In this way, so much attention would not have been paid until now to Szerémi's outrageous references, which could have provided the opportunity to criticize King John's court. A recurring element of György Szerémi's narrative, which is infused with transports of indignant emotion and presents alarming rumors as fact, is the incorrect dating of events. He got the year of Isabella's wedding wrong (placing it in 1538), for example. Szerémi made this error at the end of a lengthy passage in which the chronological order of events – which elsewhere in the work is only approximate – turns completely on its head.⁵⁶ By far the longest *lacuna* in the work serves to aggravate this significant source of confusion. In this section of the book, the author – who always highlights his own role – appears for the penultimate time in connection to King John's period of "hiding" in the region lying to the east of the Tisza

clamor that the latter occurred *egressi templum*. Elza Wales incorrectly associates the "coronation feast" with the tent mentioned at the time of Isabella's reception: Elza Wales, *Zermegh János emlékirata mint művelődéstörténeti kútforrás*. Bölcsészdoktori értekezés (Művelődéstörténeti értekezések 28). Pozsony: Wigand Nyomda, 1907, 42.

55 "Ioannes Zermeg... hanc historiam rudi et incondito sermone... conscripsit," wrote the author, who used the initials N.I., of the *editio princeps* of the Zermegh biography: Zermegh, *Historia rerum gestarum inter Ferdinandum et Ioannem Vngariae reges*, 3.

56 Wenzel (ed.), Szerémi György... emlékirata, 277–345.

River in late 1532 and early 1533. The release of Hieronymus Łaski from prison in early 1535 – which immediately follows Isabella’s wedding and coronation in the text – represents the latest such event.⁵⁷ The entire *lacuna* and most of the “muddled” part of the text pertain to the period in which – in Szerémi’s words – John spent “more than three years” in Transylvania, from where he returned “four years later” and entered Buda again for the first time after an absence of “five years.”⁵⁸ Later, it occurs to the author that his king spent most of this period in Várad (Oradea, Romania).⁵⁹ These ambiguities and the peculiarities of Szerémi’s account of the celebrations that took place in Székesfehérvár in 1539 become somewhat comprehensible if one reads the statement contained in the first lines of the book according to which the author lived in Buda “for more than 20 years” (that is, counting backwards from the Ottoman capture of the city, from the end of the second decade of the 1500s at the very latest).⁶⁰ Regardless of whether the 1527–1529 “absence” of King John – when Szerémi himself fled from Buda – belongs to this period, the author spent the majority of these years in the capital city and thus obviously was not with the royal court when it settled in Várad for a lengthy period of time. The relationship between the otherwise mobile Szerémi and his lord may have loosened significantly during these years, which could have left its mark on both the aforementioned “muddled” part of the work in general and the depiction of the events in Székesfehérvár that signified the end of the period in particular.

Szerémi began this passage of the book by “magyarizing” Isabella’s name to *Erzsébet* (Elizabeth).⁶¹ As we have already seen, beyond incorrect identification of the year, the author – just as groundlessly – erroneously placed the wedding in Buda on Mardi Gras, while he claimed that following the coronation in Székesfehérvár the royal couple returned to Buda on Palm Sunday (thus on March 30). Szerémi mentioned in passing that King John had a gilded carriage (*grabbatum deauratum*) made for precisely 100 gold florins in order to take him and Isabella back to Buda from Székesfehérvár following the coronation. The latter information contains a kernel of truth. Beginning on January 17, account books for the city of Brassó (Braşov, Romania), frequently mention “the coach of royal majesty” (*currus regie maiestatis*), only the gilding of which very nearly cost the amount reported by Szerémi (painting the carriage consumed another 70 florins).⁶² The mere journey of the gilded carriage with no traveler inside across the Szapolyai-controlled part of Hungary must have been a great spectacle – and in Buda, the author’s permanent residence, as well.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 304–308, 340–345.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 277, 279.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 345.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁶¹ For the entire account of the dual celebration in Székesfehérvár: *ibid.*, 345.

⁶² *Rechnungen aus dem Archiv der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 2: *Rechnungen aus 1526–1540* (Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen, II). Kronstadt: Zeidner, 1889, 604. For the first mention of the carriage: *ibid.*, 605. The cost of gilding and painting the carriage (January 22).

However, György Szerémi had more to say about the royal wedding in addition to the presentation of such picturesque details. He grumbled about the fact that his king had “slept” with his new wife in Székesfehérvár during Lent. Ferdinand, referring to the report that Graf von Salm the Younger had written on March 4, complained that his rival had *quasi privatim consumavit matrimonium*.⁶³ Whereas the Habsburg monarch referred to the nearly immediate departure of some of the throng of guests, the royal chaplain asserted that King John had not observed Lent in the ascetic manner befitting all believers. Szerémi also revealed the fact known from other sources as well that the sovereign received accommodation at the building of the provostship during his stay in Székesfehérvár.⁶⁴ The “rolling around” that occurred during this period of Lent therefore took place in an ecclesiastical building. Avoiding such situations may have previously been one of the reasons – if not the most important reason – for the separation of the weddings and the coronations. As we have seen, among the royal weddings that took place in Hungary during the late Middle Ages, only the nuptials of Vladislaus II were held in Székesfehérvár. According to the account of Pierre Choque, who witnessed the wedding, the royal couple retired to separate chambers the first night, therefore the marriage may have been consummated only a couple of days later, during the celebrations held in Buda.⁶⁵

Szerémi charged that King John had capped his troublesome behavior by spending more than a month in Székesfehérvár “with the agreement of the Lutherans,” whereas according to the law of “the old holy kings,” the sovereign could spend a maximum of “three days and three nights” in a row in this city.⁶⁶ Of course, there is no evidence of laws prescribing the length of the royal sojourn in either the *corpus juris* or the charters of the city. It is true that during the nearly century and a half before the Battle of Mohács, Hungarian kings – following Sigismund’s two-month stay in late 1435 and early 1436 – generally spent only short periods of time in the ancient coronation city.⁶⁷ Matthias Corvinus transcended the narrow framework provided by Szerémi several times, spending as much as

63 See note 14. On the ceremonial differences of consummation as a private or public event between the house of Habsburg and other Central European royal families, see Katarzyna Kosior, *Becoming a Queen in Early Modern Europe. East and West*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 2.

64 Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata*, 395: in 1543, the treacherous citizens of Székesfehérvár invited “[Emperor] Zoltán Selim” – that is Süleyman – to the palace of the provost.

65 Györkös, *Reneszánsz utazás*, 144. The king withdrew to his chamber immediately after the banquet and the dance “because he did not feel well.” Vladislaus was indeed sickly, though he may have refrained from consummating the marriage in an ecclesiastical building as a result of his devout spiritual constitution for which he was well-known.

66 For a similar transgression in 1526: Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata*, 142. (According to the author, King John’s gallant Serbian knight, Bošić Radić, mentioned the ancient law in his mother tongue before the newly crowned king. King John, who according to Szerémi simply ignored this admonition, allegedly laughed in the faces of the priests who cautioned him about this norm in 1539: *ibid.*, 245). There was no mention of Lutherans in connection to 1526, although the author blamed them for the fall of Székesfehérvár in 1543: *ibid.*, 390–391, 393, 394–395.

67 Pál Engel and Norbert C. Tóth, *Itineraria regum et reginarum (1382–1437). Királyok és királynék itineráriuma (1382–1437)* (Subsidia ad historiam medii aevi Hungariae inquirendam 1). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 2005, 130.

two weeks in Székesfehérvár at the time of his coronation and in four subsequent instances committing the transgression presumed by our author.⁶⁸ The diets customarily convened at the time of the coronation of kings also helped to extend the amount of time the sovereign could spend in Székesfehérvár on such occasions: this happened during the reign of Matthias Corvinus, while Vladislaus II spent 9 days in the city and Ferdinand, who felt his position to be secure, spent 16 days in the city in 1490 and 1527, respectively.⁶⁹ If we accept the date that the witness Szerémi specified as that on which John Szapolyai – and he himself – arrived to Székesfehérvár, then the still voivode Szapolyai indeed spent somewhat more time in the coronation city in 1526 than was customary: at least 19 days.⁷⁰ Szerémi's assertion that King John passed "more than two weeks" in Székesfehérvár at this time is valid.⁷¹ Of course, this does not mean that in 1539 the king actually spent the days before Palm Sunday in the city, since a charter was issued on March 2 in Buda.⁷² John, who arrived to Székesfehérvár on either the evening of February

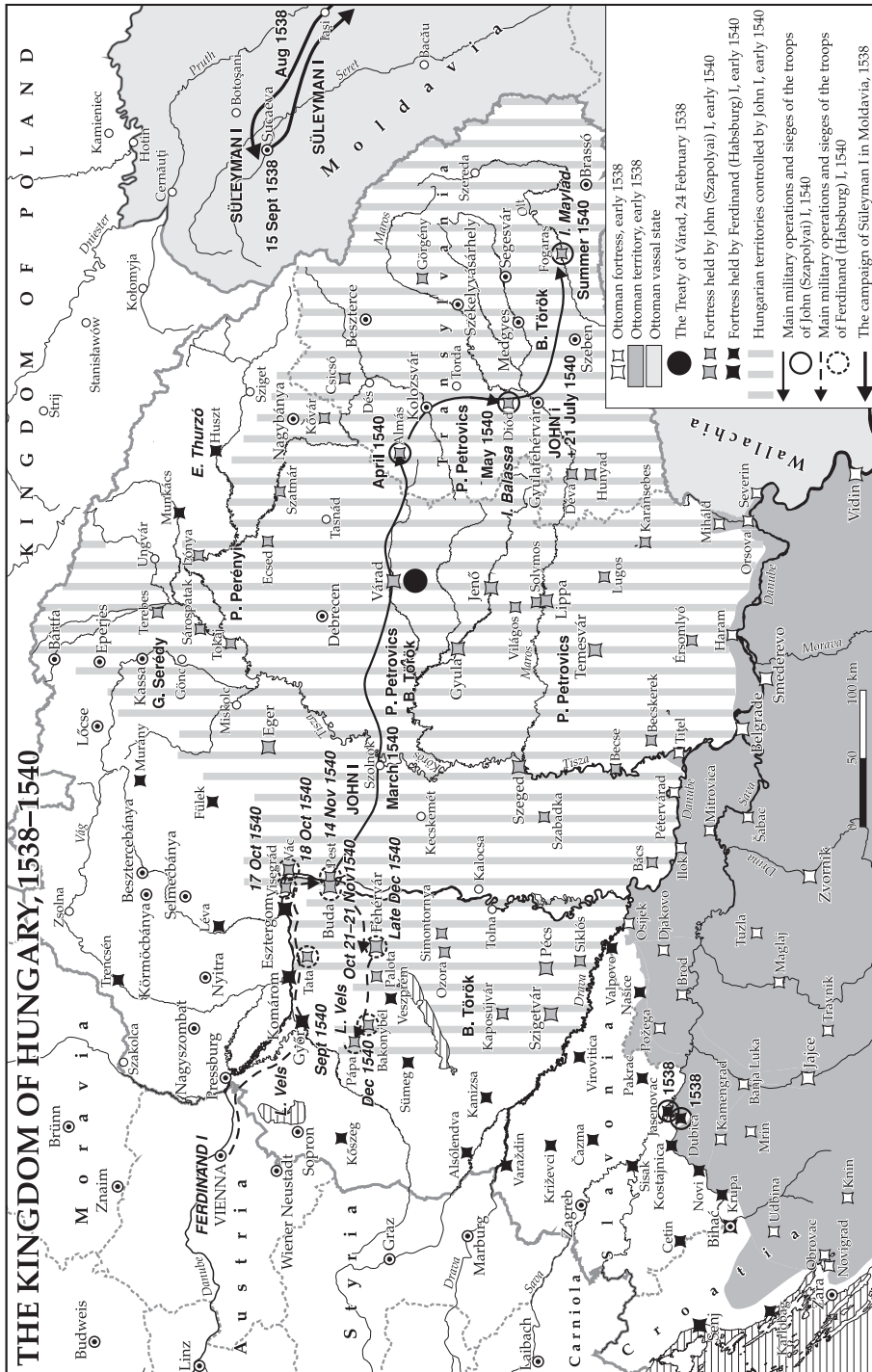
68 Richárd Horváth, *Itineraria regis Matthiae Corvini et reginae Beatricis de Aragonia (1458–[1476]–1490)* (História Könyvtár. Kronológiák, adattárak 12; Subsidia ad historiam medii aevi Hungariae inquirendam 2). Budapest: História–MTA Történettudományi Intézet, 2011, 75. Before the initial March 29, 1464, data regarding the stay in Székesfehérvár, a source dated March 24 provides evidence of the presence of the king in Buda. Since Matthias Corvinus had to return to Buda on April 9, he spent at least 11 days in the coronation city and perhaps up to two weeks. In addition, Matthias passed at least three days in Székesfehérvár in July 1466, December 1476 (at the time of Beatrice's coronation), April 1482 and, finally, in late August and early September of 1489 (the latter visit may have lasted around the same amount of time as that in 1464): *ibid.*, 81, 105, 114, 130.

69 Tibor Neumann, 'II. Ulászló koronázása és első rendeletei (Egy ismeretlen országgyűlésről és koronázási dekrétumról)', *Századok* 142:2 (2008) 318–320; [Anton von Gévay], *Itinerar Kaiser Ferdinand's I., 1521–1564*. Wien: Strauss, 1843, (no page numbers).

70 Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata*, 132. Here Szerémi wrote that they arrived on Friday to Székesfehérvár, where the (first) obsequies in the city for Louis II (*ibid.*, 135) and the election of Voivode John Szapolyai as king (*ibid.*, 135–137) took place on Saturday, the day before the feast day of Saint Martin of Tours, that is, on November 10, while John's coronation took place on the feast day itself, that is, on 11 November (*ibid.*, 137). However, "the most official source," the only existing letter announcing King John's assumption of the throne, reveals that the funeral rites, the royal election and the coronation took place on three successive days, on November 9, 10 and 11: Ernő Simonyi (ed.), *Magyar történelmi okmánytár londoni könyv- és levéltárakból* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica I; Diplomataria 5). Pest: Eggenberger, 1859, 88 (no. 8). Judged by his own standard, Szerémi's inaccuracy is negligible. Vilmos Fraknói adopted without reference the date that Szerémi specified as that on which King John arrived to Székesfehérvár, as did the author of the following work published in the late twentieth century: Gábor Barta, *La route qui mène à Istanbul, 1526–1528* (Studia Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 195). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994, 19. King John dated a document there on the feast day of Saint Catherine of Alexandria (November 25): Georgius Pray (ed.), *Epistolae procerum Regni Hungariae*, vol. 1. Posonii: Ex Typographeo G. A. Belnay, 1806, 285–286 (no. 109). The king then dated a letter on the first Wednesday after the feast day of Saint Catherine, that is, on November 28, in Buda: Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereafter MNL OL), Magyar Kincstári Levéltárak, Magyar Kamara Archivuma, E 148 Neo-regestrata Acta, Fasc. 1035. no. 72.

71 See note 66.

72 MNL OL, Diplomatikai Levéltár 24620. I would like to thank National Archives of Hungary Chief Archivist István H. Németh for helping me find this document.



11 or the following day (that is, one week before Ash Wednesday), even with this availed himself of the provostship's obligatory hospitality for an uncommonly long period of time. At the same time, most of these days passed without the presence of Isabella. Although Szerémi's assertions regularly prove to be inaccurate, he – as others – legitimately remarked that his king had nearly imposed himself upon the Székesfehérvár church and, above all, that the aging groom and his young bride has transformed Lent into the Carnival (much more in Buda than in Székesfehérvár following the consummation of the marriage at the provostship). Due to the prolonged diplomatic preparation for the marriage, King John did not want to wait with this long-awaited development until the end of Lent. The fast consummation of the marriage casted shadow on the judgment of the wedding amusements similarly to the events of 1522 when the wedding festivities of Louis II and Mary of Habsburg were put in a bad light by the loss of Nándorfehérvár.

SUMMARY

We can judge the 1539 wedding of King John I to be perhaps the greatest achievement of his western-oriented diplomacy. The king of the partial country and the “friend” of the sultan was finally able to marry the scion of an illustrious dynasty, thus opening before him the perspective of the birth of an heir. The fact that the pro-Habsburg Arch-bishop of Esztergom Pál Várday agreed – obviously with the approval of Ferdinand I and the papal legate – to officiate at the coronation and very likely at the wedding as well likewise represented a considerable, albeit more minor, success. As a result of the limitations of the papal recognition of John I and the crisis that prevailed within the Catholic hierarchy of Hungary, a single prelate was forced to celebrate both ceremonies. Isabella arrived on the day before the ceremonies to Székesfehérvár, where her fiancé received her. On March 2, 1539, the wedding and the coronation of Isabella took place immediately one after the other at the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the regular site of coronations and the frequent location of royal burials. The events that took place within the walls of this church were obviously conducted according to the practices prescribed in the *rituale* and the *pontificale*. However, we do not know whether the officiating prelate or someone else requested approval from the king and/or those attending the event. Among the authors of the sources at our disposal, only János Zermegh may have been a witness, although the latter offered true-to-life accounts of only the reception of Isabella outside Székesfehérvár and the mood during the amusements that took place following the dual ceremony. These amusements lasted for a conspicuously short amount of time – at least in Székesfehérvár. Following the banquet and the consummation of the wedding at the provostship, the royal couple immediately left for Buda in order to continue these peculiar Lenten celebrations.

Ágnes Máté*

A LITERARY IMAGE OF RENAISSANCE QUEENSHIP: THE MARRIAGE OF ISABELLA JAGIELLON

INTRODUCTION

Isabella Jagiellon, the eldest daughter of King Sigismund I Jagiellon and Queen Bona Sforza, wed King John Szapolyai on March 2, 1539. She was marrying the king of a politically divided country. John Szapolyai was elected by Hungarian nobles and crowned in 1526. In accordance with the Habsburg–Jagiellon marriage contract signed by Vladislaus II and Emperor Maximilian in 1506, however, Ferdinand I Habsburg contested Szapolyai's election, considering himself the rightful king of Hungary. The rivalry between the two kings of Hungary was settled by the Treaty of Várad, less than a year before Isabella's arrival, on February 24, 1538.¹

Humanists of Polish, Italian, Dalmatian and Hungarian origin produced a series of literary works (mainly original, but also one translation) for the wedding of King Szapolyai and Princess Isabella. The Polish humanists Stanisław Aichler² and Sebastian Marszewski³ wrote epithalamia in Latin, Michael Verantius,⁴ a Dalmatian in service of the Hungarian Crown, also wrote an epithalamium, while Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari,⁵ Queen Bona's Italian doctor, reported on the

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1 István György Tóth, *A Concise History of Hungary: The History of Hungary from the Early Middle Ages to the Present*. Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 2005, 188.

2 Stanisław Aichler, *Epithalamium Isabellae, Florentissimae Filiae Serenissimi Regis Poloniae Sigismundi, Ad Serenissimum Maritum Ioannem Hungariae Regem Proficiscentis*. Kraków: Vietor, 1539.

3 Sebastian Marszewski, *Epithalamion In Nuptiis Serenissimi Principis Domini Ioannis Regis Hungariae etc. et Serenissimae Virginis Isabellae Filiae Divi Sigismundi Primi, Invicti Regis Poloniae*. Kraków: Vietor, 1539.

4 György Palotás, 'Verancsics Mihály nászdala Szapolyai János és Jagelló Izabella esküvőjére (1539)', in Ujváry Gábor (ed.), *Lymbus. Magyarságtudományi Forrásközlemények 2012–2013*. Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2014, 25–43.

5 Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari, *De Foelici Connubio Serenissimi Ungariae Regis Joannis et S. Isabellae Poloniae Regis Filiae, et de Meritissimis Utriusque Serenissimi Sigismundi Poloniae Regem, Ac Reginae*

royal wedding in a Latin letter. The newly married royal couple also received another literary artefact as a wedding gift: the first Hungarian translation of Francis Petrarch's story of Griseldis prepared by a graduate of Padua University, Pál Istvánffy.⁶ These men of letters employed their literary talents in order to contribute to the splendor of the wedding festivities, but their works were not a mere display of literary mastery and sophistication. They engaged in defining the implications of the new dynastic union to both countries and they expressed their hopes as well as their anxieties regarding the political future. My paper shows how their social, cultural and political programs were reflected in their poems, letters and dedications.

On the one hand, I analyze their descriptions of the figure of an ideal Renaissance queen; on the other hand, I show how these ideals translated into the expectations of new subjects towards the actual Queen Isabella. I am going to analyze the descriptions of Isabella's appearance and character and the functions of comparisons of the new queen of Hungary to mythological and/or historical figures. I will also elaborate on the perception among Hungarians of Isabella as an "Italian princess" inherited from the maternal side. Other epithalamia written for the Jagiellonian dynastic marriages – namely texts dedicated to the weddings of Isabella's father, King Sigismund's I, with Borbála/Barbara Szapolyai (1512) and Bona Sforza (1518), as well as to the wedding of her elder half-sister Hedwig/Jadwiga Jagiellon with Joachim II Brandenburg (1535) – will provide a context for my investigation.

VIEWPOINTS OF EPITHALAMIA AND THEIR AUDIENCE

Often even the first look at the titles in my corpus convincingly suggests whose viewpoint is espoused in each text. It is no surprise that the literary sources produced in (connection to) the court of Kraków served as the eulogy of Queen Isabella. They described the events according to the taste of the Polish court, employing classical allusions and traditional elements of occasional wedding poetry. The works produced by the humanists who were subjects of the Hungarian Crown, on the other hand, communicated the perspective of the royal groom, King Szapolyai. They narrated the events in accordance with Hungarian interests and communicated the expectations of Hungarians towards the queen. Compared to poems proceeding from the Polish circles, the Hungarian poems refrained from abundant mythological embellishments.

Stanisław Aichler's collection of three poems bears the title "*Epithalamium Isabellae, florentissimae filiae serenissimi regis Poloniae Sigismundi, ad serenissimum maritum Ioannem Hungariae regem proficiscentis.*" This work narrates the

Sforciae Laudibus, Necnon et Totius Poloniae Regni. Epistola Jacobi Ferdinandi Bariensis Ad Excellentem, Ac Magnificum Dominum Nicolaum Antonium Carmignanum, Nobilem Neapolitanum, Bariensem Castellatum, et Reginalem Thesaurarium. Kraków: Vietor, 1539.

⁶ Pál Ács, 'Boccaccio Baranyában: Egy kivételes értelmiségi pálya a 16. század első felében: Istvánffy Pál', in Pál Ács and Gergely Tóth (eds.), „A magyar történet folytatója.” *Tanulmányok Istvánffy Miklósról.* Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2018, 37–58.

fictionalized development of love between King Szapolyai and Queen Isabella that led to the wedding itself from the viewpoint of the Polish princess. Another Polish humanist, Sebastian Marszewski, also focuses on Isabella, despite the fact that he places King John I Szapolyai before the queen in the title of his work: "*Epithalamion In Nuptiis Serenissimi Principis Domini Ioannis Regis Hungariae etc. et Serenissimae Virginis Isabellae Filiae Divi Sigismundi Primi, Invicti Regis Poloniae.*"

Based on its title, one would suppose that Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari's letter sent to an acquaintance in Italy contains a description of the royal wedding in Kraków in 1539, as the title starts with the expression *De foelici connubio*. "*De foelici connubio serenissimi Ungariae regis Joannis et S. Isabellae Poloniae regis filiae, et de meritissimis utriusque serenissimi Sigismundi Poloniae Regem, ac Reginae Sforciae laudibus, Necnon et totius Poloniae Regni. Epistola Jacobi Ferdinandi Bariensis ad excellentem, ac magnificum Dominum Nicolaum Antonium Carmignanum, Nobilem Neapolitanum, Bariensem Castellatum, et Reginalem thesaurarium.*" It is, however, enough to read the first two pages of the letter to understand that Queen Bona's Italian doctor wrote about the royal wedding to his acquaintance almost in passing and dedicated much more space and energy to the eulogy of King Sigismund I and particularly to praise of Queen Bona. Thus I will refer to his letter only for corroboration of the information about Isabella derived from other sources.

Our sources connected to Hungary, on the other hand, represent King Szapolyai's view of the events. The epithalamium of the Dalmatian Michael Verantius entitled "*Ioannis Hungariae regis nuptiae*" describes how the Hungarian king considers *his* situation and decides to marry, how *he* falls in love with Isabella, how *he* sends his envoys to Kraków and how the pre-marriage negotiations and ceremonies of the wedding were derived from *the viewpoint of Szapolyai's* representatives.

Finally, Pál Istvánffy's ambiguous wedding gift to the royal couple, despite having been written in Hungarian, originally bore a Latin title: "*Historia regis Volter.*" As I have mentioned above, this text is the first Hungarian version of Petrarch's "*De insigni obedientia et fide uxoris*", the Griseldis tale, which in Petrarch's rendering focuses on the exceptional patience of Griseldis, marchioness of Saluzzo. While in Petrarch's view Griseldis is a metaphor for the Christian soul obeying God's orders, the Hungarian translator interprets the story more to the letter, recommending it as an exemplary work. According to Istvánffy, husbands should cite Griseldis as an example to their wives as the incipit of his work suggests: "*Egy krónikát mondok, urak, hallgassátok!... Asszony-házastoknak például adjatok*"⁷ (I am recounting a chronicle, listen to me, my lords!... You can give this as an example to your lady wives). As I have argued before, the Hungarian translation of the Griseldis story served as instruction to Queen

7 Pál Istvánffy, 'Volter és Griseldis históriája', in József Jankovics, Péter Kőszeghy and Géza Szentmártoni Szabó (eds.), *Régi magyar irodalmi szöveggyűjtemény II. A 16. század magyar nyelvű világi irodalma*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2000, 280.

Isabella about the expected behavior of an “Italian” lady in Hungary.⁸ The story exhorts the lady to obey her husband and on a more metaphorical level also to honor the interests of the kingdom. I will later return to the problem of the Italian queen in Hungary when discussing the wishes and expectations towards Isabella expressed in Verantius’ epithalamium.

“POLISH” EULOGY

Perspectives of Kraków and Buda élites on the Jagiellon–Szapolyai marriage were certainly different, but what was the predominant opinion of the Polish court? Poles believed that Isabella was an excellent bride-to-be and their poets did not shy away from praising her beauty and virtues. Let us take a closer look at Stanisław Aichler’s collection. Its first piece is entitled *Epithalamium Isabellae*. His description of the preparation for the wedding festivities concludes with a refrain referring back to ancient epithalamia tradition, namely to *Carmen* 61 of Catullus: “Hymen, o Hymenaeae, adsis comes, o Hymenaeae. / An te nupta usque reperitur clarior ulla?”⁹ (Hymen, o Hymen, please be present. / Would anyone find a more renowned bride then you are?) After encouraging the newly wed queen to travel to her new country, the author describes Isabella as follows:

*“Eminet admiranda tuae prestantia formae.
Quis te non omnes veneres simul omnibus unam
Surripuisse putet? Niveo color emicat ore
Purpureus: veluti cum Amaranthis, candida nymphae
Lilia contexunt. Floret tua blandula cervix:
Non secus, ac nitidis, variisque, Hyacinthus in hortis,
Exultant oculi tanque duo lumina mundi:
Humanas acies, nimio fulgure retundunt.
Quid multis opus? Incedis pulcherrima tota:
Talis erat, coniunx Thebaei splendida Regis,
Antiopa et formosa Semiramis isse refertur
taliter in thalamos. Argiam fama fuisse
Talem testatur. Si tu certamen in illud
Tergeminum, Idaeo quod erat sub Iudice morum
Venisses, dubiam spectasset Cypria palmam.”*¹⁰

(The admirable excellence of your body is outstanding. / Who would not think that you have all the / beauties at the same time? Your snow-white cheeks are tinged / with purple color: similarly to the nymphs who wreath / the white lilies with amaranth (pigweed). Your neck flourishes not unlike the white and

8 Ágnes Máté, ‘Il ruolo del capro espiatorio delle regine ovvero la storia di Griselda come spaeculum reginae nella cultura ungherese’, *Rivista di Studi Ungheresi* Nuova Serie 15 (2016) 7–23.

9 Aichler, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, A2r, ll. 21–22.

10 *Ibid.*, A2v–A3r, ll. 41–55.

multiple hyacinths in the gardens / Your eyes rejoice as two lights of the world: / they are sharp as human eyes but with their powerful lightning they restrain us. / What are all these word for? You exceed all the most beautiful ladies: / Similar was the splendid wife of the King of Theba, Antiope, / and they say the formidable Semiramis went to the marriage bed looking like this. / Rumor has it that Argia was also similar. If you could enter the contest with the / three goddesses who accepted the whim of the Judge from Ida, / the palm would dubiously go to Venus.)

Aichler praises the different parts of the queen's face: the red and snow-white or pink color of her cheeks, her white neck and her sharp and shiny eyes. Isabella's beauty is compared to six heroines from Greek mythology: in addition to Antiope, Semiramis and Argia, the three goddesses competing for the judgment of Paris (with their Roman names Minerva, Venus and Juno) are mentioned.

The allusion to Minerva, Venus and Juno is traditional in epithalamia, as often the bride's beauty and talents are depicted as gifts from these three goddesses. For instance, there is at least one example in earlier Polish humanistic epithalamia in which the bride is said to exceed the goddesses in beauty. I refer to a place of epithalamium by Eoban Koch Hesse, a German neo-Latin writer, in which he describes Queen Barbara Szapolyai of Poland as follows: "*Quam Phrygia si forte Paris vidisset in Ida, / Aurea non Veneri stupefactis poma dedisset. / Quam sibi nec Iuno, nec Pallas glauca doloret / praelatam, tantum formosior omnibus illa est.*"¹¹ (If Paris could have seen such a lady in Phrygia on mount Ida, / he would not give the golden apple to surprised Venus. / And the heavenly Iuno nor Pallas would mind / that she got it, so much she exceeds in beauty all of them.) Aichler's selection of the three mortal heroines seems, however, a bit more unusual and ambiguous. Antiope was a Theban princess whom Zeus/Jupiter raped in the form of a satyr. (One can hope that this was not a reference to the age of King Szapolyai, who was 32 years older than Isabella.) The Argia mentioned by Aichler is most probably the wife of the Theban Polyneices, who burned her husband's corpse and buried his ashes in defiance of King Creon's order. (Again, could one interpret the figure of Argia as an admonition to Isabella that she may also have to bury her elderly husband?) Argia also appears in the "*oratio thalamis*" written by Georgius Libanus (Jerzy Liban) for the wedding of Hedwig Jagiellon and Joachim of Brandenburg: "*Sunt etiam, qui peregrinas, utpote graecas suis laudibus prosequantur... moedestiam in Argia, pietatem in Anthigone, in Didone constantiam admirantes.*"¹² (There are even some, who

11 Eoban Koch Hesse, 'Encomium Nuptiale Divo Sigismundo Poloniae Regi Scriptum', in Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedz (eds.), *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999, 116, ll. 89–92.

12 "Nam sunt, qui Romanorum veteres matronas, singulas singulis laudibus attollunt, et Lucretiae quidem pudicitiam ascribunt. Marciae gravitatem pium, impetum Veturiae. Coniugalis ardoris amorem Portiae, Claudiae hilaritatem sobriam, Iuliae facetias et eloquentiam muliebrem, urbanitatem Ceciliae, Liviae maiestatem. Corneliarum, alteri generosum robur animi, alteri morum verborumque dulcedinem. Sunt etiam, qui peregrinas, utpote graecas suis laudibus prosequantur, in Penelope honestatem, in

describe in detail their praise for foreigners, namely for Greeks... admiring the modesty of Argia, the piety of Antigone and the constancy of Dido.) In this text from 1535, Argia is mentioned alongside Antigone, thus one can be sure that the allusion is to Polyneices' faithful widow, Argia, who acted against the new king's ungodly laws. Semiramis, the third of the mortal heroines to whom Isabella is compared in Aichler's text is also hardly an obvious role model. The queen of Nineveh was indeed remembered in history as an exceptional beauty, but also as a woman surrounded by luxury who, according to certain sources (e.g., Giacomo Filippo Foresti's *De claris mulieribus*, dedicated to Queen Beatrice of Naples),¹³ even tried to sleep with her own son. What one may detect here in Aichler's text is the same method of selection that had been used by humanists since at least Giovanni Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* when referring to mythological heroes with a complicated and often contradictory history. According to this selective method, the *litterati* emphasized the qualities of a heroine who was suitable for their own goals in a specific context, while attempting to diminish, underestimate or simply omit those parts of the heroines' stories that were not compatible with their narratives. Humanists used such double-edged weapons in the story of Queen Dido, for instance. According to Virgilian tradition, Dido became the lover of Aeneas and thus unfaithful to the memory of her late husband; but in the eyes of Boccaccio and Petrarch, who also took into consideration different sources than Virgil, the queen of Carthage and the refugee from Troy had never met.¹⁴

The reference to Semiramis also appears in the above-mentioned eulogy for Bona Sforza by Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari, which may provide us with a better explanation of this issue: "*Semiramim quoque Nini uxorem factis excelsisse heroicis, imperii auxisse fines, magna cum laude annis quadraginta duobus imperasse, et Babilonem sumptuosus aedificiis fossis ac moenibus pulchriorem ac firmiorem redidisse.*"¹⁵ (Semiramis also, wife of Ninus, excelled with heroic achievements, she expanded the borders of the empire, she reigned gloriously for forty-two years, and she made Babylon a more beautiful and more solid city by erecting lavish buildings, channels and walls.) "*Cum Sforciam Reginam intueor, plures Semirames mihi sese offerunt.*"¹⁶ (When I look at the Sforza Queen, I see a lot of Semiramis in her.) The Italian doctor speaks highly of the queen of Nineveh,

Arthemisia amorem immortalem, in Ipsicratea tolerantiam, in Thamiri fortitudinem, consilium in Thetide, moedestiam in Argia, pietatem in Anthigone, in Didone constantiam admirantes." Georgius Libanus (Jerzy Liban), *In sponsalibus illustrissimi Principis Ioachimi Brandenburgensi Dei gratia, totius Marchiae D. Sacri Romani Imperii electoris et dux, cum Serenissima Principe, virgine Hedvige Invictissimi Sigismundi Regis Poloniae natu maiore filia, genialem transiret in thalamum Oratio, habita Cracoviae per M. Georgium Libanus Legnicensem.* Kraków: Ungler, 1535. Exemplar quoted: Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, Cim. 36. pages unnumbered.

13 "*Sed nec filio misceri erubuit a quo cum concubitus expostulasset ab eodem interfecta est.*" Giacomo Filippo Foresti, *De claris selectisque mulieribus.* Ferrara: Laurentius de Rubeis de Valentia, 1497, 16r–17v. (De Semiramide Assyrorum Regina capitulum quartum).

14 Craig Kallendorf, 'Boccaccio's Dido and the Rhetorical Criticism of Virgil's 'Aeneid'', *Studies in Philology* 82:4 (1985) 401–415.

15 da Bari, *De Foelici Connubio*, A3v.

16 *Ibid.*, B1r.

mentioning the great achievements of Semiramis as a collaborator with her husband in governing and developing his realm. It is possible that not only the Italian doctor of Queen Bona, but also other Kraków-based *litterati*, including Aichler, followed the tradition surrounding Semiramis that emphasized the previously mentioned activities of the queen and thus related the ancient figure to both Bona and her daughter. Along these lines of argumentation, one can interpret Semiramis as a good example of a queen who helps her royal husband in all of his endeavors. Therefore, besides being comparable in beauty, Semiramis could serve as a model of queenship for Isabella as well. In a more sophisticated, allegorical way Semiramis could also be a reference to Queen Bona, thus encouraging the princess to follow her mother's example of behavior in her new country. Let us not forget, though, that the Italian subjects of Queen Bona viewed her much differently than her Polish subjects did. I will return to this topic below.

If one considers Isabella's description in the other Polish humanist epithalamium, i.e., the work of Sebastian Marszewski, Aichler's mythological choices seem a bit more sophisticated or peculiar. Marszewski more traditionally compares Isabella to Helen, stating that her beauty is worth fighting for as much as Leda's daughter was. Marszewski referred also to Isabella's intellectual capacities, again using classical examples. In his opinion Isabella is comparable to Penelope in her modesty (*pudor*)¹⁷ and to Sappho in her cleverness (*ingenii decus*):

*"Qualeis nexistis violas et vatibus ipsae,
Aut quales meruit divino munere formae
Ledae progenies, Paridis fax, fax quoque Troiae:
Et quas Penelope sancti tulit ergo pudoris
Ingeniique decus Sappho, Musaea sacerdos.
Namque ISABELLA tenet haec singula solaque nobis...
Omnia bella gerens: An non certamine digna est
Ut coeant inter se animis gravibusque lacertis
Mille proci optatamque petant per vulnera sponsam
Digna viro ut fiat post multum sanguinis uxor:
Sic commissa diu memoratur Graecia Teucris,
Ob praestans Helenae decus et per cornua tauri
Torva cient pugnas, nivea spectante iuvenca.
Dicitur at felix merito IANUSSIUS heros,
Teque habet solus, et quam sine pulvere vincat."*¹⁸

(What kind of violas the poets ascribed to her, / or those, that Leda's progeny, the torch of Paris, and the torch of Troy itself / deserved as a divine gift: And

17 Penelope and Cornelia also appear in Libanus' oration dedicated to Princess Hedwig. Libanus, *In sponsalibus*. "Sunt etiam, qui peregrinas, utpote graecas suis laudibus prosequantur, in Penelope honestatem... admirantes." "Faxit Deus optimus Maximus ut alter ab altero coniugali amore ita teneatur, veluti a Graccho sua Cornelia, et a Portia Brutus suus, annos vero foelicissimos ad senectutem usque."

18 Marszewski, *Epithalamion In Nuptiis*, A2r, ll. 29–34, 38–46.

those gifts of holy modesty that Penelope had / and the ornament of talent which Sappho had and the priests of the Muse, / For us all of them is represented only by ISABELLA... All fight against each other: whether is she not worthy / for thousands of suitors would fight each other by heart and with powerful arms / to deserve the long-desired bride by their wounds, / and after a lot of blood was shed she would become wife of the worthy man: / This is how for a long time the Greek adventure of the Trojans is remembered, / who for the outstanding beauty of Helene and because of the fierce horn of the bull / waiting for the snow-white cow started the battles. / And they say, only the happy lord of IANUSSIUS / deserved to have you, whom he won effortlessly.)

Moreover, Queen Isabella's eloquence is comparable to that of Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi brothers, though the Hungarian queen exceeds the Roman *matrona* in this art, as she speaks not only Latin, but three other languages as well. Thus she will also easily learn a fifth language, the mother tongue of her husband.

*"Ipsa viri sensus dictis et pectora mulcet,
Librans nectareo quicquid depromit ab ore,
Verbaque Palladio illinens cum melle latina:
Non minus ut Gracchae mater Cornelia gentis
Eloquio valuit, docto et stirpem imbuit ore,
Sed minus illa tamen, quae non nisi verba latina
Calluit, ista quatergemino est insignis ab ore,
Instruet et quintum facile Ianussius Heros."*¹⁹

(She bruises the man's chest and senses by words, / whatever she pronounces opening her mellifluous lips, / Anointing the Pallas-like words with the honey of Latin: / Not unlikely as mother Cornelia prevailed on the Gracchi family / by her erudition, and instructed her kin with her savant mouth, / But she was less than this one, as she was proficient only in Latin, / while this one is fluent in four languages / and the fifth one will be easily taught to her by lord Ianussius.)

The last half-sentence about learning Hungarian was clearly an exhortation, as queens were generally expected to speak the language of their new country in order to fully embrace their adopted soil. This was, for instance, a clear suggestion given to Beatrice of Naples by one of her father's courtiers before leaving for Hungary from her native city.²⁰ The multilingualism of Isabella is also mentioned by Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari, as – in addition to her beauty and good manners – one of her most precious qualities: "*Nonne videmus quam quatuor linguarum idiomata tam bene calleat: optime enim Latine, Italice, Polonicae ac Germanicae et scribit et loquitur, ut omnibus qui audiant maximae sit admirationi.*"²¹

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, A3r, ll. 73–80.

²⁰ See especially the chapter entitled "*De lingua panonica edocenda.*" Diomedes Carafa, *De institutione vivendi – Tanítás az életvezetés szabályairól – Emlékeztető Magyarország felséges királynéjának*, translated by É. Vigh and I. D. Lázár, edited by P. Ekler. Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, 2006, 41–42.

²¹ da Bari, *De Foelici Connubio*, A2r.

(It is so that we have seen how proficient she is in four languages: for she excellently writes as well as speaks in Latin, Italian, Polish and German, so anyone hearing it admires her for it.)

The eulogy of Isabella on the part of Polish humanists reached its peak with Stanisław Aichler's epigram written about the princess, which repeats the adjective *bellus* no less than 16 times, understanding the queen's name as a *figura pseudo-etymologica*, a composite word of the prefix *isa* (equal to) and *bella* (beautiful). In this poem both Isabella's appearance, body, intellectual capacities, as well as her manners are characterized as "beautiful" with the rhetorical device of polyptoton:

*"De eadem epigramma
 Bellis musarum ornata refulges.
 Bello animos hominum flectis et eloquio.
 Te circumreptat bella catena.
 Adspirat morum gratia bella tibi.
 Ausonias belle calles ductare choreas.
 Quidquid agis bellum est omnia bella cupis.
 Frons tibi bella, genae bellae sunt, labraque bella,
 Bella manus, lucent lumina bella tua.
 Bellum collum, aures bellas, bellum quoque nasum
 Fers, toto incedis corpore bello Venus.
 Quid multis moro? An non tu Isabella vocaris,
 Ipsa Isabella es, desino, iam stupeo."*²²

(Epigram on the same. When in full dress, you stand out of the beautiful Muses. / With your beautiful erudition you also persuade people. / You are ensnared by beautiful chains. / You are inspired by beautiful habits. / You are versed in leading beautifully round dances of Ausonius. / Whatever you do is beautiful and you desire everything beautiful. / Your forehead is beautiful, your face is beautiful, and your lips are beautiful, / Your hands are beautiful, your beautiful eyes are shining. / Beautiful neck, beautiful ears, also the nose is beautiful. / The whole of the beautiful body of yours exceeds the beauty of Venus. / Why linger more? Even if you would not be called Isabella, / Isabella You are, so I stop now, as I am speechless.)

Such playful etymologies of names are also present in the epithalamia for queens Barbara Szapolyai and Bona Sforza. As Queen Szapolyai had a Christian name with a negative meaning, Eoban Hesse made sure to interpret it in the right way: "*Barbara non vultu, sed nomine Barbara tantum, / Nobilium quam lecta manus stipantia circum / Agmina densabat longisque effulsit in armis.*"²³ (Barbarous not by her face, but instead by her name Barbara she is, / As the bride surrounded by the circle of nobles she comes, / And the troop in shiny armor thickening around her.) Emphasizing the correlation of Queen Bona's name with her

²² Aichler, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, B1r.

²³ Koch Hesse, 'Encomium Nuptiale', 122.

qualities was an obvious rhetorical choice employed by Wawrzyniec Korwin (Laurentius Corvinus), a Silesian humanist, in his epithalamium written for the second wedding of Sigismund I: "*Sic regina Bona est praeclarum nomen adepta / Congrua cumque suis nomina rebus habet.*"²⁴ (As queen Bona is fit to wear this bright name, / Her deeds are in accordance with her name.)

"HUNGARIAN" EXPECTATIONS

After all the praise one can read in the works dedicated to Isabella Jagiellon by her Polish subjects, it is quite striking how laconic Isabella's description is in Michael Verantius' epithalamium. As I mentioned above, Verantius narrated the events from King Szapolyai's point of view, but it is nevertheless surprising that the new queen's appearance and character is mentioned only in the context of her ladies-in-waiting, whom she obviously outshines:

*"Quin etiam longo procedunt ordine matres
Hungariaeque nurus, quas altis curribus ingens
turba puellarum sequitur. Formosa videri
corpora, sed longe superat formosior omnes
regina. Ac dubium est, formane an moribus esset
admiranda magis, pariterque excellit utroque."*²⁵

(So in a long line are coming the ladies / of Hungary's daughter-in-law, who are followed by a great crowd / of girls sitting on coaches. They are very beautiful / in appearance, but the queen is far more beautiful / than any of them. It is even hard to decide, whether she is / to be admired more for her body or for her manners, as she equally exceeds them from both aspects.)

Eulogy of the new queen receives little attention in this work, but there are some well-placed lines about the expectations towards Isabella. The most important task of a queen was to assure the continuity of the royal house by giving birth to a male heir. In Verantius' poem it is Sigismund I, the bride's father, who expresses the hopes for Isabella's future offspring.

*"I, felix, felixque tuo sociare marito,
nata, precor, thalamisque habitet concordia vestrīs.
Ambobusque simul centum regnare per annos
dent superi, tribuant sobolem longosque nepotes.
O mihi si totidem proferrent numina menses,
quod satis esse queat, parvum vidisse nepotem
et matrem te nata novam. Tum claudere demum
morte diem, et longe componere membra quieti.*

24 Wawrzyniec Korwin, 'Epithalamium in nuptiis Sigismundi Regis Poloniae et Bonae Sphorciae', in Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedz (eds.), *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999, 204, ll. 33–34.

25 Palotás, 'Verancsics Mihály nászdala', 38, ll. 184–189.

*Felici et longo functus, non deprecor aevo.
Sic ait, ac fessis circumdat colla lacertis
moerentis natae.”²⁶*

(Go, my lucky daughter, and luckily unite with your husband. / I pray for your marriage bed would see your harmony together. / May the gods give both of you a hundred-year-long reign, / and grant a lot of progeny and descendants. / Oh, if the gods would just let me live still as many harvests / as would be enough for me to see my little grandson / and you, my daughter, as a new mother. Then exactly I would finish my days, / and prepare my body for eternal peace. / After enduring happily and for so long, I do not mind being old. / He said, and spreading his weary arms he embraced his mourning daughter's neck.)

The importance of royal offspring was also emphasized in Aichler's epithalamium, as the last two lines containing the wish for a male child were printed with capital letters: “REGIS NATA, SOROR REGIS, NUNC REGIS ET UXOR. / O UTINAM, REGUM MATER CELEBERRIMA FIAS.”²⁷ (Born from a king, sister of a king, now also wife to a king. / I wish you would soon become also the most famous mother of a king.)

The question of offspring was quite a pressing one for the newlyweds, because within the context of the sixteenth century the 52-year-old King Szapolyai was quite an old man. Moreover, during the lifetime of King Szapolyai two of his predecessors had married young and beautiful ladies who could not fulfill their most important task and provide a legitimate male heir to their royal husbands. The first of these two ladies was none other than Queen Beatrice of Naples (or Aragon), a distant relative of Isabella on the maternal side. Queen Beatrice was a great aunt of Queen Bona Sforza, as Bona's grandfather (Alfonso II of Aragon) and Beatrice were siblings. The other childless queen of Hungary was Maria of Habsburg, who was widowed in 1526 when her husband, Louis II Jagiellon, perished at the Battle of Mohács. Louis of Jagiellon, in turn, was also

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 37–38, ll. 165–175. I do not agree with György Palotás's conclusion that this Maria was Maria of Anjou, queen of Hungary in the fourteenth century. I think that due to the time frame of the poem this was Maria of Habsburg. Another argument *a posteriori* is a poem by Johannes Bocatius dedicated to Zsuzsanna Károlyi, elected queen of Hungary. In that poem the two queens, Maria of Habsburg and Beatrice of Naples, were mentioned together because of the mines that traditionally were given to the queens as a dowry: “*Dii minerales compellant principissam fodinas intrantem / Ingressae fuerant nos illa, Maria, Beatrix, / Par reginarum, tuque Susanna, subis. / Veneris huc sospes, dein sospes abiveris: aurum. / Hoc, aes reginae servit et omne suae.*” Ioannes Bocatius, *Opera Quae Exstant Omnia. Poetica 2*, edited by Franciscus Csonka. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, 843, poem no. 1070.

²⁷ Aichler, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, A3v. The same wish was expressed in the oration by Archbishop of Gniezno Stanisław Łaski at the wedding of King Sigismund I and Bona Sforza. According to the oration, being already a son, brother and nephew to kings, the task of Sigismund I was to father sons who would emulate his virtues. Although the text addressed the situation of the king, the message was clearly directed to the new queen, Bona Sforza. See Katarzyna Kosior ‘Outlander, Baby Killer, Poisoner? Rethinking Bona Sforza's Black Legend’, in Carey Fleiner and Elena Woodacre (eds.), *Virtuous or Villainous? The Image of the Royal Mother from the Early Medieval to the Early Modern Era*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 201.

Isabella's relative, her cousin on the paternal side. Due to her family connections to both of the childless and unlucky queens of Hungary, Isabella could certainly understand the subtext of the following lines from Verantius' work in which the Hungarians greet their new queen at the border:

*"Salve, Sarmatici proles dignissima regis,
Pannonici regina soli. Felixque penates
ingredere antiquos, quibus ingens sceptrum tenebat
Romani imperii quondam Sismundus et acer
Matthias, toto qui gestis notus in orbe est,
et Ladislavus patruus. Tibi debita regna
non aliena petis, gentilem sume coronam,
et Maria regnes felicius et Beatrice."*²⁸

(Hail, most worthy offspring of the Sarmatian king, / only queen of Pannonians. Come happily to / the ancient household gods, under whom the mighty scepter / of the Roman Empire was once held by Sigismund and by the fierce / Matthias, who is known for his deeds throughout the globe, / and by your uncle, Ladislavus. Do hurry into a kingdom / which is thankful and not alien to you, to receive the national crown, / and do reign more happily than Maria did and Beatrice.)

THE ITALIAN QUEEN IN HUNGARIAN HISTORICAL MEMORY

The Sforza–Jagiellon princess may have come from "Sarmatia," as Verantius stated, but her future Hungarian subjects were suspicious of her Italian heritage. This prejudice had a dual origin: on the one hand, Isabella's Italian mother, Queen Bona, determined the attitude of the Hungarians towards her; on the other hand, there was also the bad memory of Beatrice of Naples as an Italian queen on the throne of Hungary 40 years previously. The powerful mother and disliked great aunt cast a shadow on Isabella's reputation before she even crossed the Hungarian border.

According to the Italian historian Paolo Giovio, Isabella was a perfect incarnation of both her Italian and Polish cultural heritage. In the eyes of her own father, King Sigismund I, the princess was "[una] *fanciulla di virile et erudito ingegno; e quel che molto importò per allettare l'animo di lui* (i.e., the king's) *amabilissima per vaghezza Italiana e per leggiadria Polonica.*"²⁹ (An adolescent of virile and erudite mind; and what was most important for delighting the king, she was adorable for her Italian vagueness and Polish gracefulness.) Isabella's Italian cultural heritage, however, was unavoidably associated with her mother's behavior, which often provoked opposition in Poland. Beside Bona's very active involvement in politics, which the Polish nobility tried to limit with little success, the Polish queen's sexual ethics were also publicly questioned. I refer to a case

²⁸ Palotás, 'Verancsics Mihály nászdala', 39, ll. 197–204.

²⁹ Paolo Giovio, *Delle Istorie Del Suo Tempo. Seconda parte*. Vinegia: al Segno delle Colonne, 1581, 269.

of a certain Giovanni Cerdone, chaplain of Santa Maria in domo Thurzonis in Kraków, who in 1533 expressed words "*contra reginalem Maiestatem*" with regard to Bona Sforza, quoting the first line of an apparently well-known poem. The slanderous epigram read as follows: "*Regina Bona contulit nobis tira dona, / Faciem pictam, / Vulvam non strictam, / Et monetam fictam.*"³⁰ (Queen Bona brought us three gifts, / A face with makeup on, / A vulva not narrow, / And some false coins.) According to Gerardo Cioffari's reconstruction, these lines were supposedly pronounced by Sigismund I the Old after the first night spent together with Queen Bona, referring to the makeup, the non-existing virginity and the false coins Bona brought as a dowry. This short and quite nasty poem stated that Queen Bona failed to live up to two out of the four expectations that were expressed in the epithalamium by Paulus Crosnensis (Paweł z Krosna) written to the previous wife of Sigismund I, Barbara Szapolyai: "*Est praesto multis virgo circumdata donis, / Cui dos, nobilitas, forma, pudicitia.*" (in the margin: Quattuor in matrimonio quaeritur.)³¹ (She is a virgin possessing a lot of goods, / which are her dowry, nobility, body and chastity.)

Since the previous queen of Sigismund I, Barbara Szapolyai, was of Hungarian origin and the Hungarian court was eager to follow the news about the Polish royal family even after her death, it is quite probable that such gossip also reached the Hungarian élites already by the time of Bona's marriage to Sigismund, or perhaps sometime later.³² The above-mentioned Giovanni Cerdone served in a church connected to members of the powerful Thurzó family, Hungarian aristocrats with interests in Silesia and Poland as well. Hungarian and Italian historians seem to have been well-informed about the private lives of Queen Bona and Queen Isabella over the coming years as well. For instance, it was Hungarian bishop and historian Ferenc Forgách who told stories about the merry widowhood of Bona in his *Commentarii*.³³ Forgách depicted both Sigismund August, the king of Poland, and Isabella (then governor of Transylvania) as sexually insatiable due to their mother's Italian blood.³⁴ Gianmichele Bruto, the court historian of

30 Gerardo Cioffari and Monika Werner, *Bona Sforza: Donna del Rinascimento tra Italia e Polonia. L'immagine di Bona Sforza nella letteratura italiana del Cinquecento*. Bari: Centro Studi Nicolaiani, 2000, 85.

31 Paweł z Krosna, 'Epitalamion Sigismundi regis Poloniae ac Barbarae', in Mięczyński Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedz (eds.), *Szesnastowieczne epitalamia łacińskie w Polsce*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999, 70.

32 See, for instance, the reference to the same "witty poem" in the work of Ferenc Forgách: "*Bona regina... in flore quidem ad huc aetatis cum ab Italia in Poloniam ad Sigismundum regem ejus nominis primum duceretur, defloratam virginitatem, que de re inter Polonos arguta scommata habentur, una apportavit. Post mortem Sigismundi nihilo pudicior vitam transegit.*" *Ghymes Forgách Ferencz nagyváradi püspök magyar históriája 1540–1572* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 16), published by Fidél Majer, introduced by Ferenc Toldy, Pest: Eggenberger, 1866, 179.

33 *Ibid.*, 178. "*Erat apud Bonam Johannes Laurentius Pappacoda nobilis neapolitanus in summa auctoritate, et qui omnia post reginam administrabat, in tanto amore, ut thorum etiam ei communicaret; neque id clam, sed manifestissime, in conspectu, in oculis omnium, in Polonia, in Italia et postea Barri, atque ad extrema usque tempora.*"

34 *Ibid.*, 179. "*[Bona regina] Liberi porro omnes secundum maternam institutionem imbuti et degeneres prorsus paternarum omnium imitationum, nulla virtute matrem superarunt; nam inter cetera eximias*

King Ferdinand I Habsburg, did not refrain from spreading the rumor that even in Isabella's milieu there were some people who doubted that King John I was the real father of her infant son, Prince John Sigismund.³⁵ Needless to say, questioning the legitimacy of John Sigismund was in the interests of the Habsburgs. For the Poles and Hungarians Isabella and her mother represented the otherness of Italian or Italianate culture.³⁶

The memory of Beatrice of Naples in Hungary was quite vivid even four decades after she left the country, as becomes clear from the reference to her in the above-mentioned poem by Verantius. Beatrice's arrival to Buda launched a new era of Renaissance humanism in Hungary. According to Antonio Bonfini, a court historian of Matthias Corvinus, Beatrice's arrival to Buda inspired many changes in court life, as King Matthias spent an enormous amount of money on patronage and representation, transforming his rustic Hungarians into a more cultured nation.³⁷ While such cultural transformation delighted an Italian humanist, who felt the spirit of his homeland spreading in a country so different from his own, it could certainly arouse the antipathy of Hungarian élites against Queen Beatrice. And, above all, they never forgave the Italian queen for having failed to fulfill her most important task by not being able to give a male heir to Matthias Corvinus.³⁸ As another historian, Ludovicus Tubero from Dalmatian

artes, uti mater atque filia maritos, ita filius uxores pro satietate nunquam habuerunt." Ibid., 187. "Isabella primogenita Sigismundi regis Poloniae ex Bona regina secunda uxore nata est... sed ab patre nihil praeter vitam, a matre mores, consuetudinem, naturam acceperat. Post triennium quam duxerat Johannes mortuus est. Praeter alios cum Ligenza polono tenerrime convixit."

35 "*Hinc pervectus Lupitibei comitate eadem de revocandis viduae legis repetivit, cum interroganti, quid inde commodi censeret accessurum Ferdinandi rebus, illa addidisset: Imperatorem fide habita legatorum orationi cum qui refelleret nemo pro Ferdinando adesset, regnum infanti puero concessisse, (cum) quidem multi dubitarent, an vero Ioannis filius esset (usque eo progressum se, iusto dolori indulgendo vir alioqui gravissimus habitus et moderatissimus fatetur), alioqui Ferdinando assensurum, cum quidem aequissima essent quae postularet, atque eorum ipsorum testimonio et adeo qui nunc quae acta transactaque essent, rescindente foedus quo nihil certius clariusque essent, in dubium revocarent."* Gianmichele Bruto, *Brutus János Mihály magyar királyi történetíró Magyar Históriaja 1490–1552*, vol. 3, *1537-től Egervár ostromáig, 1552-ig*, edited by Ferenc Toldy and Iván Nagy. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 14). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 58.

36 On the image of Bona Sforza in Polish culture, see Kosior, 'Outlander, Baby Killer, Poisoner?'

37 "*Sed Beatricis adventu facilitas eius et popularitas multo remissior effecta. Nemo est, qui eius beneficentiam non admiretur. Cunctas bonas artes affectate aluit, viros doctissimos in remotis etiam partibus disquisivit, virtutes omnes diligenter excoluit. Purgavit Ungariam rusticitate et inventos politicorum artium artifices introduxit, Scythichos mores mitiores effecit, immanem superbiam repressit et post Atilam primus ad obsequium diligens dure cervicis Ungarum redegit."* Antonio Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decades, Tomus IV. Pars I. Decades IV. et Dimidia V*, edited by Béla Iványi and László Juhász. (Bibliotheca Medii Recentisque Aevorum, Seculum XV). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1916, 167.

38 Beatrice's evident infertility was the major reason why Vladislaus II Jagiellon did not want to marry her even when the Pope tried to convince him to do so. See the letter of Bishop Orso Orsini to Pope Alexander VI on August 11, 1494. "*Asserit enim eam esse quadragenariam et non aptam ad prolem suscipiendam et inter eos tantum odium et diffidentiam exortum, ut neutri eorum expediat simul cohabitare, subiunxit etiam eam esse sterilem, ex quo cum rege Mathia diu vixerit et ex eo nunquam conceperit prolem et defectus non provenerit ex rege Mathia, extat enim filius, quem ex alia muliere suscepit. Addidit etiam, quod si maleficiata et ipsam reginam tempore eiusdem regis*

Ragusa, put it, Beatrice's childlessness and various attempts to gain political power as heir to Matthias Corvinus made the Aragonese lady the worst example of queenship in the memory of the Hungarian élites.³⁹ Thus when a half-Italian princess and a distant relative of Beatrice came to Hungary to marry King Szapolyai, Hungarians accepted Isabella with reservation and expressed their concern even in a literary work dedicated to the couple as a wedding gift. The wedding gift in question was the first Hungarian version of the Griseldis story by a Hungarian nobleman, Pál Istvánffy, who had studied in Italy for more than a decade. This text was a rendering of Francis Petrarch's *De insigni obedientia et fide uxoris*, which in turn was based on the 100th story of Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In the story a peasant girl named Griseldis is chosen by the marquess of Saluzzo, Volter/Walter, to be his future wife. In order to symbolize the girl's transition from her peasant status to that of a marchioness, Volter makes Griseldis remove her old clothes and put on lavish garments in the presence of his whole entourage. Despite the differences in rank and in the level of bodily exposure during the transition between Griseldis and a newly crowned queen, one may find this motif of changing clothes to be an associative basis for an important part of coronation liturgy. The act of changing clothes, somewhat similar to that described in the Boccaccio–Petrarch–Istvánffy text, was indeed part of the coronation of Beatrice of Naples on December 12, 1476, when the queen put on robes that left her right arm and back naked for the sake of unction.⁴⁰ I have argued in a previous article that the Hungarian translation

Mathiae hoc deduxisse et probasse contra Barbaram, illius regis concubinam, et processus desuper habitos extare et hoc universo regno Hungariae et doctoribus universitatis Viennensis constare, (licet a plerisque acceperim reginam ipsam ex praefato rege Mathia concepisse et abortum fecisse, nec etiam esse tam provectae aetatis.)" Albert Berzeviczy, *Aragoniai Beatrix magyar királyné életére vonatkozó okiratok* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica I; Diplomataria 39). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1914, 315.

39 Mirko Valentić (ed.), *Ludovici Tuberonis Dalmatae Abbatis Commentarii de temporibus suis*. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001, 21. "Principes qui Vuladislauum in Hungaria regnare optabant, quamquam Beatricem ne in regno quidem priuatam agere e republica existimarent, nedum reginam esse uolebant – tantum odii siue reginae ipsius, siue regis Matthiae culpa in illam conceptum erat (nam et illa, praeterquam quod sterilis esset, parum benefica habita est, et Hungarorum optimates quemadmodum in Matthiam, ita et in uxorem eius erant animati) – tamen, ac si hac reginae sponsione clandestina eius praeda euoluta patefieret, quo cumulatam argentum, ut sunt Hungari ueluti plerique mortales pecuniae auidi, extraherent, quicquid postulauit, se facturos promissere, Italica sane arte, ut Hungari impudenter praedicabant, aduersus Italiam usi. Hungari enim Italicae genti fraudem maxime obicere solent, tametsi antiquis Romanorum moribus nihil minus quam perfidiae obiectio conueniat, quippe apud quos fides semper fuit sanctissime culta, omnibusque mortalium bonis antelata."

40 "The queen was wearing a red dress shot with gold, and an Italian-style robe with scalloped sleeves. Her long, nut-brown hair was let out, crowned with a double rope made out of big pearls. In the middle of the Holy Mass the mother of Matthias led Beatrice down from the high coronation stage next to the altar. Behind a drape or curtain she put on clothes which left her right arm and back naked for the sake of unction, and a loose red coronation robe shot with gold. Then the Bosnian king as vassal lord of Matthias took the orb and the golden scepter in his hands and went to the coronation stage, where King Matthias was sitting with the crown on his head and wearing his coronation robe. He led the king to the altar; the Bishop of Veszprém gave benediction to the kneeling Matthias and Beatrice. The queen took

of the Griseldis story served as instruction to Queen Isabella regarding the expected behavior of an “Italian” lady in Hungary.⁴¹ The story calls on the lady to obey her husband and on a political/metaphorical level also to honor the interests of the kingdom. In sum, Isabella Jagiellon’s image already at the time of her arrival to Hungary was formed through references to literary figures and real persons, e.g., Antiope, Semiramis, Bona Sforza, Argia, Beatrice of Naples and Griseldis, in a twofold way. On the one hand, these imaginary and real persons served as Isabella’s prefigurations, while, on the other hand, they expressed the expectations towards her as the new queen of Hungary.

Despite the best wishes and high hopes from both the Polish and Hungarian sides, as history showed, Isabella turned out to be no luckier than Beatrice of Naples or Maria of Habsburg. Seventeen months passed after her coronation before she gave birth to a son and became a widow within a period of two weeks. When the Turks laid siege to Buda in 1541 and Isabella was prepared to leave everything – crown and country – behind, the Hungarian magnates caused her once again to recall the previous queens. The previous best wishes were remembered as an admonition, if not a threat. According to sources, the governors reminded Isabella of her obligations as follows: “Please remember Our Lady the Queen, that in our company You are more honored than other late Hungarian widowed queens, who, undeserving, were expelled from this kingdom.”⁴² The reference to Beatrice of Naples must have been clear to Isabella by 1541. However, while Beatrice returned to her native Naples and never set foot on Hungarian soil again, after leaving Hungary in 1551, Isabella returned for three happy years (1556–1559) to govern Transylvania in the name of her son.⁴³

CONCLUSION

This paper analyzed how occasional poetry produced for Queen Isabella Jagiellon’s wedding with King John I Szapolyai reflected the national and political loyalty of the humanist authors who wrote it. The authors representing Polish interests emphasized the positive qualities of the newly wed queen, using traditional and unique classical examples, not even refraining from a bit of exaggeration when needed. Stanislaw Aichler, Sebastian Marszewski and Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari depicted Isabella as a lady both worthy and suitable for the

the traditional vow and her right arm and shoulder were anointed. Then the palatine asked the king’s consent to crown the queen, who gave it to him. A richly decorated crown, whose beauty impressed everybody, was put on Beatrice’s head by the palatine, the Bosnian king and other lords.” Béla Borsa, *Ismeretlen, egykorú német leírás Mátyás és Beatrix házasságáról*. Pécs: Gyarmati György Nyomdája, 1940, 27.

41 Máté, ‘Il ruolo del capro espiatorio’.

42 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, note 340. <https://mek.oszk.hu/05800/05808/html/03.htm#340> (accessed on March, 30, 2020).

43 For a comprehensive history of Hungary between 1526 and 1556 in English, see Miklós Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary*, translated by Anna Magyar. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 87–93.

position of queen in general, focusing on the qualities an ideal queen had to acquire according to the standards of their time. The humanists representing Hungarian interests, on the other hand, emphasized quite specific expectations towards the new queen of Hungary, dedicating almost no attention to the image of an ideal queen. Quite the opposite: Michael Verantius gave two negative examples, those of queens Maria of Habsburg and of Beatrice of Naples, whose steps Isabella was quite clearly advised not to follow. As in Verantius's poem, the Hungarian subjects pronounce the negative message, while the positive one – the wish for progeny – comes from Isabella's father almost as a command. Finally, in the wedding gift from Pál Istvánffy, the marchioness of Saluzzo–queen of Hungary is expected to obey the orders of her husband, as a person who understands the needs of kingdom best.

György Palotás*

LITERARY TRADITION IN THE CRACOVIAN EPITHALAMIA IN 1539

Since 1537 King John I Szapolyai tackled the idea of getting married, despite his advanced age and the political situation. The negotiations for the future Treaty of Várad were still going on, thus the possibility of funding a new Szapolyai dynasty was to stay a secret as long as possible.¹ Despite all these since 1537, it had been frequently suggested by the Szapolyai faction that it would be advisable to contract a marital union between the Hungarian King and one of the European dynasties. The idea of marriage with Isabella Jagiellon first emerged in 1537 when Ferenc Frangepán received a letter from hetman Jan Tarnowski telling about the Polish intention of this marriage.² The marriage came about as a result of persuasion from Friar Georg and Ferenc Frangepán. Mikołaj Nipszyc (c. 1483–1541), the secretary of Sigismund I, made the first reference to Isabella being the Hungarian queen in a letter dated August 25, 1538.³ Farkas Bethlen⁴

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1 See Árpád Károlyi, *Adalék a nagyváradi béke s az 1536–1538. évek történetéhez*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1879; István Sinkovics, ‘Útkeresés Mohács után. Az ország három részre szakadása’, in Zsigmond Pál Pach (ed.), *Magyarország története 1526–1686*, vol. 1. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985, 212–213.

2 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné (1519–1559)*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 25; Pál Szontagh, ‘Fejedelemasszonyok – asszonyfejedelmek. Izabella Kazimira, Mária Krisztierna és Brandenburgi Katalin uralkodása az erdélyi fejedelemségben’, *Confessio* 25:2 (2001) 106–107.

3 In his letter he wrote: “Hyebay lauft der schene stern Venus hayeret zu beschlyssen, dye Polken ungersch zu lernen ymmerzu mythunder; davon noch bysher so gar nycht zu schrayben yst.” Karolina Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 47. Roma: Insitutum Historicum Polonicum Romae, 1979, 172–173.

4 “nempe annum iam agens 52. partim quod adversa valetudine saepius tentaretur, abhorreret a nuptiis, precibus tamen procerum Pannoniae coelibatum abruptum suadentium ad ineundum coniugium urgebatur: quo delicatissima sobole ex illustri connubio suscepta, ceu preciosissima sanguinis gemma, tum regnum Pannoniae novo splendore augetur, tum domus Szapolaianae orbitate illius iamiam extinguendae (cum et frater eius in Mohácsiana clade sine haerede occubuerit) antiquum nobilitate nomen renovaret.” Wolfgangi de Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*, vol. 1. Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782, 274–275.

and Miklós Istvánffy⁵ historiographers reported that the king of Hungary had accepted the proposed marriage after lengthy persuasion inspired by his counselors (e.g., Chancellor István Werbőczy).⁶ According to Bethlen Bishop of Vác István Brodarics and István Werbőczy led the delegation bearing the proposal. The other members of the delegation were Péter Perényi, Bálint Balassi, István Homonnai Drugeth and Erasmus Gierlachowski, the king's secretary.⁷ Nipszyc also mentioned in his letter of February 2, 1539, that this delegation was leaving Buda on January 5, 1539, with 600 cavalry.⁸ Stanisław Hosius also took note of the expedition of the Hungarians and their reception in Kraków in his letter of January 11, 1539.⁹ The illustrious legation finally arrived to Kraków on January 15, which is corroborated by Justus Decius in his letter written before February 19.¹⁰

THE MARRIAGE OF KING JOHN I SZAPOLYAI AND ISABELLA JAGIELLON¹¹

The arrival and welcome of the Hungarian delegation, the symbolic marriage in Kraków, the tournament organized for this occasion and the bride's send-off are described in detail in Nipszyc's February 2 letter and in Decius's undated letter.¹² In the court of Kraków, martial tournaments were held on January 28, 1539, when the Hungarian mounted combatants presented – in their ancient manner

5 "consilia suorum et potissimum Stephani Verbecii, cui multum tribuebat, sequutus, coelibatum abrumpere decrevit et animum ad nuptias ducendamque coniugem applicuit." Nicolaus Istvánffy [Istvánffy], *Historiarum de rebus Ungaricis libri XXXIV*, liber 13. Coloniae Agrippinae: Antonii Hierati, 1622, 223.

6 Teréz Oborni, 'Principissa. Fejedelmi feleségek Erdélyben', *Rubicon* 19:4 (2008) 72; Paolo Giovio da Como (1483–1552) also emphasized this; see Paolo Giovio da Como, *Delle istorie del suo tempo*, tom. 2, liber 39. Venezia: appresso Giovan Maria Bonelli, 1560, 531.

7 Bethlen, *Historia*, 275; Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 29.

8 "Am V Januarii sint ko. mt. von Ungem Janusch botschafft zcu Crockaw mit VI hundert reysigen pferde ankommen, als nemlich der bischoff von Woczen Dudericus, Perhrenni Petter und Werwecy der cancler;" Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 48, 7.

9 Stanisław Hosii ... *epistolae tum etiam eius orationes, legationes (1525–1551)*, Franz Hipler and Vincenty Zakrzewski (eds.), *Acta historica res gestas Poloniae illustrantia*, t. 4. Kraków: Academia Litterarum Cracoviensis, 1879, 66–67. For the MS, see Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, (hereafter BCzart.) 1618, f. 329.

10 "...die hung. botschafft und werber sein uff 15 Januarii kamen." *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 48, 11. Cf. Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 29; Szontagh, 'Fejedelemszonyok – asszonyfejedelmek', 106; Oborni, 'Principissa', 72.

11 This wedding is similar in many aspects to another Polish royal wedding between Sigismund I and Bona Sforza in 1518. A recently published paper describes in detail Sforza's bridal journey and wedding ceremonies in Kraków. Based on this, it seems that weddings in sixteenth-century Europe were organized in very similar fashion. See Patrik Pastrnak, 'Adducimus gemmam et florem: Bona Sforza's Bridal Journey (1518) in the Light of Rituals and Ceremonies', *Medieval Studies* 22 (2018) 174–193.

12 *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 48, 5–8, 10–12.

– a jousting tournament.¹³ These events were so imposing and relished by all that Sebastianus Marschevius wrote a poem about this rare medieval happening.¹⁴ The symbolic wedding took place in the throne room of the Cracovian palace on January 31, 1539. At this time, the envoys gave their orations and even the speech of the chancellor, Samuel Maciejowski, had been heard.¹⁵ Then on behalf of King John, the Hungarian delegates pronounced the husband's oath, which was followed by Isabella's oath.¹⁶ The next day, on February 1, the wedding party took place.¹⁷ That was the date on which Princess Isabella officially left her home. The young bride was escorted down the church aisle by her father, Sigismund I, in the company of his family (Sigismund Augustus and Bona Sforza), the Hungarian delegation (István Brodarics, Péter Perényi and István Werbőczy) and about 400 other people.¹⁸ By this time the marriage contract was certified¹⁹ then many congratulatory poems written for this celebration were recited. Hosius wrote about it in his letter dated February 5: "*Abducta est tandem Ser/fenissi/ma Sponsa Cal/endis/ Februariis. Epithalamia scripserunt nonnulli adolescentes. Inter eos Doctor Glandinus, cuius aetas quae sit, non ignorat R/everendissima/ D/omina/tio V/estra/ Ceterum Sebastiano Marschewski minor adhuc est aetate, agit nunc annum decimum nonum, sed est ingenium illius admirabile, quemadmodum ex carminibus eius coniecturam faciet R/everendissima/ D/omina/tio V/estra/ Callet idem adulescens aequae propemodum graecam linguam atque latinam. Non vidi pari aetate, qui cum eo esset conferendus.*"²⁰

Several poets presented their wedding poems to the royal court in the Cracovian palace's throne room on February 1, 1539. The occasional poems

13 According to Decius's letter dated before February 19: "...uff 28 treung und hochzeyt gewesen, denselben und noch valgenden dag sein ritterspiel und tantz gehalten;" *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 48, 11. An unknown Transylvanian chronicler noted this event, see 'Album Oltardianum. 1526–1629', in Jenő Tauschenfels (ed.), *Deutsche Fundgruben zur Geschichte Siebenbürgens*. Kronstadt: von Johann Gött, 1860, 12. It was cited by Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 36.

14 Sebastianus Marschevius, *De ludis equestribus quos exhibuerunt Hungari in nuptiis serenissimae virginis Isabella etc.* Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, January 28, 1539. See Karol Estreicher (ed.), *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 22. Kraków: Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1939, 191; for the print, see Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk, (hereafter BKórń.), Cim. 2205.

15 According to Farkas Bethlen, Polish royal Chancellor Samuel Maciejowski gave a congratulatory speech at the symbolic wedding on January 31, 1539. See Bethlen, *Historia*, 278–281; cf. Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 34; Oborni, 'Principissa', 72. Samuel Maciejowski (c. 1499–1550) was chancellor, Bishop of Chełm from 1539, Bishop of Płock from 1542 and finally Bishop of Kraków from 1546 until his death.

16 *Libri Legationum*, VI, fol. 73b–77a, published by Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária*, 185–189.

17 "...ac diplomate Cracoviae pridie Purificationis Beatae Mariae Virginis anno 1539 conscripto." Bethlen, *Historia*, 278; Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 31.

18 Decius's letter reported about this before February 19: "...uff prima Februarii umb 22 ur ist die jung konigin wegzogen, die hatt der alt konig bitz in die kirchen im slos beleitet; der jung konig und mütter zwey nachtloger mytgezogen; uff 29 seindt die Hungern, her Steffanus Brodrich episcopus Waciensis, Berenni Peter und Verbecius cantzeller nacher zogen. Haben in 400 pferdt gehabt." *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 4, 11.

19 *Libri Legationum*, VI, fol. 60b–64b, published by Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária*, 179–182.

20 Stanisłai Hosii ... *epistolae*, 67. (Arch. ep. Fr. D. 19, ep. 14 chirogrph., id.: "XXI Februarii").

of Michael Verantius (Vrančić/Verancsics, 1514–1571?),²¹ Stanislaus Glandinus (Aichler, 1519/1520–1585),²² Stanislaus Kleryka (Gašiorek, 1504–1562),²³ Sebastianus Marschevius (Marszewski, ?–1545),²⁴ Venceslaus Schamotuliensis (Szamotulski, 1520–1572)²⁵ and an unknown author²⁶ were most likely recited at that time. Besides these poems, the congratulatory epistle of Jacobus Ferdinandus Bariensis is also known.²⁷ Similarly to the wedding of Borbála Szapolyai and Sigismund I in Kraków on February 8, 1512, a poetry competition was announced.²⁸ Among the contemporary sources, the historiographer Łukasz Górnicki (1527–1603) also reported on the Cracovian events in detail.²⁹

21 For the life and literary works of Verantius, see György Palotás, *A testvér és a fiú árnyékában. Verancsics Mihály (1514–1571?) élete és irodalmi tevékenysége*. PhD diss., University of Szeged, 2018, 1–357.

22 Stanislaus Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae, florentissimae filiae serenissimi regis Poloniae Sigismundi, ad serenissimum maritum Ioannem Hungariae regem proficiscentis*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, 1539. See Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 12, 79. This was dedicated to Samuel Maciejowski. For the print, see BCzart. TN, 250/II.

23 Stanislaus Kleryka, *Na weselie królowy Izabelle*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, 1539. Cf. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 19, 296. Today it is kept in Kraków, see BCzart TN, 850. II. Cim.

24 Sebastianus Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis serenissimi principis domini Ioannis regis Hungariae etc. et serenissimae virginis Isabellae filiae divi Sigismundi primi, invicti regis Poloniae per Sebastianum*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, 1539. See Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 22, 191. For the incunabulum, see BCzart. TN, sign. 314/I.

25 Venceslaus Schamotuliensis, *In nuptiis serenissimi et potentissimi principis domini Ioannis, Hungariae regis et serenissimae virginis Isabellae, serenissimi et invictissimi principis, domini Sigismundi primi Poloniae regis filiae, Poema gratulatorium*. Kraków: Officina Ungleriana, January 26, 1539. This work has been lost (but perhaps it lurks in some library). See Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 30, 202. Veress also refers to the title of this poem; see Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 36.

26 [Isabella], *Pieśń o małżeństwie królowy Izabelli*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, December 25, 1539. See Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 18, 704.

27 Jacobus Ferdinandus Bariensis, *De foelici connubio serenissimi Ungariae regis Ioannis et serenissimae Isabellae ... epistola*. Kraków: Mathias Scharffenberg, 1539. Estreicher, *Bibliografia polska*, vol. 12, 373–374, for print, see BKörn, sign. Cim. Qu. 2379.

28 Besides the best Polish poets of the age (e.g., Jan Dansztyek, Paweł z Krosna and Andrzej Krzycki), foreigners (Laurentius Corvinus, Georgius Logus and Eobanus Hessus) took part in this 1512 competition to write the best Latin epithalamium. See Éva Gyulai, 'Carmina in arma Zapolyana. Címerversék Szapolyai Borbála lengyel királyné (1512) és Szapolyai János Zsigmond választott király (1567) címeréről', *Publicationes Universitatis Miskolcensis. Sectio Philosophica*, 9:4 (2004) 61–81.

29 "Po przyjachaniu do Krakowa królewicowym, przyszło poselstwo roku 1539 od króla Jana węgierskiego o królowne Izabelle prosić. Panowie ci posłami byli: biskup waczowski Broderyk, Pereni Peter i Werbecy Isztwan, przyjachali z wielkimi pocztami. Rzeczy były pierwiej tajemnie ukolysane (jako między przyjaciółmi, b okrół Zygmunt miał pierwiej za soba siostrę rodzona króla Jana, królowa Barbare pania swiatobliwą), przeto nie wielka praca posłowie mieli uprosić u wielkiego króla córkę w stan święty małżencki wielkiemu królowi, panu swemu. ...pierwszego dnia ślub się królowny odprawił przez posły króla Jana; ...Na tym weselu królewic z księżciem Ilia gonili na ostre w gonczej zbroi. Potym gonili Węgrowie za tarczami i dosyc meznie kilka par, a z nich jeden unizywszy kopia towarzyskiego konia w czoło ugodził i zabil." See Łukasz Górnicki, *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej*, edited by Henryk Barycz. Wrocław: Ossolineum, [1950], 12–13.

Isabella departed for Hungary on February 2 accompanied by Péter Perényi, István Homonnai Drugeth and István Brodarics.³⁰ The leader of the Polish soldiers was Piotr Opaliński (†1551) and the head of the delegation was Bishop of Przemyśl Stanisław Tarło (1480–1544).³¹ They arrived at Csepel Island on February 19, when King John I personally received the Polish princess. From there, they traveled to Buda, where they rested for three days (*Budaeque tridui quiete sumpta*). The wedding and the coronation took place in Székesfehérvár on March 2, 1539.³² Archbishop of Esztergom Pál Várdai (1483–1549) presided over the marriage celebration and the coronation ceremony. The official wedding party was held in Buda on March 3. King John organized everything in the same way as his royal predecessors.³³ In Buda there were tournaments, festivals and every traditional elements of wedding festivities.³⁴

THE TWO VERSIONS OF VERANTIUS'S EPITHALAMIUM

In Buda, Antal Verancsics the Provost of Óbuda and royal secretary, gave his acquaintances the epithalamium written by his younger brother Michael.³⁵ Michael Verantius's wedding song has come down to us in two different forms. The library of Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryska, Teka Naruszewicza in Kraków has the printed version. The title on the frontispiece of the Cracovian printed version of Verantius's work is *Epithalamion Serenissimi Ioannis Hungariae regis et Isabellae reginae per Michaellem Wrantium Dalmatam M D XXXIX*.³⁶ According to the colophon, the book was printed by Hieronymus Vietor's press in Kraków in 1539. Its size is in quarto and it is composed of six folios (the font is Renaissance Antiqua) containing 187 hexameters of verse. The crowned coat of arms of Hungary, Dalmatia, and Bohemia adorns the frontispiece. The poem is preceded by a prose dedication by Antal Verancsics to Bishop Stanisław Tarło (35 lines),³⁷

30 "...Iohannes ad deducendam sponsam legatos misit, eundem Brodericum ac Petrum Perenium et Stephanum Homonnaium cognomine Drugetum, iique eam e Polonia Cassoviam, atque illinc Budam magnifico apparatu et luxu deduxerunt, Budaeque tridui quiete sumpta, Albam contenderunt, qua in urbe Iohannes eorum adventum expectabat; eo consilio, ut una cum nuptiis coronatio quoque novae nuptae simul perageretur." Istvánfi, *Historiarum de rebus Ungaricis*, 223; cf. Bethlen, *Historia*, 287; and *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 56, 13–16.

31 Hosius also reported to his friend Jan Dansztyek about this journey on February 5. *Stanisłai Hosii... epistolae*, 67.

32 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 44–50; Szontagh, 'Fejedelemasszonyok – asszonyfejedelmek', 106; Oborni, 'Principissa', 72.

33 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 40.

34 "...coronationem conthoralis suae rite peragit; inde Budam revertuntur, ibique tripudia et ludi ac caetera in eiusmodi actibus peragi solita regali more continuantur." Bethlen, *Historia*, 288.

35 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 53.

36 Michael Verantius, *Epithalamion Serenissimi Ioannis Hungariae regis et Isabellae reginae*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, 1539. For print, see BCzart. Teka Naruszewicza (hereafter TN) XVI, 260/II. This variant can be found in copies at the microfilm archives at the Biblioteka Narodowa in Warsaw, see BN, XXXIII, 352 (mf. 2207).

37 Stanisław Tarło (1480–1544) was the Bishop of Przemyśl between 1537 and 1544 and secretary of King Sigismund I.

in which Verancsics recommended the work of his brother to the Polish Bishop. According to this dedication as a patron of literature, Antal Verancsics supported the poets so that the stories of John's reign would not fall into oblivion. Verancsics's printed work was probably published between January 15, 1539, i.e., the arrival of the Hungarian delegation to Kraków and February 2, Isabella's departure to Hungary.

The manuscript version is found in a collection of Latin poems entitled *Praeludia Michaelis Verantii*, which is kept at the National Széchényi Library in Budapest.³⁸ In 1830, the codex was part of the personal library of Miklós Jankovich. Besides the epithalamium – here entitled *Ioannis Hungariae regis nuptiae* – the volume contains several unpublished works by Michael Verantius, none of which were written by his own hand. There is no precise date on it that might be the same age as the print, though it is certain that it is not autograph handwriting. The epithalamium is composed of six folios and 216 hexameters of verse; it does not have the dedicatory epistle of Antal Verancsics. It is obvious that the MS version is considered to be the closest to the author's intention. The insert of the description of the arrival to Buda (Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 190–199) can be read only here, thus after February 19, 1539, Verantius might have done quite a lot of modification to the printed version of his wedding song.

THE PLOT OF “IOANNIS HUNGARIAE REGIS NUPTIAE”

Although many poets wrote epithalamia for the wedding of John and Isabella, only Verantius reports to us in more detail regarding the journey of the delegation and the ceremony in Poland. The content of the manuscript from Budapest is as follows. After the Treaty of Várad John starts to think about the marriage (Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 1–13). The time for peace has come after countless wars. Ferdinand I (*Germanus*) enters into an alliance with King John in order to attack the common enemy, namely the Turks (14–40). Delegates go to Sigismund I the Old of Poland to ask for the hand of the Polish Princess Isabella Jagiellon for the Hungarian king (41–59). Three Hungarian noblemen lead the prestigious delegation, followed by a large and rich cortège of young people (60–105). There is a feast and entertainment at the royal court in Kraków (106–109). A Hungarian chivalric contest and a tournament of knights are organized on the second day (110–154). The marriage settlement is then concluded (155–164). The Polish king bids farewell to his beloved daughter with a heavy heart. He wishes her a long and lucky life. Isabella departs for Hungary (165–176). Crossing the Carpathians, she arrives to Buda (177–196). The Hungarian nobility welcomes her at the palace and wishes her all the best. They remind her of the former greatness of the Scythians, who had dominated all of Asia a long time ago. Neither the Macedonians nor the Romans were able to conquer them (197–211). Not a humble and weak, but a most brave and

38 Michael Verantius, *Ioannis Hungariae regis nuptiae*, Buda(?), 1539. National Széchényi Library, Manuscripts Collection, Quart. Lat. 776, f. 1r–6v.

strong race will arise from the "Sarmatian-Scythian league." Their successors will have one goal: repelling the wild Turks and extending the country's borders (212–216).

THE ANCIENT LITERARY TRADITION OF EPITHALAMIUM APPEARS IN THE WORK OF VERANTIUS AND THE POLISH POETS

Humanist literature flourished in Poland between 1470 and 1543. Many works were composed in accordance with the rules of ancient literary genres and were in various ways influenced by classical heritage.³⁹ Several ancient and medieval poetic examples⁴⁰ as well as a number of rhetorical treatises⁴¹ were available for the early modern authors who wanted to imitate the genre of the wedding poem (lat. *epithalamium*).⁴² The genre evolved from the amusing rural songs connected with Greek and Roman wedding ceremonies. At the same time, the epithalamium reflected the current wedding customs and a definite occasion for which it was written.⁴³ The authors of the epithalamium used quite a lot of topoi rooted in tradition and literary convention. The most thorough list of the traditional topoi can be found in the works of the rhetorical writers. Following the treatises of the members of the younger generation of sophists, such as Pseudo-Dionysius, Menander Rhetor, Choricus of Gaza and, in particular, Himerios, the wedding song gained epic and rhetorical features in Greek–Roman literature.⁴⁴ This genre as a rhetorical panegyric resurfaced in Italy at the beginning of the

39 For the epithalamia written in Poland in the sixteenth century, see, for example, Michał Bergman, *Polsko-lacińskie epithalamjum*. Wrocław: Nakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1928, 185–205; Maria Cytowska, 'Nowe uwagi o humanistycznym epithalamium', *Meander* 15:10 (1960) 535–547; Mieczysław Brożek and Jakub Niedźwiedz, *Szeznastowieczne epithalamia łacińskie w Polsce*. Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 1999.

40 Such as Hom. *Il.* 18.491–96; 24.57–62; Sapph. *frag.* 104–17; Theoc. *Id.* 18; Anacreon, Stesichorus, Pindar etc.; for the Romans, see Catull. *c.* 61; 62; 64; Stat. *Silv.* 1.2; Aus. *Cento nuptialis*; Sid. Apoll. *Epithalamium Ruricio et Iberiae dictum* and Claudian. *Epithalamium dictum Honorio Augusto et Mariae* etc. In later centuries, see Dracontius, *Epithalamium in fratribus dictum*; Ennodius, *Epithalamium dictum Maximo V. S.* and Venantius Fortunatus, *De domno Sigiberc tho rege et Brunichilde regina* etc. These poetic models were followed by modern authors such as Julius Caesar Scaliger, Jacopo Sannazaro, and Edmund Spenser, etc.

41 For examples pseudo-Dionysius, see *Techné rhétoriké*, 2; *Methodos gameliôn*, 4; *Methodos epithalamiou*; Men. Rh. *Peri epideiktikôn*, tract. 2.13; *Peri epithalamiou*, 14. and *Peri kateunastikou*; Himerios's wedding speech, the *Oratio*, 1; and Chor. *Orationes nuptiales*, 5–6. Cf. Arthur L. Wheeler, 'Tradition in the Epithalamium', *American Journal of Philology* 51:3 (1930) 210; Sabine Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium in der Lateinischen Literature der Spätantike*. München–Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 2004, 88–96.

42 See Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium*, 14–18; Bergman, *Polsko-lacińskie epithalamjum*, 1–8; Brożek, *Szeznastowieczne epithalamia*, 11–17.

43 Wheeler, 'Tradition in Epithalamium', 206.

44 E. Faye Wilson, 'Pastoral and Epithalamion in Latin Literature', *Speculum* 23:1 (1948) 37; Wheeler, 'Tradition in Epithalamium', 210.

fifteenth century.⁴⁵ These rhetorical topical elements were present in all poems written for the wedding that took place in Kraków in 1539.

Henceforth the genre and structural similarity between Verantius's wedding song and the works written by Polish authors, mainly Stanislaus Glandinus and Sebastianus Marschevius, will be reviewed. The contents of these works are varied and imitate classical form and ancient rhetorical rules. In the work of Verantius, the typical elements of the Greek–Roman wedding-song poetry can be discerned as well. However, its structure and linear storyline make it similar to the epic works rather than to the lyrical works. This travelogue character places Verantius's work close to the hodoeporicon genre.

Mythological Examples

The mythological marriages as well as emphasis on the role of Venus and Cupid, who took turns praying for the young couple (Cupid for the bridegroom, Venus for the bride), very often appear in these writings.⁴⁶ According to Verantius, Cupid's arrow lit the flame of love in Szapolyai's heart: "*sensit iam saucia dudum / igne Cupidineo, quiddam promittere blandum / pectora, et eximo traxit suspiria corde, / qualia vel castam possent flexisse Dianam.*"⁴⁷ Glandinus referred to the decision of Paris on Mount Ida and he compared Isabella to the Roman goddess Iuno.⁴⁸ Marschevius gave a shorter list of the well-known figures of the Greek mythology and also referred to Cupid's role.⁴⁹ As an epic feature the invocation of the Muses also appears.⁵⁰

45 Anthony F. D'Elia, 'Marriage, Sexual Pleasure, and Learned Brides in the Wedding Orations of Fifteenth-Century Italy', *Renaissance Quarterly* 55:2 (Summer 2002) 380; and Anthony F. D'Elia, *The Renaissance of Marriage in Fifteenth-Century Italy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004, 35–50.

46 The mythological marriages are highly recommended as a precedent by rhetoricians. For examples, see Men. Rhet. *Peri epithal.* 12. Catullus wrote about the marriage of Peleus and Thetis (Catull. 64.323–81), and Theocritus mentioned the union of Helen of Troy and Menelaus in his idyllic work. In the case of Statius and Fortunatus, see Michael Roberts, 'The Use of Myth in Latin Epithalamia from Statius to Venantius Fortunatus', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 119 (1989) 321–348.

47 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 15–18. (In the references and footnotes the Arabic number always indicates the line of the Cracovian poems in 1539.)

48 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 53–55: "...Si tu certamen in illud / tergeminum, Idaeo quod erat sub iudice morum / venisses, dubiam spectasset Cypria palmam"; as well as in his another poem: "*Isabella Iove es tanto dignissima Iuno.*" Glandinus, *Eiusdem nuptialis elegia*, 17.

49 Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 30–32: "*Aut quales meruit divino munere formae / Ledae progenies, Paridis fax, fax quoque Troiae / et quas Penelope sancti tulit ergo pudoris*"; and *ibid.*, 1–2: "*Aliger in celsa considens arce Cupido / iam clarum mediatur opus, iam laetus adornat.*"

50 *Ibid.*, 17–18: "*Quid mea Musa moras nectis, cur munere cessas / exornare novam Augusto de sanguine nympham*", and *Ibid.*, 21–22: "*Ipsa salutatum magni bona pignora regis / ibis ovans.*"

The Appearance of Hymen

In *carmen 61*, Catullus⁵¹ uncovers a lot about the role and features of the god of marriage, namely Hymen.⁵² Since, according to Menander Rhetor, one of the most important elements of the wedding song is to provide a role to the god of marriage. In his poem, Verantius referred only to the genre named after this god,⁵³ while Marschevius mentioned the god himself⁵⁴ and Glandinus, in accordance with the ancient pattern (e.g., Catull. 62.5), addressed Hymen in the refrain to make the young couple happy.⁵⁵

The Benefits of Legal Marriage

The widely used literary trope, namely mentioning the advantage of legal marriage and its blessing, is closely relating to the idea of Hymen. Legal marriage is needed to ensure the security of home, family and homeland as it can result in legal children.⁵⁶ The protection of the homeland and offspring are emphasized in these Cracovian wedding songs. Considering one of a Horace's ideas, Michael Verantius underlined how important it is to make a sacrifice for the homeland and highlighted the efforts that had been made to repel the Ottoman threat. The wedding ceremony and festivities gave a break to Hungary which was exhausted in long wars.⁵⁷ According to Glandinus, the good relationship and the century-long fellowship between the two countries would remain in order to maintain the salutary and mutual peace.⁵⁸ For him and for the Polish side, the only important aim was to avoid the Turkish menace.⁵⁹

51 Catullus's poem had to be known by Cracovian writers in 1539 since the *editio princeps* of Catullus's poem was printed in Venice in 1472. Then four others followed this edition in 1481, 1485, 1496 and 1521. Cf. Julia Haig Gaisser, *Catullus and His Renaissance Readers*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, 26–31. *Carmen 61* was examined in detail by Paolo Fedeli, *Catullus' Carmen 61*. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1983.

52 Wheeler, "Tradition in Epithalamium", 210; Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium*, 195–201.

53 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 159–160: "*cum coniuge pacta / principis, et gratos nolit differre hymenaeos.*"

54 Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 203–204: "*Emicat ast Hymenaeus ovans dux ordinis huius / taeda conspicuus.*"

55 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 15: "*Dicitur excelsa resonans Hymenaeus in aula,*" and the "*Hymen o Hymenae, adsis comes, o Hymenae*" appears as a circular refrain in lines 21, 30, 39, 58 and 67. Cf. Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium*, 69.

56 Cf. Ps.-Dionysius, *Method. gam.* 3; 4 and 8; *Method. epithal.* 2. Children are the salvation of the family, home and wealth. See Men. Rhet. *Peri epithal.* 1 and 6; Men. Rhet. *Peri kateun.* 11 and 25. Marriage is needed and necessary. See Him. *Or.* 1.7–10.

57 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 39: "*Dulce est, si patriae defensae viximus aegre.*" For the image of country exhausted in wars, see Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 59: "*et pacem et fessis promittunt foedera regnis,*" and for the deflection of the Turkish threat, see the lines 213–214: "*lis dabitur saevos compescere Turcas, / et patriae arctatos cupient extendere fines.*"

58 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 87–90: "*Ecce tuis nunc auspiciis, illaesa manebunt / foedera, o magnorum regum, coniunctio crescet / diversi populi, sociis in finibus, alium / pax caput attollet, revocabit candida secla.*"

59 *Ibid.*, 92: "*Omen ut intereat Turcorum dira tyrannis.*"

Harmonious Love and Spiritual Togetherness

Praise for the character and the appearance of the bride and bridegroom (*laus sponsi et sponsae*) and the excellence of their physical state had been central elements of the epithalamia since Sappho's poetry.⁶⁰ To show that the couple belong together, the writers of such poetry had been using natural illustration and metaphors since the ancient times. Catullus expressed it through the joining of grapes (*vitis*) and the plum tree (*ulmus*).⁶¹ This simile was very popular in sixteenth-century Neo-Latin literature too. Erasmus of Rotterdam adapted this image from Catullus in the *Colloquia familiaria*.⁶² Glandinus, insisting rather on tradition, also developed this poetic tool. In his simile, the weak ivy (*hedera*) is curled around the steady tree (*arbor*) seeking safety.⁶³ Harmonious love (*Concordia*) should last for a lifetime, which is the main trope of the epithalamium genre. The authors tell the most about it.⁶⁴ The word *Concordia* appears in the poem by Verantius just as the desire for the long and harmonic life.⁶⁵ Marschevius also referred to ever-lasting love with the image of the myrtle wreath.⁶⁶

Glorifying the Young Couple and Their Family Members

Glorifying the young wife is also an essential component of the wedding-song genre. In each of the Cracovian poems, the celebration of the young bride, namely Isabella, has a significant role. In Catullus's *Carmen 61*, Vinia Aurunculeia favors Venus (Catull. 61.16–19); she is overwhelmed by flowers, Asian myrtle (22), hyacinth (89) and red poppy (187–188) who is pure and virtuous (217–223),

60 Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium*, 73. Cf. Sapph. *Anth. lyr.* (Diehl), *frag.* 116, 117, 123, 127, 128, 130.

61 Catull. 62. 49–58; Cf. Catull. 61.102–105. Menander mentions the association of trees. Men. Rhet. *Peri kateun.* 12; and 15. The bride as a palm tree and the bridegroom as an olive tree were presented by Greek rhetoricians, for example, Men. Rhet. *Peri epithal.* 19. According to Himerios, the young couple was as compatible as two roses in a field. Him. *Or.* 1.15.

62 J. H. Waszink and Léon-E. Halkin (eds.), *Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami ordinis primi*, vol. 3. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1972, 284–285: “*Saltem illud responde, utrum est elegantius spectaculum, vitis humi iacens et computrescens, an amplexa palum aut ulmum, eamque purpureis uvis degravans?*” cited by Péter Kasza, ‘Egy catullusi szöveg helyi utóéletéhez’, in Mariann Czerovszki and János Nagyillés (eds.), *Corollarium: tanulmányok a 65 éves Tar Ibolya tiszteletére* (Acta Universitatis Szegediensis Acta Antiqua et Archaeologica Supplementum). Szeged, 2010, 121–122.

63 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 85–86: “*Nobile pectus amore tui, innectetur, ut alta / erranti hac atque hac hedera circumdatur arbor.*”

64 Ps.-Dionysius desires the greatest harmony for the young couple. Ps.-Dionysios, *Method. gam.* 3; Cf. 5–6; and *Method. epithal.* 3. The same idea appeared already in Homer's work. Hom. *Od.* 6.182–85. Choricus also emphasized the harmony. Chor. *Or.* 6.40. Menander wrote about the harmony in the unity of love. This *concordia* endures until death. Cf. Theoc. *Id.* 18.51. Catullus also referred this concept. Catull. 61.31–35; 100; 139–46 and Catull. 64. 334–36.

65 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 165–66: “*I, felix, felixque tuo sociare marito, / nata, precor, thalamisque habitat concordia vestris.*” For the idea of happiness existing until death, see *ibid.*, 167–168: “*Ambobusque simul centum regnare per annos / dent superi*” and *ibid.*, 173: “*Felici et longo functus, non deprecor aevo.*”

66 Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 28: “*immortale decus violat, nec iniqua rapit mors.*”

modest and simple (79) as well a loving woman (169–171). According to Himerios, the beauty of the bride is similar to the beauty of flowers, her skin is as white as milk, her cheeks are as red as a rose.⁶⁷ These images also figured in the description of Isabella. In Verantius's epithalamium, Isabella is described as a virgin (*virgo*), felicitous (*felix*) and as a worthy successor of the king (*proles dignissima regis*) who leads a very moral life.⁶⁸ She has a peaceful, calm character;⁶⁹ chastity and shyness are typical for her, while her snow-white cheeks turn red due to the unexpected love.⁷⁰ In addition to these, she has a steady and sinless character as a result of her education.⁷¹ Hungarian women cannot compete with the beauty of the Polish princess.⁷² These motives appear in Glandinus's writing as well. The figure and appearance of Isabella (*decor patriae*, resp. *dignissima nata*) is admirable,⁷³ and her snow-white face turns red with love.⁷⁴ The detailed description of her appearance and the comparison of her to Venus can be observed in Glandinus's other poem entitled *De eadem epigramma*.⁷⁵ In his longer wedding song, Isabella's beauty is compared to that of Niobe (*coniunx Thebaei splendida*), the Amazon princess (*Antiopa*) and Semiramis (*formosa Semiramis*).⁷⁶ Marschevius stressed the virginity of the bride and the fact that she was just experiencing the flame of first love.⁷⁷ Isabella possesses all favorable features of her age like charm and rose-like beauty.⁷⁸ Her perfect figure is comparable to that of Helen of Troy (*ob praestans Helenae decus*), while in her literacy and education she resembles the mother of Gracchi brothers, Cornelia Africana, who was the most high-minded and virtuous woman of Rome.⁷⁹ By contrast the appreciation of King John expressed in the epithalamia was modest. Three humanists used adjectives like generous and brave to describe him.⁸⁰ Glandinus referred to an

67 Him. Or. 1.19–20.

68 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 48: "*servat thalamos Isabella pudicos*."

69 *Ibid.*, 80–81: "*placidas implevit nuntius aures / reginae*."

70 *Ibid.*, 82–83: "*Virgineo primum castus pudor ore cucurrit, / purpureusque simul niveos color imbuit artus*."

71 *Ibid.*, 86–88: "*et studiis immota piis optata videre / Tempora taedarum gaudet, castamque sub alto / pectore laetitiam simulat*."

72 *Ibid.*, 186–89: "*turba puellarum sequitur. Formosa videri / corpora, sed longe superat formosior omnes / regina. Ac dubium est, formane an moribus esset / admiranda magis, pariterque excellit utroque*."

73 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 41: "*Eminet admiranda tuae praestantia formae*."

74 *Ibid.*, 43–49: "*...Niveo color emicat ore / purpureus, veluti cum Amaranthis candida nymphae / lilia contexunt. Floret tua blandula cervix... Incedis pulcherrima tota*."

75 "*Frons tibi bella, genae bellae sunt, labraque bella, / bella manus lucent lumina bella tua. / Bellum collum, aures bellas, bellum quoque nasum / fers toto incedis corpore bella Venus*." Stanislaus Glandinus, *De eadem epigramma*. Kraków: Hieronymus Vietor, 1539, 7–10. (see n. 23).

76 Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 50–51.

77 Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 8: "*ventilat [sc. Cupido] et primos tenero sub corde calores*."

78 *Ibid.*, 34–38: "*Namque Isabella tenet haec singula, solaque nobis / instar cunctarum est... / Aspice quantus honos, roseae quae gratia formae / sidereo ore micat, floret vernantibus annis, / omnia bella gerens...*"

79 *Ibid.*, 75–78: "*Non minus ut Gracchae mater Cornelia gentis / eloquio valuit, docto et stirpem imbuit ore, / sed minus illa tamen, quae non nisi verba latina / calluit*."

80 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 15: "*magnanimus princeps*"; Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 79–82: "*Ibis ad excelsi complexus aurea regis, / qui longe late populos urbesque gubernat, / magnanimus,*

immense opulence and empire in the *Eiusdem nuptialis elegia*.⁸¹ As in the work of Verantius, Marschevius also described Szapolyai as a brave man whose heart was illuminated by love (*corda viri fortis*); what is more, he compared the king to a patient who has fallen in the illness of love.⁸²

In the epithalamia, expressing praise for family members and ancestors is important in addition to lauding the young couple.⁸³ Verantius referred not to the ancestors of the Szapolyai family, but to the honorable male (Sigismund of Luxembourg, Matthias I and Władysław of Varna) and female (Mary of Anjou, Queen of Hungary and as well as Beatrice of Naples) Hungarian monarchs in the closing lines.⁸⁴ In the next lines one can discern esteem for the ancient relationship with the Scythians. Marschevius used this trope in a much more concrete way. Isabella's parents and her brother are glorified: Sigismund I the Old is *verendus* (104), Bona Sforza is *sedula* (105) and Augustus is *rexque... iuvenis* (106). The Dalmatian humanist exalts and celebrates Sigismund Augustus (future king of Poland, 1548–1572) in his poem (85–99).

Supplication for Children

The prayer and supplication for offspring (*allocutio sponsalis*) was closely related to the previously reviewed topics.⁸⁵ The following can be read about these hopes at the end of Catullus's poem (Catull. 61. 204–223) or Theocritus (*Id.* 18.50). In his poem, Catullus, for example, expresses a desire for a newborn boy who takes after his father and will inherit his mother's purity. This element traditionally appears at the end of the poem, as the ancient rhetorics inform us as well.⁸⁶ Verantius hoped that Isabella would present her husband and people with a child who would be the forebear of great kings for centuries.⁸⁷ Sigismund I also asked the gods for a child and grandchildren (*tribuant sobolem longosque nepotes*). At the end of his wedding song, Verantius expressed the expectation that kings originate from Scythian blood – *de Scythico prognatos sanguine reges / poscimus* (line 212) – from the heavenly gods. He depicts an image of a powerful people that came into being as a result of this marriage and will originate from the

prudens, ulla nec laude secundus. / Demonstrat viridem qui dexteritate iuventam"; and Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 101: "*magnanimo conducta viro*."

81 "Pannoniae dives qui tenet imperium..." Stanislaus Glandinus, *Eiusdem nuptialis elegia*. 4. (see n. 23).

82 Marschevius, *Epithalamion in nuptiis*, 57–58: "...ac petet aeger bella labella, / insistens mediosque sonos per basia rumpet."

83 Cf. Him. Or. 1.13; and Men. Rhet. *Peri epithal.* 14; 17.

84 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 199–204: "*ingredere antiquos, quibus ingens sceptrum tenebat / Romani imperii quondam Sismundus et acer / Matthias, toto qui gestis notus in orbe est, / et Ladislavus patruus. Tibi debita regna / non aliena petis, gentilem sume coronam, / et Maria regnes feliciter et Beatrice.*"

85 Wheeler, 'Tradition in Epithalamium', 211; Horstmann, *Das Epithalamium*, 73: "*die Aufforderung zum Vollzug der Ehe und zur Zeugung von Kinder.*"

86 Men. Rhet. *Peri epithal.* 22; cf. Men. Rhet. *Peri kateun.* 7. Himerios and also Choricus put this motif in the end of his work. Chor. Or. 6.32.

87 Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 50–51: "*Illa dabit sobolem vobis per secula reges / magnanimos.*"

common federation of Sarmatian (i.e., Poles) and Scythian (i.e., Hungarians) peoples: "*Non humile aut molle dabit fugiensve laborum / Sarmaticum Scythicumque genus, sed fortia cuncta*".⁸⁸ Glandinus sums up this topic in his poem inserted which contains an epigraphic description of his wish.

"Ultima dona, tui populi, haec fer carmina tecum.
REGIS NATA, SOROR REGIS, NUNC
REGIS ET UXOR
O UTINAM, REGUM MATER CELE
BERRIMA FIAS."⁸⁹

CONCLUSION

In Latin literature the epithalamium lost its lyrical quality and became a type of rhetorical panegyric.⁹⁰ The Roman model of the wedding poem was common in Neo-Latin and vernacular poetry in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.⁹¹ Such occasional poems multiplied under the conditions of aristocratic patronage in the early modern period.⁹² The laudatory elements represented the essential part of the epithalamium genre in sixteenth-century Central Europe.⁹³ The works of Michael Verantius and those of Polish humanists discussed above were part of this trend. The epic features of his writing such as plot description represents the Hungarian point of view regarding the marriage. In terms of its genre, his poem of 1539 lies at the boundary of a wedding song, a panegyric work and in some respect is also a work of historiography.

⁸⁸ Verantius, *Ioannis nuptiae*, 215–216.

⁸⁹ Glandinus, *Epithalamium Isabellae*, 94–98.

⁹⁰ Wilson, 'Pastoral and Epithalamion', 35; Wheeler, 'Tradition in Epithalamium', 210.

⁹¹ Wilson, 'Pastoral and Epithalamion', 35–57; W. Leonard Grant, 'New Forms of Neo-Latin Pastoral', *Studies in the Renaissance* 4 (1957) 71–100; D'Elia, 'Marriage, Sexual Pleasure, and Learned Brides', 379–433.

⁹² Cf. Thomas Deveny, 'Poets and Patrons: Literary Adulation in the Epithalamium of the Spanish Golden Age', *South Atlantic Review* 53:4 (1988) 21–37.

⁹³ Jacqueline L. Glonski, *Patronage and Humanist Literature in the Age of the Jagiellons: Court and Career in the Writings of Rudolf Agricola Junior, Valentin Eck, and Leonard Cox*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007, 178.

MEMORY

Karolina Mroziewicz*

THE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY DEPICTIONS OF ISABELLA JAGIELLON AND THEIR RECEPTION IN POLAND AND HUNGARY

The depictions of Isabella Jagiellon, even though spare in number, encompass the queen's portraits executed at different stages of her life from her early years to her adulthood as well as postmortem likenesses, which grew considerably in number in the nineteenth century. They were executed in different media, formats and techniques. The majority of the preserved sixteenth-century likenesses were, however, made in durable materials such as bronze or lead (portrait medals), marble (funeral monument), copper (miniature portrait) and leather (bookbinding decoration), in smaller formats and were made in dozens of copies. Their permanence and number gave these images the advantage over the individual and less durable depictions that did not survive to our times. Because there is little material, all the depictions of Isabella that survived to our times deserve close attention and examination in order to determine their meaning and functions. In what way was Isabella depicted in her early years and at a later age? Did she have any control over her images? If not, what and whose agendas did her likenesses serve? What purposes did her likenesses play during the queen's lifetime and after her death? Did the sixteenth-century images influence the ways Isabella was depicted three centuries later? Last but not least, why was Isabella represented so differently in Hungarian and Polish art of the nineteenth century?

ISABELLA, DAUGHTER OF KING SIGISMUND

The earliest and the only preserved depiction of Isabella made in the time of her early childhood was included in a large genealogical woodcut (320 × 218 mm, fig. 1), impressed from two large blocks, illustrating the treatises of Jotz Ludwig

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Dietz (Iodocus Ludovicus Decius) regarding the Jagiellonian family.¹ It was added to the second edition of *Chronica Polonorum* by Maciej of Miechów, published by Hieronim Vietor in Kraków in 1521, which was a censored version of the 1519 edition from which the passages unfavorable to the royal family were deleted by the decision of the Polish Senate.² Similarly to all other representations of 87 members and relatives of the Jagiellon dynasty represented in the woodcut, Isabella is shown half-figure on a decorative calyx. Her small image (20 × 40 mm) is a typified frontal depiction of a young princess, identified by the inscription as *Isabella Sig[ismundi] fil[ia]*. She wears an exquisite long-sleeve dress, has her long hair braided and flowing down from an elegant band or diadem. Her arms are crossed over her chest in a gesture of supplication and modesty. Isabella is shown next to her two older step-sisters, the daughters of Barbara Szapolyai, Hedwig (1513–1573) and Anna (1515–1520).

The anonymous woodcut, most probably a work of a *Formschneider* working in Kraków and produced at the turn of 1519 and 1520, was modeled after genealogical trees included in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum* (1493)

1 There is no other known depiction of the princess from the first years of her life. Until the 1970s (and sometimes also in the newer scholarship) a child portrait from the Wawel castle (inv. no. 3934) was considered to be a representation of Isabella Jagiellon painted around 1525 (Cf. Janina Ruszczyńska, 'Nieznane portrety ostatnich Jagiellonów', *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* 20 [1976] 60–61, note 81). The convincing attribution proposed by Katarzyna Sochowa (unpublished) showed that the sitter was Isabella Vasa and the author of the painting was a court artist of John III Wasa. A comparison with the portraiture of Sigismund Wasa as a child by Johan Baptista von Uther (around 1568, Wawel Castle inv. no. 3221) additionally supports this identification: Kazimierz Kuczman, 'Portret dziecięcy królowej Izabeli Wazówny', in Katarzyna Połujan (ed.), *Orzeł i Trzy Korony. Sąsiedztwo polsko-szwedzkie nad Bałtykiem w epoce nowożytnej (XVI–XVIII w.)*. Wystawa, Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 8 kwietnia–7 lipca [2002 r.]. Warszawa: Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, 2002, 120–121.

2 Maciej Miechowita, *Chronica Polonorum*. Impressum Craccouiae: per Hieronymum Vietorem, 1521. Facsimile edition of the chronicle: Maciej Miechowita, *Chronica Polonorum*. Kraków: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1986. Only Dietz's work on the times of Sigismund I has a critical and Polish-language edition: *Ludovici Decii De Sigismundi regis temporibus liber 1521*. Kraków: Akademia Umiejętności, 1901; Maciej Miechowita, *Księga o czasach króla Zygmunta*, translated under the supervision of Kazimierz Kumaniecki. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1960. More on the genealogical woodcut: Barbara Miodońska, *Małopolskie malarstwo książkowe 1320–1540*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1993, 152; Teresa Jakimowicz, *Temat historyczny w sztuce epoki ostatnich Jagiellonów*. Warszawa–Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1985, 53–54, fig. 16; Teresa Jakimowicz, 'Przeszłość i teraźniejszość w sztuce wieku XVI w Polsce', in Jerzy Topolski (ed.), *Świadomość historyczna Polaków. Problemy i metody badawcze*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1981, 172–173; Ruszczyńska, 'Nieznane portrety', 6–13, fig. 1. On the censorship of the chronicle: Paulina Buchwald-Pelcowa, *Historia literatury i historia książki. Studia nad książką i literaturą od średniowiecza po wiek XVIII*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych „Universitas”, 2005, 604–605; Paulina Buchwald-Pelcowa, *Cenzura w dawnej Polsce. Między prasą drukarską a stosem*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo SBP, 1997, 16; Krystyna Podlaszewska, 'Pierwsze wydanie Kroniki Macieja z Miechowa w zbiorach Biblioteki UMK w Toruniu', in Bohdan Ryszewski (ed.), *Studia o Działalności i Zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika*, vol. 1. Toruń: Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, 1980, 189–210; Ferdynand Bostel, *Zakaz Miechowity. Odbitka z "Przewodnika Naukowego i Literackiego" z r. 1884*. Lwów: s.n., 1884, 438–454, 540–562, 637–652.

and the genealogy of Aleksander Jagiellon in *Statuta* (1506) by Jan Łaski.³ It presents Isabella as the firstborn daughter of Sigismund I and Bona Sforza, demonstrating a genuine Jagiellon lineage from Algirdas to the offspring of Sigismund and his two wives in a broader genealogical context. The family tree stresses the links of the Jagiellons to numerous royal and ducal houses, among which are the Habsburgs, the Griffites and the Silesian Piasts, and their origins. Like Dietz's treatises which it accompanies, the woodcut had the glorifying and propagandistic aim of praising the royal family that exercised power in the Polish, Hungarian and Bohemian kingdoms. The inclusion and location of Isabella's likeness reflects her position in the royal bloodline and her role in the dynastic plans and aspirations of her parents as perceived by Kraków political élites.⁴

Along with the intensification of the matrimonial negotiations came the need for images of the princess that could be sent to other courts. Indeed, the number of Isabella's images presented within a dynastic context grew in the 1530s. Her representation as a young (yet slightly older than in reality), chaste princess appeared on one of a series of four medals produced in 1532 that represented the royal parents, their only son and the oldest, and Bona's favorite, daughter.⁵ The medals were executed by Giovanni Maria Mosca who was also known as Padovano. Perhaps, as Mieczysław Morka suggested, the series originated at the initiative of Bona, a keen admirer of medallion art and was designed for circulation in both Polish and foreign courts.⁶ Like numerous comparable medals, this series contained detailed information about the subjects represented and was a means of commemoration, fulfilling the desire for fame and immortality.⁷

Isabella's profile and bust likeness is done rather unskillfully (fig. 2).⁸ It is also a relatively small one, as the whole medal measures 68 mm in diameter. The princess is shown in an Italian Renaissance lacy dress. She has a cap on her head and braided hair. The legend reads: ISABELLA SERENISSIMI

3 *Commune incliti Polonie Regni privilegium*. Cracouie: in edibus Joha[n]nis Haller ad co[m]misionem... Joha[n]nis de Lasko... imp[er]en[si]ssum, 1506, f. 85r.

4 Małgorzata Górská, 'Rodowód dynastii Jagiellonów (Genealogia rodziny Jagiellonów)', in Janusz Trupinda (ed.), *Imagines potestatis. Insignia i znaki władzy w Królestwie Polskim i Zakonie Niemieckim. Katalog wystawy w Muzeum Zamkowym w Malborku 8 czerwca–30 września 2007 roku*. Malbork: Muzeum Zamkowe w Malborku, 2007, 275.

5 The original cast bronze specimen is part of the collection of the Galleria Estense in Modena, Italy. It was sent as a gift of the Polish court to Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este. More on the circumstances of this gift: Józef Grabski, 'Wizerunki rodziny królewskiej Zygmunta I Starego na medalach Jana Marii Padovano z 1532 r. w dawnej kolekcji książąt d'Este w Modenie', *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne* 22:1 (1978) 22.

6 Mieczysław Morka, 'The Beginnings of Medallion Art in Poland during the Times of Zygmunt I and Bona Sforza', *Artibus et Historiae* 29:58 (2008) 66–67; Helena Kozakiewiczowa, 'Jan Maria Padovano, życie i działalność we Włoszech', *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 26:3 (1964) 160.

7 Stephen K. Scher, 'Introduction', in Stephen K. Scher (ed.), *The Currency of Fame: Portrait Medals of the Renaissance*. London: Thames and Hudson in association with the Frick Collection, 1994, 13.

8 The obverse of this medal from the collection of the Polish National Museum in Kraków was reproduced on a postcard printed before 1920.

SIG[ISMVNDI] I REGIS POLONIAE FILIA ANNO XIII NATA MDXXXII. Yet, there are significant mistakes in the inscriptions pointing to a certain idealization, as the royal parents were characterized as slightly younger and their two children as one year older. On the reverse there is a figure of a woman, a *virgo* (as a personification of chastity, purity and modesty, not a zodiac sign)⁹ with her right hand raised towards the inscription and a bare left breast, reaching out to an ermine, which is identified by the legend as a symbol of chastity and innocence: HIC ARMELLINVS EST NOSTRAE PVDICITIAE INDEX.¹⁰ On the right side of the woman there is a sprout growing from a stump referring to Isabella as the young royal offspring of an ancient family.¹¹

Isabella's medal functions as pendant to her parents' medals, but the medals of Bona and Isabella best complement each other. The figures of mother and daughter are turned to each other as Isabella looks to the left and Bona to the right. The back side of Bona's medal shows a fruit-bearing artichoke plant signifying fecundity (the proof of which are Isabella and Sigismund II Augustus) and a ribbon with the inscription: TALIS EST QVALE FERT indicating that the mother bequeaths her virtues on her offspring.¹² Additionally, the reverse of Isabella's medal stresses her virtues, which indirectly also testify to her mother's character.¹³ As Anne Markham Schulz notes, the sprouting branch that grows from a stump refers not only to Isabella as a royal offspring, but also "signifies the parents' regeneration through their progeny."¹⁴

The same selection of persons within a similar context of family and dynastic ties appeared in a medium functioning in a different communication circuit. With the growing popularity of bookbinders' rolls and plates, book covers became popular carriers of numerous secular and religious images, such as Christ, Evangelists, personifications of virtues, saints, sometimes in combination with representations of the members of the Polish ruling family. The image of Isabella concluded the series showing Sigismund I, Bona Sforza and Sigismund Augustus on the so-called Jagiellonian bookbinders' rolls, which functioned in at least five different variants with the dates 1537, 1540 and 1541, and were used to decorate book covers of various patricians, men of letters, clergy and burghers throughout

9 Anne Markham Schulz, *Giammaria Mosca called Padovano, a Renaissance Sculptor in Italy and Poland*, vol. 1. University Park: Penn State Press, 1998, 123. Schulz claims that the model of the *virgo* was either Marcantonio Raimondi's engraving based on *Suicide of Dido* by Raphael or Andrea Riccio's adaptation of the engraving in a bronze plaque.

10 Feliks Kopera, 'Słowo o medalu Padovano z popiersiem Izabelli Jagiellonki z r. 1532 w Modenie', *Wiadomości numizmatyczno-archeologiczne* 5 (1911) 65.

11 Morka, 'The Beginnings of Medallist Art', 74.

12 Anne Markham Schulz translates it as "[The fruit] is like the one who bears it" and rightly points out that the inscription is an inverted version of a famous quote from the Gospel, "a tree is known by its fruit" (Matthew 7:16–20; 12:33; Luke 6:44): Schulz, *Giammaria Mosca*, vol. 1, 123.

13 *Ibid.*, 123, note 12.

14 *Ibid.*, 124.

the sixteenth century.¹⁵ The roll was impressed to form a figural *bordure* or a series of parallel figural stripes placed in the center of a front and/or back cover.¹⁶ It is unclear whether these rolls were executed on special order or were a typical device in the bookbinders' workshops at that time.¹⁷ The rolls are generally connected with Kraków bookbinders, but they were also used outside Kraków as inherited, bought or commissioned by the masters working in other urban centers.

The earliest known Jagiellonian bookbinders' roll, known from its later impressions (20 × 182 mm, the arcade with Isabella likeness measures 20 × 40 mm), bears the date 1537 (fig. 3). The date was placed in a plate above Isabella's standing, waist-length depiction located, as the other three figures, in a Renaissance arcade, placed one beneath another. Below each figure there was an inscription identifying the depicted person: SIGISMV[NDUS], BONA, SIG[ISMUNDUS] AVG[USTUS], [I]SABELLA. All the images contain attempts at individualization. The images of Bona and her daughter are more conventional than the male figures and, as Maria Jarosławiecka-Gąsiorowska notes, they are similar to the popular series of Muses or virtues.¹⁸ Both women are virtually ageless. Their faces are shown in three-quarters view, turned right. Bona wears a large Italian beret fashionable in her times, whereas Isabella's hair is arranged in a hairnet. Both wear dresses with puff sleeves, tight waists and half-round necklines and hold a flower in their hands.

The rolls, made one year after Isabella got married, still showed her as a maid with an uncovered head, which suggests that the goldsmith who executed the rolls did not take her marriage into account. This mistake was, however, modified in one of the rolls on which, according to her new status, the queen was given a crown. Modeled after the figure of Calliope, the first in the hierarchy of Muses, she is holding a harp and a round object (perhaps a wreath).¹⁹ Along

15 Maria Krynicka, 'Elementy figuralne dekoracji polskich opraw książkowych i ich związki z grafiką w pierwszym trzydziestolecu XVI w.', in Stanisław Grzeszczuk and Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa (eds.), *Dawna książka i kultura. Materiały międzynarodowej sesji naukowej z okazji pięćsetlecia sztuki drukarskiej w Polsce*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1975, 170; Jarosławiecka-Gąsiorowska, 'Ikonografia świecka', 323–327. The impressions of these bookbinders' rolls were popular on the covers of books from the collections of scholars, books from the civic chancelleries of Kraków libraries or from the libraries of religious convents: Katarzyna Płaszczynska, 'Dekoracja opraw skórzanych XVI-XVII w. – figuracyjne motywy na radełkach (na przykładzie opraw z Biblioteki Księży Misjonarzy w Krakowie)', in Agata Ptak and Katarzyna Baran (eds.), *Problemy edytorstwa, bibliologii i typografii*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2011, 278–279. Example of cover of the book owned by Jagiellonian University professor of Greek and mathematics Stanisław Grzepski (1524–1570) and reproduced in Jan Storm van Leeuwen, *The Golden Age of Bookbindings in Cracow 1400–1600*. Kraków: Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 2011, 138. They were most probably independent from royal initiative, as there are no examples of these decorations in the library of Sigismund II Augustus: Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, *Biblioteka ostatniego Jagiellona. Pomnik kultury renesansowej*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1988, 91–99.

16 Jarosławiecka-Gąsiorowska, 'Ikonografia świecka', 323.

17 Arkadiusz Wagner, 'Poznańskie radelko jagiellońskie z lat czterdziestych XVI wieku. Problem treści ideowo-politycznych i wzorów ikonograficznych', *Roczniki Biblioteczne* 56 (2012) 95.

18 Jarosławiecka-Gąsiorowska, 'Ikonografia świecka', 324.

19 *Ibid.*, 326–327.

with the modification, the figure of Isabella lost her individual character and became a typified image of a queen/Muse. Soon she disappeared completely from the bookbinders' rolls, her image being replaced by the representation of her younger sister Catherine Jagiellon (1526–1583), shown in a crown, hence commemorated as a recently wedded and crowned queen of Sweden.

ISABELLA AS A WIDOW

We may assume that more images of Isabella as a young princess existed during her lifetime, as the gift of a portrait in pursuit of marriage negotiations was a common practice. Portrait miniatures, because of their portable character and fine execution, were often used for this purpose. They could also be used in diplomatic gift exchanges. There is, for instance, an account of Bona presenting her portrait along with that of Sigismund I and her daughter, most probably Isabella, to the envoys of Charles V in 1525.²⁰ In a letter written to Jan Dantyszek (Johannes Dantiscus) on August 31, 1538, Bona inquired about the portrait of Isabella owned by the bishop, which might be a copy of an *en pied* or bust likeness of the princess in the possession of the royal court.²¹ Nothing is, however, known about these images. The very short time of Isabella's politically advantageous marriage with John Szapolyai (1487–1540), who was 32 years older than she was, is also not documented by any contemporary depiction of the queen and her husband. The only preserved example of Isabella's portrait miniature is a part of a later series (fig. 4) attributed, on the basis of the workshop's sign of a dragon with wings, to the workshop of Lucas Cranach the Younger²² and dated back to the time of Isabella's widowhood, i.e., around 1556.²³

20 Mieczysław Morka, *Sztuka dworu Zygmunta I Starego. Treści polityczne i propagandowe*. Warszawa: Argraf, 2006, 156.

21 The letter was published in Aleksander Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie w XVI wieku. Obraz rodziny i dworu Zygmunta I i Zygmunta Augusta królów polskich*, vol. 1. Kraków: s.n., 1868, 282. The copy of the letter is held in the Princes Czartoryski Library – National Museum in Kraków, MS 1596.

22 More on the workshop and the problems with attribution and the dating of its paintings: Bożena Steinborn, "Obrazy Cranachowskie," in Lech Kalinowski, Stanisław Mossakowski and Zofia Ostrowska-Kęmbłowska (eds.), *Nobile Claret Opus. Studia z dziejów sztuki dedykowane Mieczysławowi Złatowi*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1998, 45–49; Gunnar Heydenreich, Daniel Görres and Jana Herschaft, 'Die Werkstatt Cranachs des Jüngeren', in Roland Enke, Katja Schneider and Jutta Strehle (eds.), *Lucas Cranach der Jüngere. Entdeckung eines Meisters*. München: Hirmer, 2015, 65–77. Copper panels were very rarely used in Cranach's workshop. The only other example is *Christ Blessing the Children*, an epitaph painting for the family of Caspar Cruciger: *Ibid.*, 68, cat. no. 3/53. The use of copper panels for oil paintings was a novelty of the time and the durability of the material suited the commemorative purposes of the family portraits.

23 Not much is known about the series and its author(s), date and commissioner remain the subject of ongoing discussion: Dorota Dec, 'Portrety członków rodziny Jagiellonów', in *Orzeł i trzy korony*, 101; Dorota Dec, 'Portrety rodziny Jagiellonów', in Magdalena Piwocka and Dariusz Nowacki (eds.), *Wawel 1000–2000. Kultura artystyczna dworu królewskiego i katedry. Katedra*

The series of miniatures consists of ten portraits painted on copper panels (197 × 178 mm) currently held in the collection of the Polish National Museum in Kraków.²⁴ The cycle is composed of the depiction of Sigismund I and his wife Bona Sforza, Sigismund II Augustus and his three wives Elizabeth of Austria (1526–1545), Barbara Radziwiłł (1520–1551) and Catherine of Austria (1533–1572) along with the four daughters of Sigismund I and Bona – Isabella, Sophia (1522–1575), Catherine and Anna (1523–1596). The selection of the depicted figures, especially the inclusion of all the wives of Sigismund II Augustus (including the much-disliked Barbara Radziwiłł), suggests that he most probably was the commissioner of the series.

The identity of Isabella is defined in relation to her family, i.e., as a sister of the ruling king of Poland and as the widow of John I Szapolyai. As all depicted persons, she is shown half-figure on a plain, bluish background with her hands resting on the green sill. Her likeness is rather generic and typified, as her facial lines are very similar to the physiognomy of other women portrayed in the series. She is depicted in three-quarters view, turned left, holding a pair of gloves in her right hand. Isabella, in analogy to her mother, is shown as a widow, with her head covered, in a black *szuba* with a large fur collar and a white scarf embellished with lace, whereas her three sisters are represented in almost identical postures in black velvet dresses, as maids. The opulence of the depicted costumes and jewelry, especially that of the wives of Sigismund II Augustus, demonstrated the wealth and power of the Polish king and his family. The inclusion of Sigismund I, who died in 1548, and of two deceased wives suggests the commemorative function of the images as well as their role in the display of family ties. The series had sentimental value and a private purpose. Yet, serving as a model for the cycles of medals and other paintings, it was used as a means of manifesting the status of the king and his family.

The series is considered to be a later copy of unknown portraits. This is very plausible if we consider the workshop's practices and the fact that the miniatures were most probably painted far from the Kraków or Vilnius courts. Three seventeenth-century *en pied* likenesses of Sigismund I, Bona and Isabella, currently held at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, are regarded either as modeled after these same unknown portraits that were used in Cranach's workshop or as direct repetitions of the workshop's miniatures.²⁵ As nothing certain can be said about these hypothetical models, it suffices to say that the series of portrait miniatures from Cranach's workshop enjoyed an attentive and appreciative reception in the sixteenth, seventeenth and, especially, the nineteenth centuries.

Krakowska – biskupia, królewska, narodowa. *Katalog* vol. 1. Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2000, 97–98 (with detailed references to the earlier scholarship).

24 Polish National Museum in Kraków, inv. no. XII-536–XVII-545. The images were joined together in one frame in the mid-nineteenth century.

25 Ruszczyćówna, 'Nieznane portrety', 44; Steinborn, 'Obrazy Cranachowskie', 47.

The earliest example of the reception of the miniature portraits of the Jagiellons is the series of medals by Steven van Herwijck.²⁶ This Utrecht-born sculptor and perhaps also painter worked in Antwerp, Utrecht and London.²⁷ Herwijck possessed great technical skills and mastered sensitive portraiture.²⁸ On the basis of his oeuvre, it was recently suggested that he might have come to Poland directly from Sweden, where he might have worked for Erik XIV, whose step-brother Catherine Jagiellon married in 1562 and may have resided in Poland, perhaps between late 1561 and early 1562.²⁹ Seven medals with blank reverses, cast in lead, depicting Sigismund I, Bona, Sigismund II Augustus, Catherine of Austria, Isabella, John Sigismund Szapolyai and Anna³⁰ were identified and attributed to Herwijck. The medals of Sigismund Augustus and his wife Catherine bear the date 1561, which served as the basis for the dating of the whole series.

The medal shows Isabella's bust likeness in three-quarters view, turned left (75 mm in diameter, fig. 5).³¹ She wears the same widow's clothing as in the miniature painting. The original specimen is considered unfinished as it lacks the legend. Because Herwijck most probably executed the medal after her death, the work had a commemorative value. The inclusion of Isabella's son in the series defines the Hungarian queen not only as a widow, but also as the mother of a monarch, who is identified by the following legend: IOHANNES SIGISMUND D[EI] G[RATIAE] REX VNG[ARIAE]. Sigismund II Augustus, who was actively involved in Szapolyai's affairs and interested in promoting the prince as his successor, included him in the cycle, stressing his close blood-ties with the royal family.³² At the time the Habsburgs called John Sigismund the "son of king John" or "prince of Transylvania."³³ Hence the inscription is a strong political statement.

26 Edmond Majkowski, 'János Zsigmond és Izabella emlékérméi. Steven van Herwijck németalföldi éremművész (1561) művei', *Numizmatikai Közlöny* 38–39 (1939–1940) 55–60; Edmond Majkowski, 'Steven van Herwijck's serie der Jagellonen-Medaillons en zijn vermeend verblijf in Polen, 1551–1562', *Koninklijk Nederlands Genootschap voor Munt- en Penningkunde* 24 (1937) 1–37.

27 Majkowski, 'János Zsigmond', 55.

28 Scher, 'Introduction', 28.

29 Bendor Grosvenor, 'The Identity of "the Famous Paynter Steven". Not Steven van der Meulen but Steven van Herwijck', *The British Art Journal* 9:3 (Spring 2009) 16. Alternatively, the works could have been cast at another location where Herwijck had access to the miniatures or their copies. Based on Marian Gumowski's assertion, some art historians suggest that he worked on the medals in London, where the series was held at that time. Yet, the actual location of the miniature cycle (or its copies) in the 1560s remains unknown.

30 Edmond Majkowski, 'Medale Anny Jagiellonki – nieznaną pracę Steven van Herwijcka', *Biuletyn Numizmatyczny* 4 (1954) 36–38.

31 Royal Library of Belgium–Coin Department 2K15/5. I would hereby like to thank Johan Van Heesch for his assistance and the information he provided about the object.

32 On the role of Sigismund II Augustus in the installment of Szapolyai on the throne of Transylvania: Anna Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August. Król polski i wielki książę litewski 1520–1562*. Kraków: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych „Universitas”, 2010, 436–443.

33 *Ibid.*, 515.

The large *en pied* portrait of Isabella (203.5 × 111.5 cm, oil on canvas, fig. 6),³⁴ repeating the queen's iconography known from the miniature painting, is currently displayed at the Royal Castle in Warsaw along with full-figured portraits of Sigismund and Bona in the same format. It was a part of a larger series held in the collection of the House of Wittelsbach, which may have got them as a part of the trousseau of Anna Catherine Constance Vasa (1619–1651), who married Philip William of Neuburg (1615–1690) in 1642.³⁵ After the Second World War the collection was incorporated into the Bavarian State Painting Collections in Munich, from which three portraits of the members of the Polish royal family were presented as gifts to the Royal Castle in Warsaw in 1977.

The unknown Polish or German master, working in the first half of the seventeenth century, depicted Isabella in three-quarters view, turned left, in a widow's costume. As in the sixteenth-century miniature, she holds gloves in her right hand. Her silhouette is almost flat, the shading is more visible in the facial parts, which are much more refined than in the miniature. Her pale skin and white scarf contrast with the dark background. There is a strong analogy in physiognomy, pose and costumes built between the depiction of mother and her daughter. Apart from the age difference, their facial lines are similar. Both have a long, slightly carved nose and large and round dark eyes.

The later repetitions of the miniatures from Cranach's workshop came from the nineteenth century. The copies, painted on the wood panels, were held at the Gołuchów³⁶ and Kórnik castles (as part of the series of 28 miniatures showing the members of the house of Jagiellonian dynasty copied in Paris by Marcelli Krajewski)³⁷ as well as at the National Museum in Warsaw.³⁸ Whereas nothing is known about the commissioner of the last series,³⁹ the Gołuchów and Kórnik

34 Royal Castle in Warsaw, inv. no. ZKW 61.

35 Hanna Maria Malachowicz, 'Porträt der Königin Isabella', in Franciszek Stolorz et al. (eds.), *Polen im Zeitalter der Jagiellonen 1386–1572. Schallaburg 1986, 8. Mai–2. November*, translated by R. Weiss (Abteilung III/2; Kulturabteilung). Wien: Amt der Nö. Landesregierung, 1986, 218.

36 Only nine miniatures are preserved from the series. They are held at the Polish National Museum in Poznań, inv. no. Mo 1119–1127.

37 Kórnik Castle, inv. no. MK 3544–3571. More on the series of copies: Barbara Dolczewska, 'Dziewiętnastowieczne pocztyniki władców oraz osobistości polskich i obcych w zamku kórnickim', *Pamiętnik Biblioteki Kórnickiej* 30 (2013) 202–204.

38 The Polish National Museum in Warsaw, MP 4961–4970 MNW. The miniatures are kept at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The Museum is also in the possession of the copies of the series in ink and watercolor on paper by Aleksander Lesser (ca. 218 × 173 mm, inv. no. DI 31586, 31591, 31603, 31613, 31615, 31617, 32359, 31596, 31594, 31598 MNW). This Polish painter of Jewish descent was an illustrator, sketch artist and amateur antiquarian who documented countless artefacts of the Polish past. He is also the author of drawings based on the catalogue of Hungarian kings, *Mausoleum regni apostolici regum et ducum* (1664), which for him served as a study for the series of illustrations for *Dzieje Węgier pod względem historycznym, artystycznym, literackim i społecznym wg dzieła wydanego przez Towarzystwo Pisarzy Francuzkich pod kierunkiem madyarskiego historyka J. Boldenyi*. Warszawa: nakł. Aleksandra Nowoleckiego, 1863.

39 Bożena Steinborn and Antoni Ziemia, *Malarstwo niemieckie do 1600 roku. Katalog zbiorów*. Warszawa: Muzeum Narodowe, 2000, 98–101. I would like to express my gratitude to Izabella Wiercińska from the Polish National Museum in Warsaw for the information she provided

cycles belonged to the aristocratic collections of the Czartoryski and Działyński families. They had patriotic value as tokens of the royal past, recalling the sovereign Polish kingdom in the times of partition, while at the same time they were means of displaying the extraordinary status of these families.

MOTHER OF JOHN SIGISMUND

There is only one preserved sixteenth-century depiction of Isabella with her infant son (fig. 7). The scene showing the queen and her son visiting the Sultan on August 29, 1541, was included in *Süleymännâme* (History of Süleyman) by Arifi.⁴⁰ This official history of Süleyman for the period between 1520 and 1555, written around 1558, was illustrated with 65 scenes painted by a group of around 5 painters.⁴¹ Among numerous scenes of battles, hunting expeditions, executions and palace life there is a unique image showing Queen Isabella embracing her little son while standing in front of Süleyman in his imperial tent. Isabella wears a long robe with a veil or a hooded coat. She is portrayed as the archetypical Christian mother, namely Madonna with the Child. Outside the tent stand numerous members of the Sultan's retinue and Hungarian dignitaries. Both the costumes and the canvas of the tent were painted in vivid colors and much attention was paid to details stressing Süleyman's wealth and majesty. The exteriors were depicted less decoratively and less specifically – high hills, a tree and a grass plain that only in a very generic way refer to the location on the outskirts of Buda where the meeting took place. The facial parts of Isabella, her son and two officials behind the Sultan are damaged due to oxidation of the paint, though the rest of the image is in very good condition.

The inclusion of Isabella and her place in the hierarchically structured illustrated history of Süleyman reflects her prestige and active role on the political scene of the time. No other female figure plays such an important role in this visual narrative.⁴² As much as Isabella is given agency in the image, she is also objectified as part of the Sultan's display of power that provides proof of his greatness. In contrast to Arifi's account, other Ottoman historians mention that John Sigismund was carried to the imperial tent by his nurse.⁴³

about the series, which was bought by the Museum from the Jewish antiquity shop owned by Sandor Brothers in Munich in 1928.

40 The Hazine Collection of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library, MS. H. 1517, fol. 441r. Each folio measures 254 × 370 mm.

41 Esin Atıl, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent*. Washington–New York: National Gallery of Art–Abrams, 1986, 65–66.

42 Women are depicted in *Süleymännâme* only in a few scenes in which they play the role of witnesses of the recruitment of tribute children (fol. 31v) or the execution of Canberdi Gazali's envoy (fol. 56r). Also in other illustrated histories, which built official narratives about the public and the ceremonial life of the Ottomans, contemporary women are rarely present despite their cultural and political importance: Emine Fetvacı, *Picturing History at the Ottoman Court*. Bloomington–Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013, 8.

43 Atıl, *Süleymanname*, 187. Cf. Stanisław Okszyk Orzechowski, *Kroniki polskie od zgonu Zygmunta I-go*, edited by Tadeusz Mostowski. Warszawa: w Drukarnia Nro 646 przy Nowolipiu, 1805, 124–125.

The queen did not participate in the event. The inclusion of Isabella was thus not necessary in order to reflect historical reality. Her image testifies mainly to the Ottoman Empire redefining its social and political order as well as the relationship between Christian and Muslim rulers and the ways it could be visually represented.

THE QUEEN OF HUNGARY

Isabella was commemorated at the St. Michael Cathedral in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) through sculpted image, heraldic signs and a figural scene. Her tomb, made of white marble, is currently located in the northern so-called Várday Chapel. The queen's recumbent, relief figure is larger-than-life-size (180 × 65 cm, fig. 8) and directed towards the west. Its initial location was in the south transept, where the tombs of John Sigismund and István Bocskai were placed as well.⁴⁴ The queen is shown in a lavish brocade dress with puff sleeves, decorated with ornaments and with diligently executed details. She holds royal insignia, a crown is placed on her head, a scepter in her right hand and an orb on the pillow on the left side of her face. She holds a handkerchief in her left hand. The facial parts are indistinguishable due to damage. There are two coats of arms curved at her feet (fig. 9). On the left there is the smaller Polish royal coat of arms (the Sigismundian Eagle). The bigger one consists of four shields with, respectively, Sforza's basilisk devouring a child, the Szapolyai Family unicorn, the Hungarian double-cross and the three Dalmatian golden-crowned lion heads. All four crests were joined together under the Hungarian crown. The heraldry identifies Isabella as the queen of Hungary and Dalmatia and stresses her family ties to the Jagiellons, Szapolyais and Sforzas. Below the queen's figure, on the longer side panel, there is a relief scene (fig. 10) depicting the parable of the Good Samaritan (50 × 183 cm; two panels) offering moral instruction for the spectator and at the same time presenting the queen's virtues, her piety and mercy.⁴⁵ At the shorter sides two empty panels are held by one putto each and filled with Mannerist ornaments. Despite leftover spaces, no inscription was placed on the tombstone.

The tomb of Isabella's son, presented as a *rex armatus*, with battle and siege scenes on the side panels was located next to her monument. The stylistic and technical features demonstrate that both monuments were works executed concurrently by the same, most likely local master(s), probably trained abroad.⁴⁶

44 Péter Szabó, *Jelkép, ritus, udvari kultúra. Reprezentáció és politikai tekintély a kora újkori Magyarországon*. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2008, 184, 188.

45 Dóra Mérai, 'Funeral Monuments from the Transylvanian Principality in the Face of the Reformation', in *New Europe College Yearbook 2012–2013*. Bucharest: s.d., 215. Mérai notes that the representation of biblical scenes was exceptional on Transylvanian memorials.

46 Dóra Mérai, *Memory from the Past, Display for the Future: Early Modern Funeral Monuments from the Transylvanian Principality*. PhD diss., Budapest, 2017, 154–159.

The exact date, workshop and commissioner(s), however, remain unknown.⁴⁷ It is assumed that both tombs were made after 1571, perhaps at the initiative of Stephen Báthory, who had a sufficiently broad artistic understanding to commission Italianized monuments with a complex set of meanings.⁴⁸

Isabella's postmortem figure is the only preserved sixteenth-century example of her representative likeness presenting her as the Hungarian queen with all regalia. The St. Michael Cathedral was closely linked to the queen's palace, functioning as a court church, and at the same time it was a prominent burial place of numerous distinguished figures.⁴⁹ Isabella was commemorated next to her son, who additionally testified to her virtues as a queen mother.

Along with the miniature painting from Cranach's workshop, Isabella's figure from her tomb was the most recognized and reproduced artifact associated with the Hungarian queen in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The image of the monument opened the fifth volume of Aleksander Przeździecki's *Jagiellonki Polskie* [Polish Jagiellonian Women, 1878] as well as illustrated the third volume of the series *A Magyar Nemzet Története* [Hungarian National History, 1897].⁵⁰ Its reproduction was also included in the popular graphic series *Materiały do ikonografii królów, zbroi i wojska polskiego (Polska XVI w.)* [Materials for the Iconography of the Polish Kings, Armor and Army (16th-Century Poland)] collected and drawn by Karol Wawrosz and published by Władysław Bartynowski.⁵¹ The plate LVI (262 × 418 mm) contains lithographic reproductions of Isabella's miniature portrait and her bust likeness modeled after the miniature from the Cranach's workshop with the queen's tombstone between them.

There was also a plaster cast of the tomb, which was displayed at the Millennial National Exhibition in Budapest in 1896⁵² and at the Hungarian pavilion at the *Exposition Universelle* of 1900 in Paris. The first of these events presented a full range of monuments, important for reinforcing the collective identity and integration of the nation, exhibited as part of the celebration of both Hungarian history and modernization. As Samuel D. Albert notes, it was

47 Cf. András Kovács, *Épületek emlékezete: nevezetes épületek Erdélyben*. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2007, 11–39 (with bibliographical references: 217–218).

48 Árpád Mikó, 'Csatajelenet János Zsigmond erdélyi fejedelem († 1571) gyulafehérvári síremlékéről', in Árpád Mikó and Katalin Sinkó (eds.), *Történelem-kép. Szemelvények múlt és művészet kapcsolatából Magyarországon. A Magyar Nemzeti Galériában 2000. márc. 17–szept. 24. között rendezett kiállítás katalógusa*. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 2000, 299; Árpád Mikó, 'Báthory István király és a reneszánsz művészet Erdélyben', *Művészettörténeti Értesítő* 37 (1988) 125.

49 Mérai, *Memory from the Past*, 84–85.

50 Aleksander Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI. wieku. Uzupełnienia, rozprawy, materiały głównie z Ces. tajnego Archiwum Wiedeńskiego czerpane*, vol. 5. Kraków: Konstanty i Gustaw Przeździeccy, 1878; Ignác Acsády, *Magyarország három részre osztásának története. 1526–1608*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1897.

51 *Materiały do ikonografii królów, zbroi i wojska polskiego ułożone i rysowane przez Karola Wawrosza, zebrane i wydane staraniem i nakładem Wł. Bartynowskiego*. Kraków: s.n., 1908.

52 Cf. Béla Czobor and Emerich von Szalay (eds.), *Die historischen Denkmäler Ungarns in der 1896-er Millenniums-Landesausstellung*, vol. 2. Budapest–Wien: M. Gerlach und compagne, 1897–1903, 297, fig. 341.

designed as “a statement to the world by the Magyars about themselves.”⁵³ Whereas the Millennial Exhibition mainly targeted the domestic audience, the Hungarian pavilion at the *Exposition Universelle* was intended for the international fair-goers. The interiors of the so-called “historical palace,” designed by Zoltán Bálint and Lajos Jámbor, formed large exhibition galleries among which was “a large hall decorated with frescoes of great artistic value. It contained many casts of tombs, and various collections of weapons, etc., broideries, manuscripts, etc.”⁵⁴ The archival photos of this splendid vaulted room show Isabella's funeral monument from Gyulafehérvár among other artefacts which had already been displayed at the Millennial exhibition and were rearranged for the needs of the Paris exhibition. At both presentations the monument, as numerous other medieval and Renaissance-era exhibits, was to demonstrate the distinctiveness and antiquity of Hungarian culture and the virtuosity of its art.

ISABELLA IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY VISUAL ARTS

As an outstanding – and in fact tragic – historical figure, Isabella was a perfect heroine for Hungarian historical paintings of the second half of the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ After the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, famous women, especially widowed mothers who, as numerous Hungarian women of that time, brought their children up alone, were elevated to the status of national symbols and embodiments of freedom and courage.⁵⁶ They were presented as role models for women in whose hands solely rested the patriotic education of the new generations of Hungarians. In this context Isabella, a mother struggling for her son, became one of the “nation's grandmothers” as demonstrated by the illustration for the month May in the *Magyar Nők Évkönyve* [Hungarian Women's Yearbook] of 1861, which showed her along with John Sigismund in a throne room (fig. 11).⁵⁷ Isabella was also included in the large-size (64.8 × 81.8 cm) tableau “*Történelmünk kiváló nőalakjai*” [Outstanding Women of Our History] by Vilmos Grund, published in 1877 by István Szinay.⁵⁸ This lithography, as the text

53 Samuel D. Albert, ‘The Nation for Itself: The 1896 Hungarian Millennium and the 1906 Romanian National General Exhibition’, in Marta Filipová (ed.), *Cultures of International Exhibitions, 1840–1940: Great Exhibitions in the Margins*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2015, 119.

54 James P. Boyd, *The Paris Exposition of 1900: A Vivid Descriptive View and Elaborate Scenic Presentation of the Site, Plan and Exhibits*. Philadelphia: P.W. Ziegler & Company, 1900, 493.

55 More on the phenomenon of Isabella's popularity in nineteenth-century Hungarian culture: Kornélia Steinmacher, ‘Az idegenből jött uralkodónő, Jagelló Izabella (1519–1559) alakja a magyar kulturális emlékezetben’, *Publicationes Universitatis Miskolcensis. Sectio Philosophica* 19:1 (2015) 353–368.

56 Szilvia Rád, *Das Leben und Werk des aus Ungarn stammenden Malers und Kunstprofessors Sándor (Alexander) von Wagner (1838–1919), mit besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Müncher Jahre*. PhD diss., Würzburg, 2014, 92–93.

57 Steinmacher, *Az idegenből jött uralkodónő*, 354.

58 Teréz Gerszi, *A magyar kőrajzolás története a XIX. században*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1960, 149. The image is available online in the database of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest “Treasures of the Hungarian National Museum”, [http://opac3.mnm.monguz.hu/en_

advertising it and listing the names of all depicted figures reads, “deserves to be bought and used by Hungarian ladies for room decoration.”⁵⁹

During the time of political emigration following the unsuccessful revolution, Isabella also personified the figure of an exile. Mór Than, a participant in the 1848 revolution who left the country after Hungary’s defeat, painted the weeping queen in the company of a Habsburg envoy, Castaldo and Friar George, who grasps Isabella’s hand in order to make her sign the document of resignation, in his work *György barát Izabella királynét lemondásra kényszeríti* [Friar George Forces Queen Isabella to Resign, 1868].⁶⁰ The Queen’s farewell to Transylvania became a popular theme, most famously presented by Sándor Wagner, whose 1863 *Izabella királyné búcsúja Magyarországtól* [Queen Isabella’s Farewell to Hungary] won acclaim in Hungary and abroad.⁶¹ This emotionally charged scene shows Isabella lost in thought, standing alone next to an old oak tree and turned towards the land she is leaving. The color palette used to paint the autumn scenery sets a melancholic tone and highlights the queen’s deep sorrow and loneliness. Wagner also devoted several oil-painted and lithographic works to this theme.⁶²

Izabella királyné búcsúja Magyarországtól (1860, fig. 12) by Béla Vizkelety (drawing) and József Marastoni (lithography) illustrate a popular anecdote about the queen’s flight to Poland as presented in the short story *Izabella királyné fája*

GB/record/-/record/display/manifestation/MNMMUSEUM1501639/0457443a-ee59-4f97-90c0de43ac60557d/solr/0/24/2/4/importDate/DESC] (accessed on August 16, 2019).

59 Portraits of these outstanding women are arranged in three rows: on the top row, Queen Mary, Erzsébet Szilágyi, Queen Consort Beatrice of Naples and Cicelle Rozgonyi; in the middle row, Dorottya Kanizsai, Queen Isabella, Ilona Zrínyi, Zsuzsanna Lorántffy and Klára Dobó; in the bottom row, Mária Szécsi, Mrs. Count László Teleki, Mária Horváth Pálóczi, Teréz Brunszwick and Fanni (the fictitious author). The diversity of the faces and apparel make this print interesting. Grund Vilmos, *Történelmünk kiváló nőalakjai*. Budapest: István Szinay, 1877.

60 Queen Isabella with Friar George (as an arbiter between Isabella and the Habsburgs) and with Ferdinand himself instead of the Habsburg envoy was already depicted at the turn of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the wall painting at the so-called Knights Hall of the Pauline Monastery in Jasna Góra: Janusz Zbudniewek, ‘Klasztor jasnogórski i jego rola pielgrzymkowa’ in Feliks Kíryk (ed.), *Częstochowa. Dzieje miasta i Klasztoru Jasnogórskiego, tom I: Okres staropolski*. Częstochowa: Urząd miasta, 2002, 408; Feliks Kíryk, ‘Jasnogórski rękopis “Regestrum Confraternitatis Fratrum S. Pauli Primi Heremite” z lat 1517–1613’, *Studia Claromontana* 6 (1985) 249.

61 Deposit by the Hungarian National Gallery, Inv. no. MNG LU 67.10. Katalin Sinkó, ‘Wagner Sándor (1838–1919), Izabella királyné búcsúja Magyarországtól, 1863’, in Gábor Bellák and Györgyi Imre (eds.), *Aranyérmek, ezüstkoszorúk: művészkultusz és műpártolás Magyarországon a 19. században: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1995. június–november*. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1995, 250 (with bibliographical references to the earlier scholarship).

62 Among the earlier versions of the theme is an oil sketch made after 1858 (322 × 507 mm) and a lithograph that which Wagner prepared himself in 1862: Gerszi, *A magyar kőrajzolás története*, 76 and 212.

[Queen Isabella's Tree] by László Kőváry.⁶³ The queen was said to have stopped at the border when leaving her land via the Meszes Pass, looked back towards Transylvania and cut three letters into the trunk of a tree: S.F.V. (for *Sic fata volunt*). In Vizkelety's work the place and time of the scene is identified by a tombstone with the inscription: Fin[is] Transilv[aniae] 1551.⁶⁴ Isabella, as in the story, is accompanied by her young son, Péter Petrovics, Mihály Csáki and Friar George, all wearing Hungarian attire. This narrative scene has a sentimental character, though nothing of the psychological drama achieved by Wagner.

Another group of depictions focuses on the queen mother's encounters with the Ottomans and has an Orientalizing overtone. Viktor Madarász received a gold medal at the Millennial exhibition for his *Izabella királynő* [Queen Isabella] showing Friar George and an enthroned Isabella with her infant son, whose little foot is being kissed by the Sultan's envoy. An analogical theme was illustrated by Bálint Kiss (drawing) and Franz Kollarz (lithography) in *Izabella és János Zsigmond a szultán követét fogadja* [Isabella and John Sigismund Receive the Sultan's Envoy, 1866] and Béla Vizkelety (drawing) and Antal Marastoni (lithography) in *Izabella királyné anyai áldozata* [Motherly Sacrifice of Queen Isabella, 1864].⁶⁵

At the same time, Isabella was virtually absent from Polish historical paintings of the second half of the nineteenth century. If she did appear in such paintings, she did so only as a minor character in the scenes concerning the Jagiellon family. She was shown as a young princess in Jan Matejko's *Zawieszenie dzwonu Zygmunta na wieży katedry w roku 1521 w Krakowie* [The Hanging of the Sigismund Bell at the Cathedral Tower in 1521 in Kraków, 1874, fig. 13].⁶⁶ Isabella is portrayed as a blond girl in a bright dress and with a fan in her left hand. The child is embraced by her mother, thus emphasizing the emotional attachment between Bona and her firstborn daughter. This fragment of the painting was reproduced on postcards released around the years 1927–1936.

Whereas numerous nineteenth-century reproductions and copies of Isabella's sixteenth-century depictions, mainly the miniature portrait from Cranach's workshop (and to a smaller extent the image of her tomb and Padovano's medal) circulated in Poland, the Hungarian artworks made up for the sparse iconography of Isabella. The lack of Isabella's portraiture was compensated by the imaginary, romanticized likenesses, such as in the image by Miklós Barabás

63 László Kőváry, *Száz történelmi rege*. Kolozsvár: János Stein, 1857, online version available at the Magyar Elektronikus Könyvtár: <http://mek.oszk.hu/03700/03745/03745.htm> (accessed on January, 2019); Gerszi, *A magyar képzőművészet története*, 181.

64 The Latin word *finis* refers to both place (border) and time (the end of something).

65 Júlia Szabó and F. György Széphelyi (eds.), *Művészet Magyarországon 1830–1870. Katalógus. Kiállítás az MTA Művészettörténeti Kutató Csoport és a Magyar Nemzeti Galéria közös rendezésében, Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1981. augusztus–november*, vol. 1. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Galéria, 1981, 54; Gerszi, *A magyar képzőművészet története*, 166.

66 Jan Matejko's *Zawieszenie dzwonu Zygmunta na wieży katedry w Krakowie w 1521 roku* is an oil painting on a wooden panel (94×189 cm) held in the collection of the Polish National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. MP 441 MNW.

(drawing) and Karl Mahlknecht (steel engraving) of 1843, which portrayed her as a beautiful young lady.⁶⁷ However, it was the historical paintings focused on actual and legendary episodes from her life that reshaped the ways Isabella was imagined and made her a national symbol in nineteenth-century Hungary.

CONCLUSIONS

Isabella Jagiellon was a remarkable historical figure, though her contemporary depictions rarely captured anything of her strong personality and extraordinary life. The majority of her preserved images were not independent, but were parts of larger series of likenesses serving the representational and propagandistic needs of her family.

Isabella's images as a maiden functioned within the nexus of the past (royal bloodline) and future (dynastic plans and matrimonial negotiations) and were a reflection of the political aspirations of her parents. Despite attempts at individualization, her depictions were typified images of a young princess. Similarly generic were Isabella's likenesses as the queen dowager, included in the series of portraits presenting Sigismund I, Bona and their offspring. Thanks to their broad reception in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the images testified to the wealth and status of the royal family in Poland and abroad. The only representation of Isabella as the queen with regalia was her postmortem image on the funeral monument in the St. Michael Cathedral in Gyulafehérvár. Apart from the royal symbols, the heraldic program presented Isabella as the queen of Hungary and Dalmatia, and related to the Jagiellons, Szapolyais and Sforzas. As not much is known about this tomb, it can only be speculated that it was commissioned by Stephen Báthory as an attempt to legitimize his position as the successor of the Szapolyais. Among the sixteenth-century depictions of the queen, the Ottoman painting in *Süleymännâme* remains one of a kind. It offers a glimpse into the perception of Isabella at the Sultan's court, where she was imaged as a queen mother modeled after the depictions of Virgin Mary with the Child. This work shows how Isabella, an active political figure who challenged the frameworks of female agency, was accommodated into the visual narrative celebrating Süleyman and his reign.

The sixteenth-century depictions of Isabella demonstrate how she was perceived by others and how the others wished her to be perceived. The analyzed likenesses suggest that Isabella did not have much control over her image. It was mainly her family and, to a lesser extent, the members of the leading political

⁶⁷ The image is available online in the database of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest "Treasures of the Hungarian National Museum," http://opac3.mnm.monguz.hu/en_GB/record/-/record/display/manifestation/MNMMUSEUM1837125/684e5032-b693-4dad-9a65-8dad1e502cb0/solr/0/24/1/7/importDate/DESC (accessed on August 16, 2019). It was published first in *Iris. Taschenbuch für das Jahr 1843*, 67, then reprinted on the title page of the first volume of *Der Bildersaal. Eine Stahlstich-Sammlung, darstellend Bilder und Scenen meist aus Ungarn*. Leipzig: Haendel, 1848 and in János Vajda's *Magyar képek albuma*. Pest: Gusztáv Heckenast, 1858, 71: "Treasures of the Hungarian National Museum."

élites who decided about the means of her presentation, commemoration and glorification that best fit the dynastic and political interests of the time. Many of these likenesses were copied or reproduced in the nineteenth century as artefacts of the national past. The ways Isabella functioned in the collective imagination of the Poles were reshaped by the miniatures from the Cranach's workshop and, to a lesser extent, by Isabella's funeral monument and Padovano's medal. In Hungary, where Isabella was reinvented for the needs of national discourse, only the queen's tomb had a similar status, serving as evidence of the achievements of Hungarian art and culture. After the failure of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, Isabella became a heroine of the collective imagination, embodying freedom and courage. She was used as a role model for widowed women raising children patriotically, as well as a symbol of political exile. Isabella's eventful life offered a repository of episodes and anecdotes that could evoke emotions, provide entertainment and teach Hungarian history and patriotism. Thus Isabella's depictions continue to serve various agendas having nothing to do with the queen herself.

FIGURES



FIGURE 1. ISABELLA IN THE JAGIELLONS' GENEALOGICAL WOODCUT (FRAGMENT) IN *CONTENTA: DE VETVSTATIBVS POLONORVM LIBER I; DE IAGELLONVM FAMILIA LIBER II; DE SIGISMVNDI REGIS TEMPORIBVS LIBER III* BY JOTZ LUDWIG DIETZ (IMPRESSUM CRACCOUIAE: OPERA ATQ[UE] INDUSTRIA HIERONYMI VIETORIS [...], XII 1521), POLISH NATIONAL LIBRARY IN WARSAW, SHELF MARK SD XVI.F.643 ADL., UNNUMBERED PAGE. PHOTO: POLONA (ACCESSED 04.02.2019)



FIGURE 2. GIOVANNI MARIA MOSCA CALLED PADOVANO AND UNKNOWN MASTER,
ISABELLA JAGIELLON, 1532, LEAD MEDAL, 68 MM IN DIAMETER,
GALLERIA ESTENSE, MODENA, INV. NO. 9313.
PHOTO: GALLERIA ESTENSE, MODENA



FIGURE 3. THE IMPRESSIONS OF THE SO-CALLED JAGIELLONIAN BOOKBINDERS' ROLL (120 × 182 MM) OF 1537 ON THE FRONT COVER OF *DESIDERI ERASMI ROTERDAMI PARAPHRASIS IN EUANGELIUM SECUNDUM IOANNEM...* (BASILEAE: IN OFFICINA FROB, 1540), THE LIBRARY OF THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY, TEOL. 1557.
PHOTO: LIBRARY OF THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY, KRAKÓW



FIGURE 4. ISABELLA'S LIKENESS (SECOND IMAGE IN THE LOWER ROW)
AS A PART OF THE SERIES OF PORTRAITS OF THE JAGIELLON FAMILY, WORKSHOP OF LUCAS CRANACH THE YOUNGER, AROUND 1556,
OIL ON COPPER PANELS, 197 x 178 MM, POLISH NATIONAL MUSEUM IN KRAKÓW, INV. NO. XII-536-XII-545.
PHOTO: POLISH NATIONAL MUSEUM IN KRAKÓW



FIGURE 5. STEVEN VAN HERWIJCK, MEDAL OF ISABELLA JAGIELLON, AROUND 1562,
75 MM IN DIAMETER, ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM—COIN DEPARTMENT, 2K15/5.
PHOTO: JOHAN VAN HEESCH



FIGURE 6. UNKNOWN GERMAN PAINTER (?), ISABELLA JAGIELLON,
ROYAL CASTLE IN WARSAW — MUSEUM, INV. NO. ZKW/61,
PHOTO BY ANDRZEJ RING, LECH SANDZEWICZ



FIGURE 7. *SÜLEYMAN RECEIVING ISABELLA AND HER SON JOHN SIGISMUND [FRAGMENT]*,
PAINTING IN *SÜLEYMANNÂME* BY ARIFI, AROUND 1558, 254 × 370 MM,
THE HAZINE COLLECTION OF THE TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM LIBRARY, MS. H. 1517, FOL. 441R.
PHOTO: PUBLIC DOMAIN



FIGURE 8. UNKNOWN WORKSHOP, QUEEN'S RECUMBENT, RELIEF FIGURE [FRAGMENT], FUNERAL MONUMENT, ST. MICHAEL CATHEDRAL IN GYULAFEHÉRVÁR, AROUND 1571.
PHOTO: KAROLINA MROZIEWICZ



FIGURE 9. UNKNOWN WORKSHOP, HERALDIC PROGRAM OF ISABELLA'S FUNERAL MONUMENT, ST. MICHAEL CATHEDRAL IN GYULAFEHÉRVÁR, AROUND 1571.
PHOTO: KAROLINA MROZIEWICZ



FIGURE 10. UNKNOWN WORKSHOP, THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN, RELIEF SCENE, 50 X 183 CM, ISABELLA'S FUNERAL MONUMENT, ST. MICHAEL CATHEDRAL IN GYULAFEHÉRVÁR, AROUND 1571.
PHOTO: KAROLINA MROZIEWICZ



FIGURE 11. UNKNOWN AUTHOR, ISABELLA AND JOHN SIGISMUND, ILLUSTRATION TO *MAGYAR NŐK ÉVKÖNYVE*, 1861, LITHOGRAPHY. PUBLISHED BY THE COURTESY OF THE MAIN COLLECTION OF NATIONAL SZÉCHÉNYI LIBRARY, BUDAPEST



FIGURE 12. BÉLA VIZKELETY (DRAWING) AND JÓZSEF MARASTONI (LITHOGRAPHY), *ISABELLA KIRÁLYNÉ BÚCSÚJA MAGYARORSZÁGTÓL [QUEEN ISABELLA'S FAREWELL TO HUNGARY]*, 1860, 35.4 × 25 CM, GRAPHIC COLLECTION OF THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM, INV. NO. 9744. PHOTO: HUNGARIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM



FIGURE 13. JAN MATEJKO, *ZAWIESZENIE DZWONU ZYGMUNTA NA WIEŻY KATEDRY W ROKU 1521 W KRAKOWIE*
[THE HANGING OF THE SIGISMUND BELL AT THE CATHEDRAL TOWER IN 1521 IN KRAKÓW], 1874, OIL ON A WOODEN PANEL, 94 x 189 CM,
THE POLISH NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW, INV. NO. MP 441 MNW.
PHOTO: POLISH NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW

Gábor Petneházi* and Péter Kasza**

“*SIC FATA VOLUNT*”: THE NARRATIVE MEMORY OF THE TRAGEDY OF QUEEN ISABELLA AND THE PERIL OF BUDA

In 1539, the 20-year-old Isabella Jagiellon married King John I of Hungary, who was 32 years older than she.¹ One year later, fate presented Queen Isabella with a male child and practically at the same time took her husband from her. These two events determined the course of the rest of Isabella's life and placed her in the middle of a power struggle of European magnitude in which – essentially until her return to Transylvania in 1556 – she only very rarely had the opportunity to truly exert control over the events taking place around her. Instead, the queen – who faced her destiny with her head held high, though with totally unconcealed pain – was accorded the role of tragic heroine, which she played with gravity befitting the dignity of her regal office. The use of theatrical terminology here is not accidental for two reasons. On the one hand, this terminology signifies the entirely representative role that Isabella, as the widow of the deceased monarch and the mother of the infant king, was forced to play in the shadow of Friar George, who either openly or surreptitiously controlled politics in Hungary almost single-handedly; on the other hand, it reflects the dramatic tone of the public political sphere during the period in question. For Queen Isabella, participation in this domain was completely natural since from her birth she had been raised to one-day exercise the authority of a sovereign. Isabella's limited capacity to make independent decisions during her life full of dramatic turning points and inability to liberate herself from the framework that had been established for her were the product of historical circumstance.

This sense of destiny is reflected in Isabella's motto as well: *Sic fata volunt* – as fate wills it. According to historical tradition, Isabella left this motto behind her on two occasions. First in September 1541, when she engraved it into the wall of

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1 See the studies by Ágnes Máté, Péter Molnár and György Palotás in the present volume.

her room at the royal palace in Buda with a knife before permanently evacuating the residence (these words were allegedly visible in the room for decades). She left the motto behind her again in July 1551, when she carved the initial letters of this expression and her name – *S[ic] F[ata] V[olunt] Y[sabella]* – into an oak tree as she traveled through a pass in the Meszes Mountains after surrendering the Holy Crown of Hungary to a representative of Ferdinand I and renouncing her rule over eastern Hungary.² The queen bowing before the inexorable force of destiny: this was the topical self-image that she wanted to express with these two symbolic acts and this same image of her became embedded as a literary motif in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historiography as well.³

We shall examine the ways in which this motif was formed in light of the narrative memory of the events that took place in 1541. We shall then contrast this with the image that emerges from contemporary recollections. In doing this, we intend to reveal the dynamic connection that existed between literature dealing with historical events and historiography during the early modern period. Subsequently we will attempt to illustrate how the mechanism of memory functioned during this period, an objective that can best be reached through the use of literary terms. According to our point of departure, *fate* is one such literary expression, while the concept of *fatalism* essentially reflects literary thinking, which – taken together with a biblical intellectual world sometimes fused with

2 The abbreviation S.F.V. appeared also on the golden coins minted by Isabella and John Sigismund. Lajos Huszár, *Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség pénzverése*, edited by Gyula Rádóczy. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1995.

3 Two travelogues from the late sixteenth century report the words that Isabella engraved in the wall of her room at Buda Castle (*Sic fata volunt; Isabella Regina*): Franz Ömich/Omichius, *Beschreibung einer Legation und Reise von Wien aus Ostereich auff Constantinopel, durch den Wolgebornen Herrn David Ungnadn, Freyherrn zu Sonneck... an den Türckischen Keyser, Anno 72 verrichtet*. Güstrow, 1582, 15; and Salomon Schweiger, *Eine neue Reyßbeschreibung auß Teutschland Nach Constantinopel und Jerusalem... in III unterschiedlichen Büchern*. Nuremberg, 1608, 21. In connection to the latter work, see Katalin Németh S., 'Salomon Schweigger útleírásának magyar vonatkozásai', in Gábor Kecskeméti (ed.), *Tarnai Andor-émlékkönyv* (Historia litteraria 2). Budapest: Universitas, 1996, 196. The Spanish mercenary captain Bernardo de Aldana wrote in his memoirs about the letters that Isabella carved into the oak tree in the Meszes Mountains and the stone well that General Giovanni Battista Castaldo had built at this location. See Fernando Escribano Martín (ed.), *La expedición del Maestre de Campo Bernardo de Aldana a Hungría en 1548*. Barcelona: Miraguano Ediciones, 2010; Zoltán Korpás, 'La correspondencia de un soldado español de las guerras en Hungría a mediados del siglo XVI. Comentarios al diario de Bernardo de Aldana (1548–1552)', *Hispania* 206 (2000) 881–910. Bernardo de Aldana's memoirs remained in manuscript form until their initial publication in the following work: Antonio Rodríguez Villa (ed.), *Expedición del maestre de campo Bernardo de Aldana a Hungría en 1548*. Madrid: Medina, 1878. Jacques August de Thou (1553–1617) mentions this episode in the ninth volume of his monumental work *Historiarum sui temporis*: "[Isabella] Cassoviam versus iter direxit. Cum propter angustias viarum inter silvas de curru descendere cogeretur, dum auriga currum traduceret, ipsa retro in Daciam respiciens, pristini culminis e quo deciderat memor altum corde suspirium duxisse dicitur et cum aliud non posset litterata femina, inscripto arbori nomine, haec addidisse, Sic fata volunt, eoque relicto iusti doloris monumento, rursus currum conscendit." Jacques August de Thou... *Historiarum sui temporis ab anno domini 1543 usque ad annum 1607 libri CXXXVIII*. Frankfurt: Koppfius, 1625, 182.

millenarianism – represented one of the most important features of the Renaissance and the Reformation. As a result of the Turkish conquest, this way of thinking appeared in Hungary with even more intensity and over a more extended period of time than elsewhere in Europe.⁴

At the same time, such an intermingling of the tragic and prophetic outlook was much weaker in Italy, where the archaization of the concepts of *fate* and *fortune* became one of the central elements of literary and historical thinking already from the beginning of the rise of humanism. As a result of this, these concepts were able to assert themselves in pure form in sixteenth-century Italian literary culture. Isabella Jagiellon, whose upbringing was imbued with Italian influences, may have chosen her motto as a result of her exposure to this culture.⁵

In this study, we will take a look at both published and unpublished contemporary narratives regarding the loss of Buda in 1541 in which Isabella's role stands out.⁶ We will start with the "more literary" works intended for a broader audience, then progress toward texts that are either of lower quality

4 For the importance of the concept of fate in the work of poet Miklós Zrínyi (1620–1664), see Tibor Klaniczay, *A fátum és szerencse Zrínyi műveiben*. Budapest: Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem Bölcsészeti Kara, 1947; and Sándor Bene, 'A sztoikus Zrínyi', in Judit Nyerges, Attila Verók and Edina Zvara (eds.), *MONOKgraphia. Tanulmányok Monok István 60. születésnapjára*. Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 2016, 69–86. For the prophetic outlook and its connection to the Turkish threat in historical thinking in Hungary and elsewhere in Europe, see Marjorie Reeves, *The Prophetic Sense of History in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*. Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 1999; Pál Fodor, *In Quest of the Golden Apple: Imperial Ideology, Politics and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire* (Analecta Isisiana). Istanbul: Isis, 2000, 71–103; Pál Ács, 'The Names of the Holy Maccabees. Erasmus and the Origin of the Hungarian Protestant Martirology', in Marcell Sebők (ed.), *Republic of Letters, Humanism, Humanities* (Collegium Budapest Workshop Series 15). Frankfurt–New York: Campus Verlag, 2005, 45–62; and Johannes Ehmann, *Luther, Türken und Islam. Eine Untersuchung zum Türken- und Islambild Martin Luthers (1515–1546)* (Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte 80). Heidelberg: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2015².

5 Following the Ockhamist antecedents and naturally Dante, the Great Plague, and Petrarch's *Fortunae* book, Chancellor of Florence Coluccio Salutati wrote a treatise around the years 1396–1399 entitled *De fato et fortuna*; the *Quattrocento* Italian humanists also kept this question alive (Poggio Bracciolini, Leon Battista Alberti, Lorenzo Valla, etc.); after which Pico della Mirandola and – partially in argument with Mirandola – Pietro Pomponazzi made the subjects of more serious philosophical investigation. The problem acquired an explicit theological complexion with the spread of the Reformation (see the dispute between Erasmus and Luther). Just a small sample of the entire library of works available on this subject: Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, 641–667; and Paul Richard Blum, *Philosophy of Religion in the Renaissance*. London–New York: Routledge, 2016, 55–76. At the same time, the concept of *fatum* may have retained its original, more obscure tragedy-of-destiny meaning in the everyday educated language and mentality: the mottos of Queen Isabella and historiographer Paolo Giovio (*Fato prudentia minor*: "wisdom is smaller than fate").

6 Paolo Giovio, whose account of the loss of Buda will be examined in this study, and Francesco Guicciardini, sent each other excerpts from the works that they were writing. T. C. Price Zimmermann, 'Francesco Guicciardini and Paolo Giovio', *Annali d'Italianistica* 2 (1984) 34–52; for this phenomenon in early modern Italy in general: Peter Burke, 'Oral and Manuscript Culture in Early Modern Italy', in Luca Degli Innocenti and Brian Richardson (eds.), *Interactions between Orality and Writing in Early Modern Italian Culture*. London: Routledge, 2016, 21–30.

from a linguistic perspective and/or aimed at a narrower group of readers. The first work to be examined will be the drama, which remained in manuscript form until the end of the twentieth century, that Venetian patrician Daniele Barbaro (1514–1570) wrote about Isabella. This will be followed by an account of the loss of Buda by Paolo Giovio (1483–1552) that until now the authors of scholarly literature have claimed served as one of the most important sources for Barbaro's work. We will then examine the letter that Antal Verancsics wrote to Giovio at about the same time that Barbaro produced his text. Finally, we will survey accounts and reports that internal witnesses wrote immediately after the events in question. However, before we turn to concrete texts, it is worthwhile to briefly examine the historical background of the loss of Buda and the current status of related research.

BUDA OPPUGNATA

The Turkish occupation of the capital city of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1541 entailed much more significant and far-reaching consequences than the Battle of Mohács in 1526: this fact has dawned on the horizon of present-day research, though contemporaries clearly perceived and gave voice to it.⁷ These consequences are well-known. As part of the sultan's so-called "great strategy," Hungary became the main theater in the Ottoman–Habsburg conflict, thus leading to the spectacular failure of the policy of King John and Friar George aimed at maintaining balance between the two great powers. However, neither one of these powers had enough strength to bring all of Hungary under its control and by 1570 an Ottoman vassal state, the Principality of Transylvania, had formed in the eastern part of the realm. This principality, which possessed only limited independence, though a great degree of internal freedom, was essentially able to preserve the illusion of Hungarian state sovereignty until the Ottoman reprisals that took place in 1658 following the failed military campaign that Prince of Transylvania George Rákóczi II conducted in Poland.⁸

It is not necessary for us here to recall the history of the loss of Buda and the formation of the Budin Eyalet, which were parts of a longer sequence of

7 Several anti-Turkish *oratio* were written under the direct impact of the events that appeared in numerous published editions. Among these were Ferenc Frangepán's address at the imperial assembly in Regensburg on June 9, 1541, speeches that Tranquillus Andronicus and Joachim Camerarius delivered immediately after the capture of Buda, Jacopo Sadoletto's homily, Clemens Janicki's Latin-language elegy and Mavro Vetranović's Croatian-language *tužba*. See Péter Kasza, 'Buda Oppugnata 1541 – egy korszakváltó esemény új megközelítésben', *Tanulmányok Budapest múltjából* 42 (2017) 7–28. The Battle of Mohács is generally depicted as the caesura in non-Hungarian scholarly literature, while the fall of the capital city is regarded as an event of secondary importance. For a prime example of this phenomenon, see the following short biography of Queen Isabella (which contains other factual errors as well): Roland H. Bainton, *Women of the Renaissance: From Spain to Scandinavia*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1977, 217–229.

8 Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire. The Ottomans in Central Europe – a Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390–1566)*. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities–HAS, 2016².

events. However, it should be noted that the search for those responsible began almost immediately: the powerful and unequivocal will of Sultan Süleyman was obviously not enough to bring forth the loss of Buda – the ineffectiveness of the two armies that Ferdinand sent to the city one after the other and the protraction of negotiations taking place between the two kings of Hungary with Polish mediation also played a role.⁹ As we will see, the contention that Isabella bore limited responsibility for the loss of Buda emerged as well, though this claim stands in stark opposition to the previously mentioned schematic (self-)image of the tragic victim of the events.

The loss of Buda had tragic consequences in Hungarian history, while the siege of Buda conducted under the command of Wilhelm von Roggendorf claimed an enormous number of victims and itself was no less tragic. The battle fought below the walls of Buda Castle, on Gellért Hill and on the waters of the Danube just before the arrival of Sultan Süleyman's main army in August, 1541, and in which several thousand Austrian, German and Czech mercenaries were killed represented the final episode of the siege. In terms of Isabella's personal destiny, the "only" changes that occurred after September 1541 were that she was forced to change the location of her royal residence and the territory of her son's state had shrunk to half its previous size. From Isabella's perspective, only one truly tragic incident occurred during these events: on August 29, the queen was forced to endure an entire day in a state of helpless uncertainty as she waited to find out if her one-year-old son would return from the Süleyman's camp outside Buda and to learn what the sultan had decided with regard to her own fate. It is no accident that Daniele Barbaro used this scene – the mother forced to painfully tolerate her child being taken away – as the basis for his dramatic depiction of the loss of Buda that remains unique to this day.

BARBARO'S TRAGEDY

The Venetian patrician, polymath, historiographer, political official and humanist Daniele Barbaro,¹⁰ who has been remembered primarily for his translation of

9 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901; Pál Fodor, 'Ottoman Policy towards Hungary, 1520–1541', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 45:2–3 (1991) 271–345; Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds.), *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe. The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*. Leiden–Boston–Köln: Brill, 2000; Teréz Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát. Fráter György (1482–1551)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2017.

10 Daniele Barbaro was the scion of a patrician family that was very influential in the Republic of Venice during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and produced numerous statesmen and scholars during this period. His uncle was the prominent humanist Ermolao Barbaro (1454–1493), while his younger brother Marcantonio Barbaro (1518–1595) had a successful political career, serving as Venice's ambassador to France and the Sublime Porte and standing several times as a candidate to become the *doge* of the republic. Daniele Barbaro was a member of the Accademia degli Infiammati in Padua and engaged in significant activity as both a philologist and a political official. Therefore it is not surprising that he played a role in the dialogue (*Della perfettione della vita politica*) praising the form of government in the Republic of Venice that

Vitruvius, presumably wrote his 2,235-line drama entitled *Tragedia* around the year 1548. The only existing autograph manuscript of this work is kept at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice.¹¹ According to a later subtitle, Barbaro wrote *Tragedia* at the age of 24, though this is certainly inaccurate: perhaps the person who recorded the information on the initial page of the drama wrote 24 instead of 34, in which case Barbaro finished the work in 1548. The year 1548 as *ante quem* is certain because the only contemporary mention of *Tragedia* appears in a letter that Pietro Aretino wrote to Barbaro in April 1548 in which he praises the text from the drama that the author had sent to him.¹² One can only speculate why the drama remained unpublished and was not performed: the carefully clarified text could have easily been divided into a five-act play and the plot of the work is complete.¹³ The most probable explanation is that Barbaro, who from the end of 1548 served as the representative of *La Serenissima* in London, had no time to deal with the publication of *Tragedia* after completing the work and never returned to this task later in his life.¹⁴

As other dramas that followed the classical patterns of the *Cinquecento*, the text of *Tragedia* features monologues, dialogues and chorale insertions that follow one another in diverse, metrical lines.¹⁵ One cannot exclude the possibility that Barbaro wrote the drama with a musical purpose in mind (in this case, the text

Paolo Paruta (1540–1598) published in 1579. For the Accademia degli Inflammati: Valerio Vianello, *Il letterato, l'Accademia, il libro. Contributi sulla cultura veneta del Cinquecento*. Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1988. For a recent work on Daniele Barbaro's life and works: Laura Moretti, 'Daniele Barbaro: la vita e i libri', in Susy Marcon and Laura Moretti (eds.), *Daniele Barbaro 1515–70. Letteratura, scienze e arti nella Venezia del Rinascimento*. Venezia: Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, 2015, 15–32; and Daria Perocco, 'Daniele Barbaro ambasciatore e letterato', in Frédérique Lemerle, Vasco Zara, Pierre Caye and Laura Moretti (eds.), *Daniele Barbaro 1514–1570. Vénitien, patricien, humaniste*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

11 Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana di Venezia, It. IX 29 (=6590): *Tragedia della regina Isabella, vedova di Giovanni, re d'Ungheria*. Its publications: Corinne Lucas, 'Tragedia, text inédit de Daniele Barbaro', in Adelin Charles Fiorato (ed.), *Discours littéraires et pratiques politiques* (Cahiers de la Renaissance italienne 1). Paris: Université de La Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris III), 1987, 89–162; Corinne Lucas, 'Daniele Barbaro—Tragedia', *Quaderni Veneti* 15 (1992) 7–80; Ferdinando Neri, *La tragedia italiana del Cinquecento*. Firenze: Galletti e Cocci, 1904, 108–116; Sándor Varga, *Barbaro Daniel (1513–1570)*. Budapest: Pátria Nyomda, 1944; Szabolcs Ö. Barlay, *Romon virág. Fejezetek a Mohács utáni reneszánszról*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1986, 60–71; Corinne Lucas, 'Jeux de miroirs entre Bude et Venise dans la Tragedia de Daniele Barbaro', in Adelin Charles Fiorato (ed.), *Discours littéraires et pratiques politiques*. Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 1995, 61–88; Valeria Cimmieri, 'The Performative Power of Diplomatic Discourse in the Italian Tragedies Inspired by the Wars Against the Turks', in Nathalie Rivère de Carles (ed.), *Early Modern Diplomacy, Theater and Soft Power: The Making of Peace*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 93–112.

12 Di Aprile in Vinetia 1548: *Il quarto libro dell lettere di M. Pietro Aretino*. Parigi: Appresso Matteo il Maestro, 1609, 191.

13 Perocco, 'Daniele Barbaro ambasciatore e letterato', 402, note 50.

14 Barbaro wrote a letter to Aretino from London in early 1549. Daniel Barbaro D. Ambasciatore al Signor Pietro Aretino; Di Londra 28. Genaro del 1549: *Lettere scritte al Signor Pietro Aretino da molti signori, comunità, donne di valore, poeti e altri eccellentissimi spiriti*, vol. 2. Venezia: Francesco Marcolini, 1552, 137–138.

15 Neri, *La tragedia italiana del Cinquecento*; Renzo Cremante (ed.), *Teatro del Cinquecento*, vol. 2, *La tragedia*. Milano–Napoli: Ricciardi, 1988.

was probably the libretto for a never-completed opera); in the event of a prose performance, the appearance of the chorus signifies the end of the drama's acts. The plot unfolds in Buda over a period of just a few hours shortly before the Turkish capture of the city as Isabella and her entourage await and then receive Süleyman's envoy, who transmits the sultan's request to see the queen's young son at his camp. A Turkish messenger subsequently arrives to the royal court to inform Isabella and her counselors that they must leave Buda for Transylvania, which the sultan has set aside for the queen and her son.

The allegorical figure representing Pain (*La Pena*) recites the prologue, after which the events that take place during the first half of the drama – essentially following the pattern of ancient Greek and Roman tragedy – serve to heighten the ambiance of impending doom.¹⁶ The dialogue and monologue involving the members of Isabella's court (two *Consiglieri*, a *Secretario* representing Friar George and the secondary characters *Cortegiano*, *Barone* and *Amico*) reflect the Hungarian political leadership's doubts and uncertainties, which culminate in the apparently joyful entry of the Turkish envoy (*Noncio Turcheso*) accompanied by a choral song from the Buda guards celebrating victory and peace. The envoy does not present Süleyman's message directly on stage; instead the dialogue between the secondary characters and the envoy's conceited monologue reveal that the sultan has summoned the toddler John Sigismund to his camp. The main character, the queen (*Reina*) appears on stage only after this, immediately following the choral song calling for resistance against the Turks. The queen's dialogue with the *Secretario* (lines 1,315–1,742) represent the climax of the drama. The queen has already heard the bad news, which she did not receive calmly in the least. The *Secretario* then turns toward the audience and introduces the scene:

Rotto ha il dolor il freno
d'ogni prudenza, quando
fu detta alla Reina
la sospetta dimanda
di voler il fanciullo.
La pietà sua materna
non ebbe alcun rittegnò;
però si deide al pianto,
alle querele, ai gridi.¹⁷

Pain broke the brake
of all prudence, when
the suspicious request
of wanting the boy
was said to the queen.
Her maternal compassion
had no restraint;
she broke out in tears,
cried and lamented.

Isabella, forgetting about her dignity (*vinta del dolore / si scorda del suo onore*), began to rave in anger, unwilling to accept that she had no choice, that she must bow to the will of the sultan. She then calls upon those in her midst to fight:

¹⁶ Based on this, Sándor Varga and following him Szabolcs Ö. Barlay surmised that the original title of Barbaro's drama may have been *La Pena* rather than *Tragedia*. Varga, *Barbaro Daniel*; Barlay, *Romon virág*.

¹⁷ *Tragedia*, 1361–1368.

Alle difese, all'armi,
alle torri, alle mura!
Difendete l'onore,
difendete la fede,
la libertà, la vita!¹⁸

To the defenses, to arms,
to the towers, to the walls!
Defend your honor,
defend the faith,
liberty and life!

The queen then speaks to the soul of her late husband and reveals her greatest fear – that the sultan will take the young prince away from her and have him raised in Turkey.

Guarda Signor benigno,
in che stato si trova
la tua fedel compagna,
la tua diletta serva;
mira la bella pianta,
in cui revive tua semente santa,
in che maligna terra
da velenoso umore
esser nodrita deve.¹⁹

Behold benign Lord,
the situation in which
your faithful companion
and beloved servant finds herself;
gaze upon the beautiful plant
in which your holy seed as sprouted
in what malignant earth
from what poisonous humors
it must imbibe.

Meanwhile, Isabella's anger slowly softens into helpless grief. The queen asks God for the intervention of her husband, though not in order to mitigate the punishment that has rightfully been imposed upon them, since she is prepared to die and lose the kingdom as well:

attendo la vendetta
che ne tolga la vita
che ne spoglie del regno,
ch'il nostro nome estingua.²⁰

I await the vengeance
that shall take our lives away,
that shall destroy the kingdom,
that shall extinguish our names.

But at least to show mercy on her son, so that he not become a servant of the Turks:

volgiti a i giusti preghi
dinanzi al tuo Signore
che difenda 'l tuo onore
nella persona mia;
ch'il tuo figlio innocente
servo non sia di questa iniqua
gente.²¹

Turn with pure prayer
toward your Lord
so that he may defend your honor
in my person;
so that your innocent son
shall not serve this evil people.

18 *Tragedia*, 1397–1401.

19 *Tragedia*, 1431–1439.

20 *Tragedia*, 1455–1459.

21 *Tragedia*, 1463–1467.

The task of the *Secretario* is then to appeal to the queen's better judgment. On the one hand, he cites the force of necessity:

Il consiglio ch'io dico
non è in tutto consiglio,
ma seco ha il compagna
forz'e necessitate;²²

The counsel that I give
is not entirely advice,
but its fellows are
force and necessity.

On the other hand, he offers hope to Isabella in the form of fatalism: if God had wanted to destroy her, he would have already done so before the sultan reached Buda, because this would have helped the Austrians to capture the castle:

Tu sai con quanta rabbia e quanto
sdegno
la casa Austria, oltra la onesta
usanza,
s'è mossa contra te, contra 'l tuo
regno,
tu sai con quante angosce di tue
genti,
tra quai sospetti e intollerabili
pene,
l'assedio hai sopportato in questa
terra,
che nessun'ora dal tornar del sole
sin'alla sera e dalla sera all'alba
fu mai tranquilla e riposata un
punto.
Infin tu sai, ché pur ora l'intendi,
com'a Dio piace il tuo nimico
vinto.
Che si può dir, se non questi segni
mostran che sian finite le fatiche
e consumati i danni ei tuoi
travagli,
ch'Egli è Dio di pietà, di
compassione,
né in tutto vuole tua distruttione?²³

You know well with what great anger
and how unworthily
the Austrian house moved against you,
setting your honor aside, attacking your
kingdom,
you know well with what anguish,
among what intrigues and intolerable
pains
your people endured the siege in this
land,
that not a single hour or minute passed
tranquilly
from sunrise to sunset,
from dusk until dawn.
You also know, since you can now see it,
how God likes your enemy defeated.
What can show better than these signs
that your troubles are over,
that your suffering and anguish have
passed,
that He is a God of pity, of compassion,
nor does He want your destruction?

At the end of this dialogue, the queen slowly realizes that she cannot do anything else than preserve hope; the *Secretario*, Friar George, promises to go to the sultan's camp to ensure that the queen's young son is sent back to her as soon as possible.

²² *Tragedia*, 1553–1556.

²³ *Tragedia*, 1599–1614.

The next scene begins with the presence of Isabella, who is having difficulty parting with her son, the boy's nurses and Friar George. Isabella's anguish is indescribable, though this anguish turns to indignation when another Turkish messenger (*Messo Turchescho*) arrives and exhorts the queen to send her son on his way to Süleyman's camp; furthermore, the messenger informs both Isabella and the *Secretario* that the sultan will occupy Buda and that the queen will receive Transylvania, to where she will be allowed to go freely with all her treasure and where she can rule far from all danger and in peace along with her son:

A voi largo paese e più sicuro
nella gran Transilvania si provvede:
ivi con la tua gente
con tue ricchezze, e col tuo caro
figlio
lontano da periglio
vivrai lietamente.²⁴

To you a vast and more secure country
does the great Transylvania provide:
there with your people
with your riches, and with your dear
son
away from peril
you will live happily.

Isabella, though she protests, must accept the decision, while Friar George and – almost aggressively – the Turkish messenger also exhort her to do this. The queen therefore sends her son on his way and in the final scene of the drama conducts a dialogue with the chorus in which she mourns both her fate and that of her county, which she qualifies as “even worse than death,” and laments that she can neither die proudly nor return to her father in Poland:

O me misera e trista,
almen potess'io gire
col mio figliuolo dove
il mio diletto padre
tien di Polonia il scetro
e ivi la mia vita
e i miei danni finire,
over arditamente combattendo
per la fede morire!
O amici, o vicini,
o voi che la natura
meco congiunse con suoi dolci
nodi,
ove siete, ove state?
Non vi prende pietate
di quei miseri modi
con che, misera, io sono
spogliata e priva d'ogni libertade?

Oh me miserable and sad,
if only I could return
with my little son to where
my beloved father
holds the scepter of Poland
and there finish my life
and my ordeals,
or at least boldly fighting
for the faith die!
Oh friends, or neighbors,
or you to whom nature
has joined me with his sweet bonds,
where are you, where are you?
Does pity not take hold of you
to see the wretched ways
with which, miserably, I am
divested and deprived of all liberty?

²⁴ *Tragedia*, 2013–2018.

Perché non riguardate
con benign'occhi ormai le mie ruine,
certe e triste indovine delle vostre?

...

O regno antico, o sacri tempi, o
torri
alte, o palazzi ornati,
o mia nobilitade,
com'in un punto io perdo
ogni cosa e la speme
di riavervi mai!²⁵

Why do you not look
with benign eyes upon my sad ruin,
which certainly foretells your own?

...

Oh ancient kingdom, your sacred
temples,
your high towers, your ornate palaces,
Oh my nobility,
how in a single instant I have lost
everything and the hope
of ever returning.

The text of *Tragedia* reveals that Daniele Barbaro was familiar with the events that took place in Buda during the period August 28–September 5, 1541, though presumably for dramaturgical reasons he reduced the time in which the plot of his work unfolds to just a few hours. The merging of the figures and behavior of the three Turkish envoys and messengers who actually appeared at the Buda court on three different days in the characters of the *Noncio Turcheso* and the *Messo Turchesco* represent an example of the methods that Barbaro used to shorten the duration of the plot. In fact, Ali Orudj *Chavush* arrived to the royal court with an invitation to Süleyman's camp on August 28, while another Turkish envoy appeared at the court on August 31 in order to deliver the letter in which the sultan informed Isabella that she and her son would receive Transylvania and the following day an Agha of the Janissaries turned up to demand that the queen surrender the castle. Almost any of the works examined below may have served as the concrete textual source from which Barbaro derived the information that he used to construct the plot of *Tragedia*. One cannot exclude the possibility that the author may have been familiar to some degree with all of these works and that he learned about them from Antal Verancsics. Indeed in 1548, Verancsics was sent on a diplomatic mission to Rome and on May 22 of this year sent a letter to Paolo Giovio in which he criticized the Italian historiographer's unpublished history of the loss of Buda and presented a narrative version of this event that would have better suited the tastes of his sovereign and his employer – Queen Isabella and Friar George, respectively.²⁶ However, before expounding upon this, it would be worthwhile to take a closer look at Giovio's work.

²⁵ *Tragedia*, 2209–2225; 2238–2243.

²⁶ This letter from Antal Verancsics to Paolo Giovio, which is examined in detail in this study, is the only existing source regarding Verancsics's visit to Italy in 1548. Although the purpose of his trip is unknown, one might surmise that if he went to Rome, Isabella and Friar George may have had affairs that needed to be settled in this city. There is no evidence indicating that Verancsics had had any connection to Daniele Barbaro or anybody in his family, though his known and published letters confirm that he maintained friendly relations with at least the following members of the patrician élite in Venice: Marcantonio Da Mula (1506–1572), whose name, as

GIOVIO'S BUDA BOOK

Paolo Giovio's 45-book history of Europe from the French invasion of the Italian peninsula in 1494 to the death of King Francis I of France in 1547 was first published in print in Florence near the end of his life.²⁷ Giovio, the longtime Bishop of Nocera, dealt extensively in this history of Europe with the coalition that formed against the Turks during the period, therefore he devoted particular attention to the events that led to the fall of Buda in 1541.²⁸ According to the present arrangement of the text, Giovio's examination of these events begins with the death of King John in the middle of book 39 and – with the exception of a short deviation to the topic of the imperial assemblies held in Worms and Regensburg beginning in late 1540 – ends with the departure of Queen Isabella from Buda around the middle of book 40. This section of the work may therefore be regarded as a compact unit, which Giovio furnished with a separate introduction in which he underscored the political sensitivity of the theme in plain, Erasmus-inspired language and rebuked European sovereigns for having allowed their feuds to strengthen the Turks.²⁹

The events follow one another in an orderly fashion in Paolo Giovio's narrative. The author provides a detailed, realistic and well-informed account of the fall of Buda, despite consistently misspelling Hungarian, Turkish, German,

that of Daniele Barbaro, is associated with philosophical works and high-ranking political office; and Carlo Cappello (1492–1546) and his sons, primarily Francesco, who received Verancsics as a guest at his house in Murano in 1546. See László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 6, *Vegyes levelek 1538–1549* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 9). Pest: Eggenberger, 1860, 182–199; Giuseppe Gullino, 'Marcantonio Da Mula', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 32 (1986);

http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/marcantonio-da-mula_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/; and Angelo Ventura, 'Carlo Cappello', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 18 (1975) [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/carlo-cappello_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/carlo-cappello_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).

27 *Pauli Iovii Novocomensis episcopi Historiarum sui temporis*, vols. 1–2. Firenze: Laurentii Torrentini Ducalis Typographi, 1550–1552. Modern publication of this work: Dante Visconti (ed.), *Historiarum sui temporis I; 2/1 (Pauli Iovii Opera 3–4)*. Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato–Libreria dello Stato, 1957, 1964; and T. C. Price Zimmermann (ed.), *Historiarum sui temporis 2/2 (Pauli Iovii Opera 5)*. Roma: Istituto poligrafico dello Stato–Libreria dello Stato, 1985.

28 See Emmanuelle Pujean, *L'Europe et les Turcs. La croisade de l'humaniste Paolo Giovio*. Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Midi, 2015; T. C. Price Zimmermann, *Paolo Giovio: The Historian and the Crisis of Sixteenth-Century Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995; and Eric W. Cochrane, *Historians and Historiography in the Italian Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981, 366–376.

29 "Scio me aliquando liberius quam deceret totius praesertim orbis gesta praescribentem in explicandis principum consiliis, quibus haud dubie perituri sumus, ab instituta brevitate discessisse, sed certe boni mortales in hac publici doloris et iam propinqui luctus causa longius provento facilem omnino veniam dabunt, quum intelligent, quanta insaniam summi reges praeclaram occasionem non propulsandi modo, verum ingenti victoria delendi eius hostis amiserint, qui accersitus ultro in cervices nostras cruentum gladium securus exercet, exercebitque tamdiu insolenter atque feliciter quamdiu vigeant reges, qui nulla pietate et summa vecordia perdendo orbi nefariis inter se armis depugnent; scilicet ut postquam mutuas vires attriverint, occidentis quoque imperium cuncta iam ex tuto fidenter invadenti barbaro foede relinquant." *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 2. Firenze: Lorenzo Torrentino, 1552, 348.

Czech, Polish and other sorts of proper names. Giovio starts with the conclusion of the Treaty of Várad, continuing with King John's marriage to Isabella, the birth of their son, the monarch's death, the subsequent negotiations in Constantinople, Ferdinand's dispatch of an envoy, the Leonhard von Vels— and Wilhelm von Roggendorf—led military campaign, the siege of Buda and the decisive big battle and concluding with the arrival of Süleyman, the summons of the heir to the throne to the sultan's camp and the Turkish capture of the capital city. Giovio wrote about Isabella in several places in this account, offering the reader a much more nuanced image of the queen than those projected in literary topoi.

Giovio's description of the royal wedding reveals that Isabella was not only beautiful, but very strong-willed as well.³⁰ The queen then acquires power following the death of her husband.³¹ Isabella did not subsequently wish to relinquish this power – a circumstance that Giovio attributed to the Sforza blood that coursed in her veins. The author vividly illustrates this with the episode in which Isabella very aggressively persuades Péter Petrovics and Friar George to permit her to receive the envoys that Ferdinand sent to Buda (in late 1540) as well, then theatrically plays the role before these envoys of the weak widow who has become exhausted from her mourning and is unable to make a decision, whereas she is actually prepared to call upon the Turks to help her defend her newly acquired throne.³² It is therefore not surprising that, according

30 "*Nec multo post Ioannes... uxorem duxit Isabellam Sigismundi Sarmatarum regis filiam, virili eruditique ingenio puellam, et quod alliciendi animi multum interfuit, Italico lepore et venustate Polonica peramabilem.*" *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 2, 349.

31 "*Caeterum ius imperii Isabellae reginae communi procerum studio delatum, ea lege, ut in publicis litteris filii matrisque nomine praescriberetur, eodemque titulo regia moneta cuderetur.*" *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 2, 351–52.

32 "*Exceptus Budae Salma aegre impetravit ut ad reginam admitteretur: Georgius enim et Vichius muliebri ingenio diffidentes, denegatum colloqui officium nimio reginae dolore et lachrymis excusabant, quum se peculiari munere mandata audire referreque paratos esse dicerent, postquam viduae reginae regisque pueri tutelam demandante obtestanteque Ioanne rege suscepissent. Sed eam regina de se imbecilli iudicii opinionem, quam tutores conciperent, ad contumeliam revocabat, quum Sarmatico et Sfortiano sanguine progenita, non viriles modo, sed plane regios gereret spiritus, diceretque sibi in necem manus se allaturam, nisi legato aditus in cubiculum daretur. Id erat atratum obscurumque, utpote quod de more coelestem lucem excluderet, ipsa ignobili in strato residebat, neglecto ornatu et pallida facie, sed oculis nihil tum in lachrymas proclinatis, voce tamen et cervicis gestu ita composita, ut diuturnu defessae luctu exaruisse potius lachrymas, quam discessisse ex animo moerorem ostenderet. Feminae siquidem mentem regnandi cupido iam invaseret, atque ita possidebat, ut omnia imminens belli pericula contemneret, ac ipsos denique barbaros, ut regium nomen tueretur omnino evocandos existimaret. Itaque Salmae cum multo verborum honore mandata explicanti demisse respondit, eam esse Fortunam sexus ac aetatis suae, ut orbata rege coniuge et diuturnis corporis ac animi doloribus perturbata, neque suscipere, neque terminare consilium queat; quum in re longa gravissima Sigismundum patrem omnino consulendum existimet, eius autem regis tantam esse virtutem atque iustitiam, ut Ferdinandus nullo alio disceptatore atque arbitro in ea controversia uti velit. Proinde se petere spatium ac idoneum tempus, quo pater consuli posset. Se enim ab eius sententia minime discessuram, ac idem facturos proceres Hungaros arbitrari; quod si id morae spatium denegetur, atque armis agendum putent, egregiam certe laudem non ferent, inquit, Caesar et Ferdinandus, si viduam fletu consumptam et vagientem in cunis puerum regem oppugnatum advenerint.*" *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 2, 354.

to Giovio's narrative, Isabella was the one who at the end of the year 1540 requested military assistance against Ferdinand's troops from the Turkish beys along the border and ensured that the Turkish army that finally arrived to Buda in the early spring after encountering delays during the winter received sufficient supplies of food and military equipment.

However, Isabella disappears from the scene in *Historiarum sui temporis* following the arrival of General von Roggendorf's army and the beginning of the actual siege of Buda and returns only after the arrival of the sultan to the city in book 40. In this section of the book, Isabella no longer appears as the cold, calculating queen as she did previously, but as a sensitive woman and mother who attempts to save as many captives as possible. Isabella was horrified to learn that Süleyman wished to see her son at his camp, though ultimately decided to comply with the sultan's request. Following the boy's return, the queen intervenes on behalf of the Hungarian lords detained at the Turkish camp. She writes a letter to Süleyman imploring him to set the lords free and sends some of her own jewels to the sultan's daughter as a gift. Later Isabella tries to obtain the release of Bálint Török as well, though the Turks take him back to Constantinople with them because they regard him to pose a greatest threat to their interests. This Isabella lies closer in character to the female figure of the queen that Daniele Barbaro portrayed in *Tragedia*, as the following lines from *Historiarum sui temporis* demonstrate: "Thus the queen, although amid tears and cursing the despot's perfidy with a silent sigh, apparently bowed before the force of constraint and withdrew from the castle and the city under the barbarians' condition that she leave behind untouched the cannons, military equipment kept in the armories and stores held in the granaries."³³

In light of these facts, one may conjecture that Paolo Giovio used two sources pertaining to Isabella. The first of these sources may have been a pro-Habsburg account that depicted Isabella's hunger for power as one of the main reasons why Ferdinand eventually chose the option of armed conflict. The royal courts in both Buda and Vienna naturally attempted to play for time and persuade the sultan to take action that would be to their benefit. The second source was certainly pro-Szapolyai and Giovio's presentation of contrasting viewpoints about Isabella was presumably not an accident, but the product of his consciously embraced objectivity and his detail-rich manner of expression. Antal Verancsics, the author of our next text, praised Giovio's impartiality. In 1548, therefore at around the same time as Daniele Barbaro wrote his drama, Verancsics sent a letter to Giovio in which he corrected and supplemented the manuscript of the account of the fall of Buda that appeared in *Historiarum sui temporis*.³⁴

33 "Itaque regina vel cum lachrymis et tacito gemitu, tyranni perfidiam detestata, sed tum necessitati dissimulenter cedens, arce atque urbe excelsit, ea a Barbaris imposita lege, ut tormenta aenea et quicquid militaris instrumenti armamentariis inerat et commeatus in horreis, omnino relinqueret." *Historiarum sui temporis*, vol. 2, 374.

34 Letter from Antal Verancsics to Paolo Giovio, Venezia, May 22, 1548: "Nihil enim praetermittis, quod a lectore desiderari possit, adeo rerum gestarum omnes partes expendis, adeo omnia historiae

ANTAL VERANCSICS CORRECTS GIOVIO

One year before switching his allegiance to King Ferdinand in 1549, Antal Verancsics³⁵ wrote a letter from Venice to Paolo Giovio in which he corrected minor details in *Historiarum sui temporis* and supplemented the Lombard humanist's Buda history with very detailed information that occasionally reached the depth of psychology in its analysis of character.³⁶ Verancsics's letter was almost as long as Giovio's Buda history and although never finished shows in its degree of elaboration that the writer worked very hard on it.³⁷ Verancsics presumably did not even send the letter to Giovio in its existing form.

The letter introducing the text that Antal Verancsics wrote from Venice on March 22, 1548, reveals that the previous year he had received the 28-book manuscript of Paolo Giovio's history from Stanisław Wapowski. Verancsics found several errors in this manuscript and took the liberty of writing a letter to Giovio and because he was already planning to travel to Rome wanted to meet personally with the author.³⁸ Published sources contain no information regarding Verancsics's

membra circumspicis, et in quoddam corpus non integrum solum sed etiam plenum redigis. Quod quum in aliis, qui aevo nostro lucubrantur non invenio; tuas equidem solius historias justas continentes et omni ex parte absolutas non dubito affirmare." László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 2). Pest: Eggenberger, 1857, 178.

35 Antal Verancsics, who was born in Šibenik, Croatia, was undoubtedly the most multi-faceted figure among the members of the humanist-political élite in Hungary during the period in question. Verancsics studied at the University of Padua and served as a special emissary for King John. In 1549, he switched his allegiance to Ferdinand. He became the Bishop of Pécs in 1553, later the Bishop of Eger and at the end of his life the Archbishop of Esztergom and the royal governor. Verancsics's historical collection, his own historical and literary works and his correspondence are contained in the following 12-volume work: László Szalay and Gusztáv Wenczel (eds.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vols. 1–12. Pest–Budapest: Eggenberger, 1857–1875. For information regarding Verancsics's life and works, see Ignác Acsády, 'Verancsics Antal és Szerémi György', *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 4 (1894) 1–59; Pongrácz Sörös, 'Verancsics Antal az erdélyi udvarnál', *Magyar Szón* 11 (1897) 898–923; Pongrácz Sörös, *Verancsics Antal élete*. Esztergom: Buzárovits Gusztáv könyvnyomda, 1898; Emma Bartoniek, *Fejezetek a XV–XVII. századi magyarországi történetírás történetéből*, edited by Ágnes Ritoókné Szalay. Budapest: MTA ITI–MTA Könyvtár, 1975, 35–56; Marianna D. Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World: Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century*. Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1985; Tomislav Pavičić, *Antun Vrančić. Znameniti Šibenski Humanist*. Šibenik: Muzej grada Šibenika, 2004; József Bessenyei, 'Antonio Veranzio e le sue opere storiografiche', in Adriano Papo and Gizella Nemeth Papo (eds.), *L'Umanesimo Latino in Ungheria. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Budapest, 18 apr. 2005*. Treviso: Fondazione Cassamarca, 2005, 121–129.

36 Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 178–225.

37 The facts that the page numbering differs from that in the first edition of *Historiarum sui temporis* and that Verancsics mentions only one book suggest that Giovio's Buda history was composed of a single, separate book in its first manuscript redaction: "Anno superiore, quum essem in Polonia, liber historiarum tuarum XXVIII. venit in manus meas." Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 178.

38 According to Verancsics's introductory letter, he took Giovio's manuscript along with him to Italy and during his free hours, while staying at inns, he wrote commentary about the work

trip to Italy in 1548, though it is certain that he left Kraków in the spring of this year and returned to this city a few months later, in the late summer or early autumn.³⁹ Even if Giovio in fact received the letter, it did not prompt him to modify the text of *Historiarum sui temporis*.⁴⁰ The reason for this might be that Verancsics proposed few practical corrections (such as those pertaining to proper names) in his letter, which is composed primarily of an account of historiographical quality pertaining to the fall of Buda and which can be regarded as an independent work that rivals Giovio's history of this event.

Around half of Verancsics's letter deals with the events that took place in Buda on August 29, 1541, with special focus on the negotiations that took place at the Turkish camp outside the city. During these talks, the Turkish pashas attempted for hours on end to persuade the Hungarian lords to peacefully surrender Buda Castle. Verancsics presents these negotiations in nearly psychologizing detail, while rhetorically specifying the grounds for the Hungarian position. The parallel to the speech found in Verancsics's letter can be found in the elaboration of the Turkish position contained in Giovio's text. This elaboration represents the only rhetorical passage in the latter text. The difference is that in Giovio's work Mehmed Bey of Belgrade delivers before the Imperial Council in the early days of September an extremely anti-Hungarian speech reflecting the most radical Turkish viewpoint of that time. Verancsics's objective in describing the speech of the Hungarian lords was obviously to counterbalance the anti-Hungarian opinion reflected in Giovio's text.

The negotiations were still taking place at the sultan's camp when the Turks began the occupation of Buda. Queen Isabella helplessly awaited further developments at Buda Castle. Verancsics wrote with regard to this episode: "She [Isabella] only learned about this [the occupation] when the municipal magistrate reported to the castle that there was a Turkish guard at Szombat [Saturday] Gate and that the city guard had been chased off. It is true that by this time fear-borne rumors had spread in the city that the lords had been retained at the camp in the interest of surrendering Buda or that they had already been killed, or that they had already been sent off down the Danube toward Turkey and that the

on slips of paper that he intended to transform into a cohesive text that he would send ahead to the author from Venice: "*Igitur ingressus iter hoc, ipsum librum adjunxi mihi comitem, secumque quicquid in diversoriis per quietem, quae mihi satis exigua, nec omnino integra, quod maturabam, dabatur sim commentatus, in has cartulas studio rerum nostrarum veritatis contuli, et ad te ne omnino vacuus hospes venirem, praemittere decrevi*." Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 181.

39 Isabella established contact with Pope Paul III in a letter dated January 12, 1547. The purpose of Verancsics's trip to Italy may have been to further develop this connection. Cf. Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 270.

40 Giovio accepted only the most insignificant changes that Emperor Charles V proposed to the text, thus indicating that he was not inclined to adopt suggested modifications to his work. Cf. T. C. Price Zimmermann, 'The Publication of Paolo Giovio's Histories: Charles V and the Revision of Book XXXIV', *Bibliofilia* 74 (1972) 49–90; and Richard L. Kagan, *Clio and the Crown: The Politics of History in Medieval and Early Modern Spain*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, 85–90.

sultan would never return the boy [the queen's son] to his mother and would instead take him away along with him."⁴¹ Verancsics, as Barbaro, portrayed Queen Isabella as a grief-stricken woman and worried mother who until that time exercised no influence over the course of events, though at least is attempting to send a message to the sultan aimed at getting her son back after failing to find a pretext in order to prevent him from being taken to the Turkish camp in the first place.⁴²

The image of the queen that Antal Verancsics portrayed in his letter therefore clearly resembles those contained in Daniele Barbaro's *Tragedia* and the 40th book of Paolo Giovio's *Historiarum sui temporis*. The main difference between Verancsics's letter and Giovio's text in this regard is not in their descriptions of the situation that Isabella was facing, but in their appraisal of the queen's personal responsibility. One of the primary objectives that Verancsics wished to reach in writing his letter may have been to offer a depiction of the queen's responsibility that differed from that portrayed in Giovio's work.

VERANCSICS'S SURVIVING SOURCES; GIOVIO AND THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

As we saw above, Antal Verancsics expressed extensive praise for Paolo Giovio's qualities as a historiographer, placing him in the same rank as Titus Livius.⁴³ However, Verancsics mentions in his introductory letter that he found a few minor errors in Giovio's work, proposing corrections that would serve to purge these

41 "Nec prius funestum novum atque infandum tyranni facinus reginae ullique Budae cognitum, quam custodiam Turcicam in Sabbatina porta esse, urbana exacta nunciatum est in arcem a iudice civitatis (ut postea dicemus), tametsi crebro interim jactatum est in urbe metu auctore proceres Budae reddendae gratia modo in castris detentos, modo simul occisos, modo Danubio missos in Turciam, caesarem demum matri non redditurum ultra filium sed una secum abducturum." Szalay (ed.), Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái, vol. 1, 199.

42 "Verum regina perculsa tam tristi nuncio et jam in verum conjecta metum, licet foemina alieno gubernata arbitrio, totque malis uno tempore esset occupata, seque in dolorem et lachrymas tradidisset, habita tamen cura sui, jussit arcem diligentius custodiri, missoque ad proceres oratore, quanto celerius potuit, divinasse se et praedixisse casuum hunc significavit, caeterum, quod magnopere cuperet, si spe et consilio illis adesse posset. Verum quum et in re acta consilio opus non est, et jam ex misericordia Turcae tam sua quam illorum omnia pendeant, ea dexteritate, ea modestia atque prudentia sese gererent cum caesare, ut pro male inito consilio melius scirent; darentque per immortalem Deum omnem operam, ne si reliquam Hungariae salutem charam habeant, filius eius non periclitetur. Meminissent parentis erga se beneficiorum, foreque forte fortuna, ut eo conservato ipsi quoque periculo eximantur. Sed haec legatio aditus difficultate non est perlata ad proceres. Erat autem reginae sententia priusquam Buda exissent, ut dissimulata filii aegritudine eo tum non mitteretur ad caesarem. Proceres postquam una periclitari libuisset, adirent eum cum muneribus, ibique excusato puero, caetera quoque omnia quae e re communi fore judicassent, decernerent. Si illis commode successisset ac perspexissent non esse metuendum a caesare, de quibus in dubium venerant, se post eos filium quoque dimissurum pollicita; sin incurrissent ipsi quodpiam infortunium, incolumitati pueri in quo restaret adhuc propriae salutis aliqua species, non aegre paterentur consultum iri, quum patriae charitate et pro salute principum sustinere aliquid, semper apud mortales gloriosum esse consuevit." Szalay (ed.), Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái, vol. 1, 199–200.

43 See note 34.

small mistakes from the author's nearly perfect text. Verancsics wrote that in light of Giovio's unassailable competence as a historian, his errors "can be traced back to the ignorance of the scribes or the inaccuracy of the narratives"⁴⁴ Verancsics therefore believed that it was difficult to produce a reliable historical account based on the narratives or memoirs of others and that personal experience represented the foundation of authenticity. With this in mind, he reassured Giovio that "I promise there will be no word about other chapters, since smiths should perform the work of smiths, and I am of the opinion that it will be enough for me to present that which I experienced and with which I became acquainted."⁴⁵ One might presume that Verancsics was attempting to justify his correction of Giovio's minor errors and his proposal of an alternative narrative regarding the fall of Buda on the grounds that he, contrary to the author, was writing based on experience.

The problem with this supposition is that it is altogether incorrect. Antal Verancsics was not in fact in Buda in the years 1540–1541, but lived in Transylvania throughout this period. In 1553, Verancsics – who had by this time switched to Ferdinand's side – had been questioned as a witness in the Friar George murder inquiry. The questionnaire for witnesses in this case contained queries regarding Friar George's past and the role he had played in the fall of Buda. Verancsics, who had already entered service for the Habsburgs, declared during questioning that "I was in Transylvania when the army of His Majesty the Roman King placed the queen under siege in Buda following the death of King John." Verancsics subsequently stated that "he did not participate in these events, but just learned about them from various people."⁴⁶ With regard to his sources, Verancsics revealed only that "I learned from hearsay" and "he heard all of this and much more from Mr. Paolo Savorgnano"⁴⁷ of Cividale del Friuli, the Italian secretary of Her Majesty Queen Isabella."⁴⁸ Therefore, both the long account that Antal Verancsics (who had not yet become a bishop) wrote to Bishop of Nocera Paolo Giovio, and the narrative of the fall of Buda that the latter presented in *Historiarum sui temporis*,

44 "...quae visa sunt aut amanuensium scribendi inscitiam aut referentium indiligentiam adiisse." Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 179.

45 "*De aliis nihil polliceor, ne fortasse, ut sutor ultra crepidam, satis me facturum existimans, si quid in his quae vidi et cognovi, praestitero.*" *Ibid.*

46 "*Eo tempore, quo regina mortuo rege Joanne Budae obsideretur ab exercitu majestatis regis Romanorum, ego in Transsilvania eram... dicens ipse testis se non interfuisse hisce rebus, sed a diversis personis accepisse.*" Georgius Pray (ed.), *Epistolae Procerum Regni Hungariae*, vol. 2. Posonii: Ex Typographico G. A. Belnay, 1806, 384, 389.

47 Paolo Savorgnano appears in no other sources, though the Savorgnani were one of the most influential families in Friuli in the sixteenth century. Cf. *I Savorgnan e la patria del Friuli dal XIII al XVIII secolo*. Udine: Assessorato alla cultura, 1984; and Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance*. Baltimore–London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, 77–126. The military engineer Giulio Savorgnano (1510–1595), whom Antal Verancsics met at the home of Antonio Da Mula in 1546, was the most famous member of the Savorgnano family. See Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 6, 196–198.

48 "...sed ex publica fama audivi... idem testis se inter caeteros audivisse ab domino Paulo Savorgano Forojuliensi, qui tunc temporis Serenissimae reginae Isabellae erat ab epistolis Italicis." Pray, *Epistolae procerum*, 384, 386.

were based on verbal and written sources. Verancsics also identified the other sources in addition to Paolo Savorgnano: a conversation with Friar George in which they discussed the fall of Buda and relevant statements from Péter Petrovics.

We naturally have no access to the verbal accounts. However, we can attempt to determine the written sources that Antal Verancsics used as the basis for his own Buda narrative. We can take into consideration only texts that were written before the year 1548 and which Verancsics may have been able to obtain. These criteria narrow the field to five currently-known texts: the letters of Queen Isabella's secretary Piotr Porębski; the unique siege diary entitled *Obsidio Budae*;⁴⁹ György Szerémi's exciting historical work *De perditione regni Hungarorum*;⁵⁰ Tamás Bornemisza's Hungarian-language memoir *Emléközet* (Remembrance);⁵¹ and the Hungarian-language work *Memoria rerum*, which was previously known in scholarly literature as the *Verancsics-évkönyv* (Verancsics Yearbook).⁵² The known manuscripts of all five of these works were preserved as part of Verancsics's estate.⁵³

49 The manuscript of this work can be found at the following location: National Széchényi Library Manuscript Collection, Quart. Lat. 511; for information regarding the publication of this manuscript, see Fanni Csapó and Gábor Pesti, 'Ismeretlen forrás Buda 1541. évi ostromáról', *Fons* 25:2 (2018) 225–246.

50 Gusztáv Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata Magyarország romlásáról 1484–1543 (De perditione regni Hungarorum)* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 1). Pest: Eggenberger, 1857.

51 Tamás Bornemisza's personal account of the events that took place in Buda in the years 1540–1541, which he likely wrote at the request of Antal Verancsics, is one of the earliest examples of Hungarian-language memoir literature. Bornemisza was an active member of the group of leading citizens of Buda who in the middle of June 1541 attempted to deliver the city to the besieging German forces. This text briefly mentions the events that took place in Hungary following the death of King John, then focuses primarily on the factors that prompted the conspirators to engage in their treasonous plot, preparations to carry out the scheme and the reasons for its failure. Bornemisza contends in his memoir that stubborn pro-King John lords were responsible for the loss of Buda and that Queen Isabella would have adhered to the stipulations of the Treaty of Várad (Oradea, Romania), though these lords would not permit her to do so. According to Bornemisza, Isabella was therefore compelled to turn to the citizens of Buda in order to gain their help in reaching an agreement with General Wilhelm von Roggendorf. Bornemisza therefore claims that he and his associates had not engaged in an act of treason, because the queen had authorized them to seek accord with the Habsburg forces. Bornemisza's short account of the loss of Buda not only bears literary value as an early Hungarian-language text, but represents an outstanding source of information for this period since its author, though not impartial, not only witnessed the events in question, but participated in them as well. Tamás Bornemisza, 'Emléközet', in *Magyar emlékiratok 16–18. század*, edited by István Bitskey. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1981, 70–77.

52 József Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*. Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1981.

53 Although the only manuscript of György Szerémi's work *De perditione regni Hungarorum* was found in Vienna, this text had likely once been part of the estate of Antal Verancsics. In any case, Verancsics must have had his own copy of *De perditione regni Hungarorum*, since Szerémi could have hardly written it without his help. The author himself wrote at the end of the work that "*Et ad Anthonium praepositum Transilvaniensem me rogatum in scriptis obtuli ei in donum*" See Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata*, 401.

Another important question is that if Antal Verancsics did acquire the mentioned manuscripts, might he have been familiar with them before 1548? Verancsics could have been acquainted with Piotr Porębski's letters, György Szerémi's *De perditione regni Hungarorum* and certain parts of *Memoria rerum* before this year. However, there is no trace of Tamás Bornemisza's *Emléközet* in the letter that Verancsics wrote to Paolo Giovio. Because neither Porębski's letters nor the siege diary *Obsidio Budae* refer to any events following the arrival of Queen Isabella and her entourage to Lippa (Lipova, Romania) following their departure from Buda, one may presume that they were written before the end of 1541. Szerémi completed *De perditione regni Hungarorum* after 1543, examining the fall of the cities of Esztergom and Székesfehérvár in this year. Szerémi's dedication of the book to Provost of Transylvania Antal [Verancsics] suggests that the latter received a copy of the work before the year 1548. The situation is not so clear with regard to the Hungarian-language memoirs *Emléközet* and *Memoria rerum*: we may only presume that Verancsics was familiar with these works before 1548 (or at least parts of *Memoria rerum*, which deals with events until 1566) if their textual use can be shown in the letter he wrote to Giovio.

There is no way to conduct a detailed philological analysis within the framework of the present study, thus the comparison of the possible source texts must be summarized in the following manner. There is no such information in the letter that Antal Verancsics wrote to Paolo Giovio that the former may have acquired exclusively from Tamás Bornemisza's *Emléközet*. Since the failed plot of the citizens of Buda in June 1541 represents the theme of the latter work, it does not even compose a major element in the text dealing with the loss of Buda. The fact that we have no reason to presume that there was any connection between Bornemisza, who fled to the Habsburg-controlled city of Nagyszombat (Trnava, Slovakia), and Verancsics, particularly before the latter switched his allegiance to Ferdinand in 1549, also represents an important consideration. *Obsidio Budae* is an eyewitness account and thus cannot be Verancsics's work, the cumbersome Latin composition of which implicitly suggests that the University of Padua graduate did not write it. An unnamed provost dedicated *Obsidio Budae* to Péter Petrovics and Provost of Arad Ferenc Szokoli. Since Verancsics held the office of Provost of Óbuda until 1541, he may have been the person who dedicated the work to Petrovics and Szokoli. At the same time, *Obsidio Budae* is fundamentally a history of the 1541 siege of Buda and refers only tangentially as a postscript to the events that took place at the sultan's camp and therefore could not have served as the primary source of information contained in Verancsics's letter to Giovio.

Verancsics's use of *Memoria rerum* as a source can be textually verified. Among the known sources, only this work describes the episode – which is also contained in Verancsics's account – in which Süleyman discreetly examined John Sigismund during the presentation of the infant-king to the sultan at his camp outside Buda in order to personally confirm that rumors suggesting that

Isabella had in fact given birth to a girl were untrue.⁵⁴ Neither György Szerémi nor Piotr Porębski mention this incident in their works. *Memoria rerum* is likewise the only source that attributes Süleyman's decision to occupy Buda to the fact that in his advanced age he no longer felt sufficient strength to conduct annual military campaigns to Hungary.⁵⁵ Thus if Verancsics did not base his letter to Giovio on information that he had acquired verbally, his mention of the above occurrences appears to support the hypothesis that by 1548 he had already read at least part of *Memoria rerum*.

Piotr Porębski's letters unequivocally represented the main source of Antal Verancsics's information regarding the events that took place in Buda in the years 1540–1541. Two of Porębski's letters have survived as part of Verancsics's estate.⁵⁶ Both letters were written by the same hand, while Verancsics himself wrote a few notes in the first letter, thus proving that he had had it in his possession. In my opinion, both of these valuable source documents were at one time appended to a single letter that was impeccable in terms of form as well and which has since been lost. The two letters that Verancsics used as sources were likely written at different times and can be regarded as fundamentally independent from one another. Of the two letters, that entitled "*De obsidione*" was presumably written first. Porębski's first letter consists of an account of the fall of Buda from the beginning of the siege on May 4, 1541 until the arrival of Turkish troops on July 10. His second letter, which he wrote in early September – thus after he had left Buda – represents a thematic continuation of the first letter and contains supplementary information as well. In the introduction to the second letter, Porębski expresses regret that he had been unable to send it to its addressee (Verancsics?) for such a long time. If Porębski had managed to forward his first letter in early July, then two months passed before he was able to send the second – a length of time that would have justified such an apology. In this letter, the author briefly reviews previous events before resuming his narrative with the arrival of the Turkish relief force to Buda. This narrative, which ends with the flight of Queen Isabella from Buda, demonstrably served as the main source for the information and chronology of events contained in Verancsics's letter to Paolo Giovio. The notes that Verancsics wrote on the manuscript of the Porębski letter prove that the currently-known manuscript was once in the hands of the former.⁵⁷

Antal Verancsics may have become acquainted with Piotr Porębski's text in several ways, since we have information showing that his account was widely known during the period in question. A German-language publication entitled *Vier warhafftige Missive* that may have appeared in late 1541, though of which we

54 Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*, 65.

55 Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*, 71.

56 Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 162–178.

57 This manuscript can be found at the following location: National Széchényi Library Manuscript Collection, Fol. Lat. 422/II f. 46r–51v.

are aware of several reprints from the year 1542,⁵⁸ contained – as the work's title suggests – the German-language translations of the following four letters that had originally been written in Latin: a letter that Queen Isabella wrote to Seweryn Boner sometime before October 18, 1541;⁵⁹ Porębski's account with no addressee identified; excerpts from two letters written to Ferenc Révay (to which we shall return later); and Süleyman's letter to the Transylvanian nobility in which the sultan urges them to remain loyal to John Sigismund. In light of the fact that all four letters are connected in some way to Isabella, the lords who were associated with her or the fate of Buda, we cannot exclude the possibility that somebody from the queen's entourage sent them to an unknown printing house in Germany as a means of informing German public opinion. The letter that Verancsics wrote to Paolo Giovio suggests that, among the four letters published in *Vier warhafftige Missive*, the former may have been familiar with that which the provisor of Esztergom, Mihály Muthnoky, sent to Ferenc Révay.

There are essentially two components of Antal Verancsics's letter to Paolo Giovio that are clearly the product of the author's own work and were thus not derived from his sources: the lengthy, previously mentioned plea of the Hungarian lords in which they attempt to persuade the Ottomans not to occupy Buda; and the text inserted at the end of the letter offering a detailed description of István Werbőczy's fate, particularly his ghastly death.⁶⁰ The latter text, which is imbued with the quality of a novella, is particularly interesting because it could hardly have been written based on the previously mentioned sources. In *Memoria rerum*, the poisoning of Werbőczy is reported as a fact,⁶¹ though does not provide detail regarding the reason for which he was murdered. In *De perditione regni Hungarorum*, György Szerémi does not assert that the Pasha of Buda had poisoned Werbőczy, writing only that the old Hungarian chancellor fell asleep in the arms of the Lord three days after having taken his lunch as a guest of the high-ranking Turkish official.⁶² In other instances, Szerémi falsely suspected that conspiracy and murder had taken place, therefore it is odd that

58 The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek catalogue lists three editions – one without a place of publication, one published in Ulm and one published in Augsburg. The edition published in Ulm can be found at the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (297301–B ALT RARA) without a date. The edition published in Augsburg can be found at the National Széchényi Library (App. H. 290) with the date *Anno MDXLII*. The somewhat dissimilar layout of the title pages also show that these are separate editions with the same content.

59 In this letter Isabella referred in the future tense to a partial diet to be convened in Debrecen on October 18, 1541, thus revealing that she wrote it before this date.

60 István Werbőczy (?–1541): the most prominent Hungarian jurist of his era, whose 1514 book *Tripartitum opus iuris consuetudinarii inclyti regni Hungariae* was the first law code published in Hungary. Werbőczy became the Palatine of Hungary in 1525 and served as chancellor and counselor for King John I beginning in 1526, remaining loyal to Queen Isabella even after the king's death. Following the Turkish occupation of Buda, the sultan appointed Werbőczy to serve as the magistrate for Christians who had remained in the city.

61 Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*, 89.

62 “*Et tertia die obdormivit in Domine sine confessione.*” Wenzel (ed.), *Szerémi György... emlékirata*, 343.

he did not voice such suspicion with regard to Werbőczy's death. Szerémi did mention Werbőczy's scribe named Márkó, though claimed that the Turks did not murder the copyist, but mockingly threw him into a sewer following his master's death. Only Mihály Muthnoky claims in the letter to Ferenc Révay published in *Vier warhafftige Missiven* that the Turks murdered Werbőczy's servant: "Yesterday my servant saw with his own eyes that the chancellor went to visit the pasha and that when he arrived to the gate the Turks slapped one of his servants in the face behind him. The servant cried out to his master to rescue him. However the chancellor responded: what can I do about it, my dear friend, since you also clearly see that I must also fear them. While the chancellor was with the pasha, the Turks beat his servant to death near the chancellor's carriage and left him there lying dead. His master must have seen this, but he could there say not a word against it."⁶³

If we compare our sources, the Werbőczy novella that Antal Verancsics included in his letter to Paolo Giovio can be put together from the information contained in *Memoria rerum*, György Szerémi's *De perditione regni Hungarorum* and Mihály Muthnoky's letter to Ferenc Révay. According to Verancsics's literary version of events pertaining to Werbőczy and his death, the chancellor's servant languished in Turkish captivity, learning to speak the Turkish language during this time, before the chancellor gained his release and retained him as a sort of counselor. The Turks therefore murder the servant-cum-counselor, then the pasha has Werbőczy poisoned so that he cannot report his arbitrary action to officials in Constantinople.

If the above story is Antal Verancsics's creation, then it conforms nicely to the concept that manifests itself in his letter to Paolo Giovio: that István Werbőczy and his associates were responsible for the fall of Buda rather than Friar George and Péter Petrovics. The main question posed in Verancsics's protracted correction attempts to determine responsibility for this tragedy. In terms of the loss of Buda, the fact that Ottoman troops slipped into the city as the infant-king and the leaders of Hungary were at the sultan's camp was of decisive importance. The defenders of Buda, exhausted following the German siege of the city that had begun several months previously, would have hardly been able to resist the sultan's attack. Moreover, it was no longer possible to defend Buda Castle, since the heir to the Hungarian throne and all of the most

63 "So hat mein Diener gester mit seinen augen das gesehen, das der Canzler zum Bassa gangen, und wey er unter die thür kommen ist, haben die Türcken hinder im seiner knecht einen in das angesicht geschlagen. Der knecht aber schreyet seinen herrn an, er soll in retten, aber der Canzler anwortet ihm, was soll ich dazu thun, lieber bruder, sihest du doch woll, das ichs auch vonnn ihnen gewartenn muss. Weil nur der Canzler bey dem Bassa ist, schlagenn im die Türcken sein knecht gar zu todt hart bey des Canzlers wagen und lassen in also todt bey dem wagen ligenn. Das musste sein herr sehen unnd dorfft kein wort darwider sagen." *Vier warhafftige Missive*, fol. CIIv. For the context surrounding Muthnoky's letter, see Zoltán Péter Bagi, "...Szolgám, akit kegyelmes uram parancsára a pásához küldtem...": Két jelentés a Buda elestét követő időszak sorsdöntő eseményeiről, különös tekintettel Török Bálint és Werbőczy István sorsára, *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 117:2 (2004) 739–750.

powerful lords were at the Turkish camp and thus Süleyman's hostages as Turkish military forces occupied Buda. If we take this factor into account, responsibility for the loss of Buda rests on the shoulders of those who urged Queen Isabella to comply with the sultan's request that she send her son to his camp along with the leading lords. Paolo Giovio identifies in his Buda book the influential lords who accompanied John Sigismund to the sultan's camp: Friar George, Péter Petrovics, István Werbőczy and castellan Orbán Batthyány. However, Giovio unambiguously attributes the decision to submit to the sultan to Friar George.

Although Isabella, listening to her motherly instincts, fears for her child's safety and does not want to permit him to be taken from her, "*sed monente demum obtestanteque Georgio*," that is, Friar George urges the queen to send the boy to Süleyman's camp in the company of the lords in order to avoid arousing the sultan's suspicion. In Paolo Giovio's work, Friar George is the only person in Isabella's entourage who argues in favor of submission to Süleyman and therefore was ultimately responsible for the fact that the Hungarians fell into a trap and Buda fell into Turkish hands. In Verancsics's letter to Giovio, the same five people play the main role, though the difference is palpable. Verancsics's letter contained the following description of Friar George's behavior: "With regard to the question of whether they should expose the royal scion to the great peril and whether the lords should go to the camp of the fearsome Turkish sultan, leaving Buda without military leadership and entrusting the city to commoners, he was rather taciturn and, as a result of the dubiousness of the decision, uncertain and leaned more toward that which others decided, though attempted through procrastination to defer the decision because he saw that an obvious danger was threatening them."⁶⁴ But not only was he cautious. Let us again quote Antal Verancsics: "Meanwhile Utissenius (i.e., Friar Georg) behaved this way and did not decide haphazardly, just as the *ispán* [count] of Temes Péter Petrovics did not dare to decide either."⁶⁵

There are thus two members of Isabella's court who at the very least urge caution regarding the decision of whether to submit to the sultan. Finally (according to Verancsics) another decision is made for the following reason: "István Werbőczy, the supreme leader of the royal chancellery, and Bálint Török, not to mention Orbán Batthyány and one of the commanders who has distinguished himself in military affairs, the Serb Péter Ucsarevics,⁶⁶ who

64 "*Quapropter in exponenda regia prole tanto discrimini, deque omnium procerum ad castra metuendi Turcae profectione dimissa Buda plebeo populo et sine duce militi, magis tacitus et ambiguitate consilii anxius, paratiorque ad ea, quae alii decrevisent, differebat mora deliberationem, quum... manifestum imminere videbat periculum.*" Szalay (ed.), Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái, vol. 1, 184.

65 "*Utissenio itaque sic se gerente, nec decernante temere Petro etiam Petrovio comite Temesiensi nihil ad rem deliberati afferre audente.*" *Ibid.*

66 According to a note that Verancsics later expunged and therefore did not appear in the Szalay edition, Ucsarevics (Owchiarevius) was the captain of the Danube war barges. National Széchényi Library Manuscript Collection, Fol. Lat. 422/III. f. 102r-v.

attempted to employ the widest variety of forceful means of persuasion, resolutely cited numerous arguments in opposition to the doubts of the others and finally overcame their indecision and brought them to their side. They too should have faith in Süleyman, they can go to him [his camp] without misgivings, there is no reason to fear that the child will be held there, they do not have to worry about the future of the country.”⁶⁷

Verancsics provided an unambiguous answer in the letter to the question of who made the recommendation upon which the final decision was made to go to the sultan's camp, thereby undertaking the risk leaving Buda defenseless: the opinion of three out of the five key figures – István Werbőczy, Bálint Török and Orbán Batthyány – prevailed over the caution of Friar George and Péter Petrovics. If anybody was responsible for the fall of Buda, then it was these three people, particularly Werbőczy and Török. The fact that both Werbőczy and Török soon paid a horrible price for placing trust in the pagan Turks serves, as it were, to confirm their guilt: the former died a horrible death from the pasha's poison, while Török spent the remainder of his life in captivity. Verancsics's Werbőczy novella in this way becomes a genuine parable in which the well-intentioned, though foolish chancellor is punished for his deeds.

In addition, the grand speech that Antal Verancsics puts into the mouths of the lords serves to their benefit. Based on these factors, the reader legitimately feels that the lords who fell into the sultan's trap had done everything they could to prevent the Turks from occupying Buda. Verancsics does not name those who participated in the speech, thus the glory falls upon all of them, though particularly on Friar George and Péter Petrovics, who moreover could not be blamed for having tried to persuade Isabella to comply with the sultan's request. According to this reading of Verancsics's letter, the lords are the truly active main characters, while the queen receives only a walk-on role as the mother worrying about her son who attempts to intervene on behalf of the lords, then leaves Buda: she is a prisoner of destiny.

At the same time, no matter how much Antal Verancsics suggests in the letter he wrote to Paolo Giovio that the lords who by 1548 were either dead or languishing in captivity had been primarily responsible for placing too much faith in the motives that had induced the sultan to send his invitation, Verancsics also indicates that the fateful unfolding of events had placed the lords on a pathway of constraint regardless of the considerations that had served as the basis for their decisions: “Whether all this happened by mistake or intentionally, none of them can be made solely responsible for it. Their integrity, which until then had been intact and unimpaired, and partially their fright, partially the

67 “*Soli Stephanus Verbucius summus epistularum scriniique regii magister et Valentinus cognomento Turcus, ut Urbanum Bathianum et Petrum Ouchiareum Rascianum, unum ex ducibus militum, insignem virum in re bellica praeteream, qui magnam vim huic persuasioni stimulis suis attulerunt, obfirmatis animis contra omnium dubitationem usi argumentis plurimis et cunctationem eis exemerunt et in suam petraxere sententiam. Credendum scilicet esse Solimano et ad eum secure eundum, nec de pueri abductione aut de statu regni metuendum.*” Szalay (ed.), Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái, vol. 1, 184–185.

inadequacy of their strength insofar as they would have attempted to resist, as well as their hopelessness all played a role.”⁶⁸ This is perhaps the most important sentence in Verancsics's letter because it signals that he was perfectly aware of the complexity of the truth and the necessary simplification stemming from the literary toolkit of historiography as he attempted to maintain a balance between the interests of those on behalf of whom he was acting and the truth.

However, Antal Verancsics's viewpoints regarding those who were responsible for the fall of Buda and his opinion of Queen Isabella herself had changed drastically by the time of his testimony as part of the Friar George murder trial in 1553. As a subject of King Ferdinand, Verancsics appeared to forget that he had once written an *apologia* in defense of the role that Friar George had played in the Turkish occupation of Buda. Not only did Verancsics acknowledge in his testimony that he had not witnessed the events that took place in Buda in 1541, but he also highlighted different aspects of the narrative regarding the fall of the city based on information collected from others. In his 1553 testimony, Verancsics portrayed Isabella as a Christian sovereign with the capacity for independent action who “would have more readily chosen more modest circumstances among Christians than more magnificent ones among the Turks” and therefore “made up her mind to hand Buda Castle over to His Holy Majesty the Roman King.”⁶⁹ According to Verancsics, Isabella thus devised a plan in cooperation with envoys from Poland to allow German troops to occupy Buda. This reflects the version of events contained in the memoir of Tamás Bornemisza, who asserted that the conspirators had acted with the knowledge and approval of Queen Isabella. Verancsics went even farther than this in his testimony, leaving out the citizens as well and depicting the surreptitious nighttime opening of the gates before General von Roggendorf's troops as the plan of the queen alone. Verancsics furthermore asserted that this plan had stunned Friar George, who not only tried to prevent it from being carried out, but “rebuked the queen in plain language and dealt with her more severely than the dignity of her position would have demanded.”⁷⁰ However, Friar George and the other lords were guilty not only of this. Verancsics claimed that they had been the ones who had invited the sultan to enter Buda explicitly against the will of Isabella: “Friar George, Petrovics, István Werbőczy and some others, as they had discussed, attempted to persuade the queen to accept the decidedly sanguine plan to request the sultan's assistance. The queen, who, as they said, abhorred the sultan, vehemently opposed this plan, though the reasoning of the counselors eventually triumphed and she consented

68 “*Nemini horum virorum uni impingendus est, hic sive sit error, sive consilium, sed omnium partim fiducia, quam hactenus salvam habuerant et inviolatam, partim timori et virium resistendi posse, si resistisse tentavissent, imbecillitati atque diffidentiae.*” Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, 193.

69 “*...ipsa regina mallet mediocrem etiam fortunam cum Christianis tolerare, quam magnam cum Turcis, demum aliis etiam rationibus persuasa induxerat animum ad deditionem faciendam arcis Budensis Romanorum regis majestati.*” Pray, *Epistolae Procerum*, vol. 2, 384–385.

70 “*...incepta regina verbis etiam minus decentibus, habita etiam ipsa regina strictius, quam eius dignitas exigebat.*” Pray, *Epistolae Procerum*, vol. 2, 386.

to call upon the Turks for help.”⁷¹ Finally, they used effective arguments to convince Isabella to send her child to see the sultan at his camp: “The queen subsequently summoned her advisors and had her son brought to her as well. The queen, who worried about the fate of her son, resisted for a long time, but finally the above individuals persuaded her and she thus sent both her son and her counselors [to the Turkish camp].”⁷²

It is a cliché that the appraisal of historical events depends to a great degree on the point of view of the observer. In the spring of 1548, when Friar George and Péter Petrovics were at the height of their power in Transylvania, it appeared to be expedient to absolve them of their heavy responsibility for the loss of Buda, especially in light of the fact that negotiations had already begun between the royal courts in Vienna and Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) regarding the transfer of the eastern part of Hungary to Ferdinand and Isabella's second forced departure. The concept that guided Antal Verancsics's hand when he wrote his letter to Paolo Giovio reflected this. Archival research is destined to determine if there was actually some connection between the trip that Verancsics made to Italy, the letter he wrote to Giovio and Daniele Barbaro's drama. As we have seen, agreement in terms of time and location as well as the corresponding point of view seen from Isabella's perspective makes this probable. However, a couple of years later, as a subject of King Ferdinand, who had approved the murder of Friar George, and within the framework of a Holy See-conducted inquiry, Verancsics had to confirm that Friar George could not in the least said to be free of blame and wrongdoing, since the loss of Buda was his fault as well. Moreover, it may have been expedient for Verancsics to place the half-Italian Isabella in a positive light before the Italian priests who were questioning him as part of the investigation of Friar George's murder. In this way, the walk-on performer became a resolute Christian woman who was not so much the victim of fate, but rather of her depraved, or at least gullible, subjects.

CONCLUSION

If we seek the answers to the questions posed implicitly at the beginning of this study, that is, if we evaluate the role that Isabella played in the loss of Buda, we must arrive to the same conclusion that Antal Verancsics reached in his letter to Paolo Giovio: that neither the queen nor the Hungarian magnates were in control of the situation at this time. Following the arrival of the sultan to Buda, they may have at most harbored the illusion that the Turks would not take advantage of the opportunity that had presented itself to occupy the capital city

71 “...consilio, quantum dicebatur, urgentissimo Fratris Georgii, Petrovics, Stephani Verböczii et quorundam aliorum ex consilio persuasum est reginae, ut imploraretur Turcae auxilium. Regina, ut quae dudum aversa erat, quantum dicebatur, a Turca, plurimum adversabatur huic consilio, evicta tamen consulentium rationibus acquievit, ut Turca advocaretur.” Pray, *Epistulae procerum*, 386–387.

72 “Tandem vocatis ad se reginae consiliariis Fratre Georgio, Petrovics et aliis, filium et reginam ad se adduci fecit, dubia regina de salute filii diu restitit, persuasa tandem a praedictis personis et filii demisit et consiliarios.” Pray, *Epistulae Procerum*, vol. 2, 387.

of the Kingdom of Hungary. In light of the manner in which the General von Roggendorf-led siege transpired, it is also questionable whether the German imperial army would have been capable of defending Buda from Süleyman if Queen Isabella and her child's guardians (Friar George, Péter Petrovics and Bálint Török) had come to an agreement with the Viennese court earlier and ceded the city to Ferdinand before the sultan's arrival. There certainly was not much chance of this happening. On August 29, 1541, Queen Isabella and her leading political officials could choose only between the alternatives of maintaining the charade with the sultan until the very end or yielding the city of Buda to him without resistance.

Isabella's later activity as a sovereign – since her origin and the example of her mother predestined her to this – clearly shows that she regarded herself as more than a mere puppet and that she maintained within her the will to rule: as Paolo Giovio wrote, Sforza blood coursed through her veins. However, in 1541 and 1551 this will was forced to submit to historical events. Whether we attribute the unfolding of history to chance, the geopolitical situation or some sort of necessity composed of individual destinies – this is a dilemma of historiography that during the period in question manifested itself with exceptional strength in historical thinking and stood primarily under the influence of literary-type notions of fate. According to Giovio's motto, fate has a more distant horizon than human wisdom – *Fato prudentia minor*. According to Isabella's motto, the individual must bow before the will of fate: if one receives a role on the stage of history, it is appropriate to play this role to the very end in accordance with one's abilities and opportunities. As the great director requires: *Sicut fata volunt*.

Susanna Niiranen*

CONTINUING FAMILY BONDS AFTER DEATH: CATHERINE AND ISABELLA

Catherine Jagiellon¹ (1526–1583) was born the youngest daughter of Italian princess Bona Sforza and King Sigismund I “the Old” of Poland. As her siblings Isabella, Sigismund Augustus, Sophia, and Anna – not to mention her half-sister Hedwig, the eldest daughter of Sigismund I the Old and his first wife, Hungarian Countess Barbara/Borbála Szapolyai – she was the last to bear the name of Jagiellon, although her brother is usually called by his regnal name, Sigismund II Augustus. In many regions of Europe in the early modern era, married women, including queens, traditionally kept their patrilineal family names to indicate that they were not fully assimilated into their husband's kin.² This was also the custom in Sweden (which at this time included the Duchy of Finland), where Catherine lived for 21 years after marrying John Vasa in 1562. First she became the duchess of Finland, and then, after her imprisonment in the years 1563–1568, the queen consort of Sweden (1569–1583). In Sweden and Finland, as in Scandinavia as a whole, Catherine is known as Katarina/Katariina Jagellonica, a name still remembered along with one of the Latin forms of her family name, Jagellonica, which is also used for other sisters in sources from the sixteenth century and later. With the exception of her son Sigismund, king of Poland

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1 The research for this article was made possible by the project *The Jagiellonians* (University of Oxford), the Department of History and Ethnology (University of Jyväskylä) and the project *Late Medieval and Early Modern Libraries as Knowledge Repositories, Guardians of Tradition and Catalysts of Change*. (Lamemoli, Academy of Finland and University of Jyväskylä, no. 307635, 2017–21).

2 On women's names in the Middle Ages and early modern era, see Monique Bourin and Pascal Chareille (eds.), *Genèse médiévale de l'anthroponymie moderne*, vol. 2 (2), *Persistances du nom unique. Désignation et anthroponomie des femmes. Méthodes statistiques pour l'anthroponymie Etudes d'anthroponymie médiévale, IIIe et IVe Rencontres, Azay-le-Ferron, 1989–1990*. Tours: Publication de l'Université de Tours, 1992; Christine Peters, *Women in Early Modern Britain, 1450–1640*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003; Gabriela Signori and Christof Rolker (eds.), *Konkurrierende Zugehörigkeit(en): Praktiken der Namengebung im europäischen Vergleich*. Konstanz: UVK-Verl.-Ges, 2011.

(Sigismund III, 1587–1632) and king of Sweden (known merely as Sigismund without the order number, 1593–1599), she is unquestionably the best-known member of the Jagiellonian family in Scandinavia.³

The other children of Catherine and John, their daughters Isabella and Anna, have not aroused much interest in Scandinavia, even though they were all born in Sweden. Isabella and Sigismund were born in 1564 and 1566, respectively, during the couple's four-year captivity at Gripsholm Castle. Anna, on the other hand, was born at the Eskilstuna Royal Manor in 1568, soon after her family was released from captivity. The following year, John ascended the throne of Sweden as John III. In this study, I focus on the short life of the couple's first child, Isabella, and investigate the representations of her life in order to create a bond with Catherine's late sister, who bore the same name. First, I discuss the naming patterns in both the Vasa and Jagiellon families, and I then introduce the tomb effigy of the little Isabella at Strängnäs Cathedral in Sweden, considered the first funeral monument dedicated to a child in Scandinavia.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

After the death of Sigismund I in 1548, Catherine and her sisters Anna and Sophia moved from Kraków to Mazovia with their mother, Bona. As a widow and dethroned queen, Isabella returned in 1551 from Hungary to Poland, where she lived with her family for the next five years. If there was a specific sisterly bond between Catherine and Isabella, it was formed during their early childhood in Kraków, but even more probably, during this period as young adults, when it was developed. In 1556, Isabella was back in Transylvania, where she ruled as queen regent for her son until her death in 1559.⁴ Also in 1556, Bona departed to her native Italy. Isabella and Sophia were both married, but Anna and Catherine remained unmarried through their 30s. Based on this fact, some scholars maintain that apart from her eldest daughter Isabella, Bona – coming from a different ruling tradition – was not, after all, very interested in conducting dynastic policy in favor of the Jagiellons.⁵ The sisters were not close to their brother Sigismund II Augustus, who cared little about getting his sisters married either, until he finally accepted the proposal of Duke John of Finland to marry

3 There is only one biography in Finnish of the siblings, that regarding Anna Jagiellon. See Miia Ijäs, *Varjoista valtaistuimelle. Anna Jagellonica ja Itämeren valtapiiri 1500-luvulla*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2016; there is also one popular biography in Swedish on Catherine: Eva Mattson, *Furstinnan: en biografi om drottning Katarina Jagellonica*. Vadstena: Bring to Life, 2018. On Catherine Jagiellon's legacy comparing Sweden and Finland, see Susanna Niiranen, 'Remembering a Past Princess: Catherine Jagiellon and the Construction of National Narratives in Sweden and Finland', in Natalia Nowakowska (ed.), *Remembering the Jagiellonians*. Abingdon–Oxon–New York: Routledge, 2019, 141–161.

4 See Teréz Oborni's article in the present volume.

5 Andrzej Wyczański, 'La difficile storia della regina Bona', in *La regina Bona Sforza tra Puglia e Polonia: atti del Convegno promosso dall'Associazione culturale Regina Bona Sforza sotto il patrocinio della Regione Puglia, della Provincia, del Comune e dell'Università di Bari: Bari, Castello Svevo, 27 aprile 1980*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1987, 144–160, 154.

the youngest sister Catherine. They were married in Vilnius in October 1562. Duke John's independent foreign policy (including the marriage) caused King Eric XIV to declare war on his brother. On August 12, 1563, the Turku Castle in Finland, the ducal court, was besieged. The ducal couple was taken to Sweden and imprisoned at Gripsholm Castle near Stockholm.⁶

Because the first child of Catherine and John was born during their captivity, when their interaction with the outer world was almost completely severed, we do not have much information regarding the details of the child's birth and baptism. In early modern Europe, baptism was a central rite of passage that represented the social birth of the child to the human and Christian community – simultaneously a social obligation and an expression of religious conviction.⁷ In princely circles, baptism was even more important as a ritual. It served to establish, confirm and promote status, social relations, spiritual kinship (godparenthood)⁸ and even dynastic politics.⁹ In the early modern Europe, as today, the baptismal service was not only a religious rite but also a naming ceremony. It gave to the youngest members of society their individual identity and brought forth their Christian name, but also served as a link to an ancestor, saint, godparent, auspices, contemporary fashion or celebrity, the main factors of name-giving in early modern Catholic Europe. Thus names marked the social status and roles of individuals; as Lévi-Strauss put it, “individuation is the final level of classification.”¹⁰

According to anthropologists, taking control of naming is both a central component of the process of assuming political power and a fundamental part of social and political change. Having the authority to name is a politically charged form of power. Choosing a name signifies that the namer has power. The link between naming and power relations has been called “political onomastics,”¹¹ which in this context might also be regarded as “dynastic onomastics.” I will return to this point.

6 On Catherine's life before her imprisonment, see Carl J. Gardberg, *Turun linnan kolme Katariinaa*, translated by I. Savolainen. Helsinki: Otava, 1986.

7 Adrian Wilson, *Ritual and Conflict: The Social Relations of Childbirth in Early Modern England*. London: Routledge, 2014, 184.

8 On spiritual kinship, see Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, ‘Parrains et filleuls: Une approche comparée de la France, l'Angleterre et l'Italie médiévales’, *Medieval Prosopography* 6:2 (1985) 51–77; Agnès Fine, *Parrains, Marraines: La parenté spirituelle en Europe*. Paris: Fayard, 1994; Guido Alfani and Vincent Gourdon, ‘Spiritual Kinship and Godparenthood’, in Guido Alfani and Vincent Gourdon (eds.), *Spiritual Kinship in Europe, 1500–1900*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 1–41.

9 Guido Alfani and Vincent Gourdon, ‘Fêtes du baptême et publicité des réseaux sociaux en Europe occidentale. Grandes tendances de la fin du Moyen-Âge au XXe siècle’, *Annales de Démographie Historique* 1 (2009) 153–189; Rolf Strøm-Olsen, ‘Dynastic Ritual and Politics in Early Modern Burgundy: The Baptism of Charles V’, *Past and Present* 175 (2002) 34–64.

10 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966, 172.

11 Valerie Alia, *Names and Nunavut: Culture and Identity in the Inuit Homeland*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007, 9.

In a later account, based on now-lost documents (the Swedish author often mentions “manuscripts”), Isabella Vasa’s birth is described very briefly as a humiliating experience to the parents, because the guards did not allow anyone to enter or exit. Therefore, a midwife could not have assisted in the birth, but “a couple of women” took care of the mother and the baby. The ducal couple’s miserable conditions are exposed by reports that they lacked not only assistance in the form of servants and various professionals, but also everyday necessities, including baby clothes. Catherine was forced to buy “coarse shirts” from guards and use the material to sew clothes for the baby. In the account, the baby is called “Isabella,” but the account does not explain how she received the name. The account also states that Isabella died because the family could not get any help for her.¹² Neither the cause nor the date of the death of infant Isabella is known, but it is plausible that she passed away before her second birthday. According to the tomb inscription, she died in January 1566.

The lack of a midwife at Gripsholm was exceptional, because midwives were acting as advisors and mediators, and they participated in organizing childbirth rituals. Male physicians were present at some royal births,¹³ but in general midwives gained public recognition through the administration of emergency baptisms and reporting in courts for illegitimate births, premature births and infanticide.¹⁴ According to the marriage contract, Catherine had the right to keep her Catholic faith and the future children would be raised Catholic even though John was Lutheran. Because the Roman Catholic chaplains, who originally belonged to Catherine Jagiellon’s retinue when she left Vilnius for Turku after the wedding in 1562, were not allowed to follow her to the prison where she and John were confined, it is not known how the baptism was performed and who the possible godparents were. The number of “sponsors” was limited by the Council of Trent to one godfather or one godmother, or at most, to a godfather and a godmother, although the rule was not followed strictly among the highest nobility. In either case, the name Isabella provides us with significant clues regarding the naming policy and family strategy of Catherine and John.

Isabella (Elisabeth), the eldest full sister of Catherine Jagiellon, had passed away five years earlier, in 1559. Isabella (of Aragon) was also the name of their maternal grandmother. John had a sister named Elisabeth as well. Because John’s sister Elisabeth was born in 1549, she was only 15 years old at the time of her niece’s birth. During the reign of John III, she was quite close to him, but she

12 Anders Fryxell (ed.), *Handlingar rörande Sveriges historia*, vol. 3. Stockholm: L.J. Hierta, 1839, 46.

13 Regional and cultural differences existed. For instance, in contrast to France, professional accreditation in royal births was reserved to male physicians in England. See Carolyn Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 121–153.

14 Louise Bourgeois managed to attain the status of Royal Midwife for Queen Marie de Médicis (1601–1609) and wrote the three volumes of her *Observations diverses sur la stérilité, perte de fruit, foecundité, accouchements et maladies des femmes et enfants nouveaux naiz*, published in 1609, 1617 and 1626; Lianne McTavish, ‘Blame and Vindication in the Early Modern Birthing Chamber’, *Medical History* 50:4 (2006) 447–464.

was also responsible for the upbringing of her brother's illegitimate children. Her young age at the time of the birth of Isabella Johansdotter, as well as her position as the caregiver for the illegitimate children, makes it implausible that she was the godmother of John and Catherine's child. Before Catherine, John had had three children with his concubine, Karin Hansdotter. John took good care of all his children, but it is difficult to imagine that both his legitimate and illegitimate children were related to this same young person, even if she later gained fame for her learning and library.¹⁵

It is more probable that the first daughter received her name from the maternal side, implying the prestige of the Jagiellons and Sforzas. This would be in concordance with the naming of their future children, because both Sigismund and Anna were names derived from Catherine's family, not John's. Moreover, it is logical that the first daughter was given the name of the elder sister (and/or the maternal grandmother) and that the second daughter was named after another elder sister, Anna.¹⁶

In late-medieval and early modern Sweden, the system of inheritance and concepts of kinship can be characterized as bilateral. Although male lineage was dominant, kinship was seen in bilateral terms and agnate relations crucial for creating networks of power.¹⁷ Gustav Vasa and his sons actively sought political alliances through royal marriages from Western Europe and sent their princesses as princely spouses to the German courts in particular. (TABLE 1) The custom of giving first names reveals a great deal about a family's connections, values and strategies. Names carry various forms of symbolic significance, which intertwine persons, mentalities, power, fortunes and memories. In the early modern ruling families, names were never chosen at random. The patrilineal succession system, organized around the male-line names, has been interpreted by medieval and early modern scholars as a system in which the eldest son is named for his paternal grandfather and the second son for his maternal grandfather, subsequent sons alternately taking the names from paternal and maternal uncles. The system sought to honor the male-descendant line.

This naming practice was basically adopted by Swedish nobles,¹⁸ and the patrilineal scheme is the dominant strategy in the naming patterns of the Vasa brothers (Eric XIV, John III, Magnus and Charles IX) (TABLE 1). The families of their sisters (Catherine, Cecilia, Anna, Sofia and Elisabeth) are not included in the table, because the likelihood that their sons would have been rulers is

15 Ottfried Czaika, *Elisabet Vasa. En kvinna på 1500-talet och hennes böcker*. Stockholm: Föreningen Biblis, 2009.

16 Anna of Bohemia and Hungary (1503–1547), the wife of Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I and her mother Anne de Foix, the third wife of King Vladislaus II of Bohemia and Hungary, were also bearers of high rank of the name *Anna* in the recent past of the Jagiellonian family.

17 Anu Lahtinen, "A Knight from Flanders". Noble Migration and Integration in the North in the Late Middle Ages', in Ann Katherine Isaacs (ed.), *Immigration and Emigration in Historical Perspective*. Pisa: Edizioni Plu–Pisa University Press, 2007, 79–92, 85.

18 On historical name-giving patterns in Sweden, see Astrid Sondén, 'Den bundna namngivningen', *Släkt och Hävd* 2 (1959) 270–278.

practically nil in a situation in which they were preceded by several brothers, who in turn had numerous children. In a newly established hereditary monarchy, only the son of Eric, as the first hereditary king, was named Gustav after the paternal grandfather, even though the son was conceived with his *frilla*, a commoner Karin Månsdotter, crowned in 1568, the year the son was born. However, the second son was given the name Henrik, not Måns. The youngest brother, Charles, named his second son after the maternal grandfather (Louis), but he named his first (illegitimate) son not Gustav but Charles, after himself and previous Swedish kings.¹⁹ Instead, the subsequent son (the second legitimate one) was called Gustav (II) Adolph. The third brother, Magnus (whom John proposed should marry Anna Jagiellon at the same time he married Catherine),²⁰ who suffered from severe mental problems, had neither legitimate children nor sons. Nevertheless, John's naming strategy represented a remarkable exception within the Vasa family. John's first illegitimate or "natural" son with Karin Hansdotter was called Augustus, a name quite strongly associated with ruling as well. Nearly all the illegitimate children of the Vasa brothers had classical names, such as Augustus, Julius, Virginia and Helena. Curiously, three brothers with illegitimate daughters – John, Eric and Magnus – had a daughter called Lucretia. Charles had a son born out of wedlock called Charles (later Gyllenhielm). John's illegitimate children born before his marriage with Catherine Jagiellon – Sofia, Lucretia and Julius – were ennobled in 1577 and given the name Gyllenhielm. Moreover, Magnus's illegitimate daughters were called Gyllenhielm. In medieval and early modern Sweden, offspring born within an extramarital relationship were categorized as *horbarn* and *frillobarn*. The main legal difference was that *frillobarn* could inherit the father, whereas *horbarn* could not. The child of a *frilla* (mistress, concubine) had a relatively well-protected position, both legally and socially.²¹ John took care

19 Karl Sverkersson (c. 1130–1167) was the first Swedish king by the name of Charles (Karl). He was also called Charles VII, but this is a posthumous invention, counting backwards from Charles IX (1604–1611), who adopted his regnal number according to an inventive history of Sweden. Six others before Karl Sverkersson are unknown to any sources before Johannes Magnus's sixteenth-century book *Historia de omnibus gothorum sueonumque regibus* (1554) and are considered his invention. The first Swedish monarch of the name Charles to actually use a regnal numeral was Karl Knutsson (Bonde) or Charles II (retrospectively renumbered VIII), on his queen's tombstone (1451) at Vadstena. See Johan Henrik Schröder, *Anteckningar om Drottning Catharina, Konung Carl Knutssons Gemål, och Dess Graf-Monument i Wadstena Klosterkyrka*. Stockholm: Iduna, 1820, 378; Kurt Johannesson, *The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden: Johannes and Olaus Magnus as Politicians and Historians*, translated by J. Larson. Berkeley–Los Angeles–Oxford: University of California Press, 1991.

20 Raimonda Ragauskienė, "The Marriage of Catherine Jagiellon and John III Vasa in Vilnius (1562)", in Eugenijus Savišcevas and Marijus Uzorka (eds.), *Lithuania–Poland–Sweden: European Dynastic Unions and Historical-Cultural Ties* (Studies of the Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania XXI). Vilnius: National Museum–Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, 2014, 102–119, 115; letter to Ferdinand I, Vilnius, April 3, 1562 in Valentin Saurman von Jeltsch et al. (eds.), *Valentino Saurmano laišakai imperatoriui Ferdinandui I iš Žygimanto Augusto Vilniaus dvaro (1561–1562 m.)*. Vilnius: Pilių Tyrimo Centras "Lietuvos Pilyų", 2009, Ep. 32, 202–206, 204.

21 Pia Gadd, *Frillor, fruar och herrar – en okänd kvinnohistoria*. Rimbo: Fischer & Co, 2009.

of his former *frilla* Karin Hansdotter and continued to support her and their children after he married Catherine Jagiellon. This was the “normal” way, but Eric went beyond convention by marrying his long-term *frilla* Karin Månsdotter, who was a commoner, and additionally having her crowned as a queen, which the Swedish nobility considered an insult. Eric’s scandalous marriage in 1568 was one of the causes of the rebellion against King Eric and his deposition in favor of John.²² In preserved sources, Catherine Jagiellon is silent on John’s *frilla*, but Karin Månsdotter’s background is mentioned on Catherine Jagiellon’s own epitaph.²³ Various narratives, such as the epitaph and the testament, direct her resentfulness first and foremost toward Eric, who imprisoned John and Catherine for four years and had the audacity to negotiate with Ivan IV about sending Catherine to Russia. Nevertheless, she took a beneficent attitude towards Eric’s widow and children. Many female *frillobarn* became ladies-in-waiting in royal courts; for instance, one of John’s natural children, Sofia, became a lady-in-waiting to her aunt Princess Elizabeth of Sweden in 1576. In 1582, Sigrid, Eric’s daughter with Karin Månsdotter, was made lady-in-waiting to her cousin, Catherine Jagiellon’s daughter, Princess Anna of Sweden, and traveled with her to Poland, where she was present at the coronation of King Sigismund III Vasa in 1587.²⁴ Despite their presence in court and contacts with the royal family, *frillobarn* or their mothers were by no means included in the nuclear or immediate family, which seems to have been the basic family unit of the royal couple. Illegitimate families were, for instance, omitted from ceremonial orations and other memorial discourses.

In this Swedish context, it is noteworthy that all three children of John and Catherine were named after Catherine’s family. According to Catherine’s epitaph, Sigismund was named after Catherine’s father, Sigismund I. It is likely that Anna was named after her sister, and Isabella may refer to the maternal great-grandmother, Bona Sforza’s mother Isabella (of Aragon), and/or to Catherine’s late sister, who was probably closer to her than she was to their mother. It was also customary to name the most recently born baby in memory of family members who had died at a young age. Isabella was 40 years old when she died in 1559, but she was the most recently deceased female family member. Sofia was still alive when Catherine’s daughters were born in 1564 and 1568. Hedwig died in 1566. Both John and Catherine had a sister named Sofia, but neither of the two daughters was given that name. If Isabella was named after Catherine’s late sister, it may have been the case that Anna was named after the living sister, who remained in Poland. In Sweden, the interesting preference of Catherine and

22 Lars-Olof Larsson, *Arvet efter Gustav Vasa: berättelsen om fyra kungar och ett rike*. Stockholm: Prisma, 2005, 151–152; Lars Ericson, *Johan III: en biografi*. Lund: Historiska media, 2004, 82–94.

23 “*Et sibi plebeiam thalamo dvm ivngit amicam*,” Catherine Jagiellon’s epitaph on the wall in the Jagiellonian Chapel, Uppsala Cathedral, published in Herman Bengtsson, *Uppsala domkyrka VI. Gravminnen* (Sveriges kyrkor. Konsthistoriskt inventarium, 232). Uppsala: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitetsakademien och Riksantikvarieämbetet, 2010, 55–78.

24 Ericson, ‘*Johan III*’, 312–315; Sture Arnell, *Karin Månsdotter*. Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, 1951; Henry Biaudet, *Gustaf Eriksson Vasa, Prince de Suède: Une énigme historique du XVI^e siècle*, vol. 1. Helsinki: Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae, 1913, 10.

John for the names of parents and siblings taken from the onomastic stock of Catherine's family was apparently rare, but it was customary among Catherine's sisters, as is made sufficiently evident by the continuous sequence of the Sigismund-named rulers among all the sisters, Hedwig, Isabella and Catherine, who had offspring (TABLE 2). Additionally, the Roman Catholic affiliation of Catherine and her children may explain the choice, if we suppose that Catherine wanted to follow the recommendation of the Roman Catholic Church of naming children after saints and patrons: Isabella/Elisabeth, Sigismund and Anna existed also in calendars of saints.²⁵ Considering that in Northern Italy, taking a name from maternal side was a clear sign of linking affection to the transfer of wealth and power,²⁶ one may conclude that this specific naming pattern was one of the numerous practices Bona Sforza brought from Renaissance Italy; however, demonstrating this would require further comparisons with the naming patterns of different regions and families in Italy, Poland and elsewhere. Otherwise, if John and Catherine had already turned their attention to the Polish–Lithuanian throne, “Jagiellonian” names and faith would certainly have been an asset for the eligible candidates. Irrespective of these speculations, the fact is that in the European context, Catherine's family had more power and prestige than the Vasas. The families of Brandenburgs or Szapolyais were perhaps not regarded, like the less-known Northern Vasas, as “newcomers” on the playground of European dynasties, but the Jagiellons obviously placed themselves in the first rank among royal and territorial princely families.

COMMEMORATING THE PRINCESS ISABELLA IN SCANDINAVIA

Without two art-historical representations, the memory of the younger Isabella would have waned to the point of vanishing. First, there is a portrait, an anonymous oil painting on wood measuring 94.8 cm × 54.7 cm of the little princess made in Sweden, most probably a gift to Anna Jagiellon from her sister Catherine Jagiellon, Isabella's mother. The portrait is currently located at Wawel

25 According to the inventory made in 1563, Catherine had prayer books in her possession. John's library had a more humanistic flavor, including, for example, a “new” almanac that German astronomer and priest Johannes Stöffler had published in the year 1518, plausibly the proposal for a calendar revision that formed one of the foundations for the Gregorian calendar. A calendar of saints is included, though contains neither Saint Sigismund nor Saint Isabella/Elisabeth. See Johann Stoeffler, *Calendarium romanum magnum*. Oppenheim: Köbel, 1518; Inventarium, Katarina Jagellonica 28 Oct–3 Dec 1563. Kungliga och furstliga personers enskilde egendom, vol. 3 1556–1594. Stockholm, Royal Palace Archives.

26 Cf. naming patterns in Northern Italy, where taking a name from the maternal side is a clear sign of linking affection and the transfer of wealth and power. See Marcello Zane, ‘The Importance of a Name: Gender, Power and the Strategy of Naming a Child in a Noble Italian Family: the Martinengo of Brescia’, in Penny Richards and Jessica Munns (eds.), *Gender, Power and Privilege in Early Modern Europe*. Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2003, 55–70, 66.

Castle in Kraków.²⁷ A similar oil painting was made of the two-year-old Sigismund in Sweden in 1568 and given to Anna Jagiellon.²⁸

Second, the funeral monument of Isabella in Sweden's Strängnäs Cathedral is said to be the first dedicated to a child in Scandinavia. Because of its rarity and touching beauty, the monument is mentioned in many art- and church-history publications. However, its history has not been studied. Here I focus on some elementary points that may shed light on both the commemoration of a royal child and on the family strategies of the Jagiellonians, but the basic research has yet to be done.

After her death in 1566, little Isabella was buried in the medieval Cathedral of Strängnäs, not far from Stockholm. Apparently it was not only during his reign as King John III that the father had the idea (and opportunity) to commission a monument for his first daughter. Documents associated with the commission itself have not survived, but we know that the Flemish architect and sculptor Wilhelm Boy,²⁹ who had been in favor at the Swedish royal court since Gustav Vasa, traveled to Strängnäs in September 1580. Two king's letters concerned the project: a letter dated October 4, 1580, on "the tomb in Strängnäs Cathedral" and another on October 31 of the same year concerning an iron fence that was to be erected around the monument.³⁰

The monument consists of a rectangular sarcophagus made of limestone and alabaster. On one side of the pedestal the inscription indicates her title:

*HIC ISABELLA SERENISSIMI PRINCIPIS
D(OMI)NI IOAN(N)IS III SVECOR(UM), GOTHOR(UM), WA(N)
DALOR(UM)Q(UE)
REGIS FILIA PRIMOGENITA REQUIESCIT QVE
OBIT IN ARCE GRIPSHOLM MENSE IANVARIO
ANNO SALVTIS MDLXVI*

27 The portrait (inventory number 3934) was previously attributed to the Flemish painter Domenicus Verwilt, but according to information from the Wawel Royal Castle National Art Collection, it is currently regarded as anonymous <http://51.254.200.38/zbiorywawel/node/4459> (accessed on September 15, 2019).

28 The portrait of Sigismund (inventory number 3221) measuring 91.5 cm × 56.3 cm is attributed to Johan Baptista van Uther, <http://51.254.200.38/zbiorywawel/node/4460> (accessed on September 15, 2019).

29 Several important funeral monuments are attributed to William Boy, such as the tombs of King Gustav Vasa and his wives and the tomb of Catherine Jagiellon. Boy was probably the main executive sculptor, even though he was often referred to as *conterfeijare*, meaning that he was originally hired by the king as a portraitist. See Cynthia Osiecki, 'Willem Boy & Willem van den Blocke: The Import of Flemish Sculpture into Sweden's Courts from 1562 until 1599', in Sara Ayres and Elettra Carbone (eds.), *Sculpture and the Nordic Region*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2017, 24–39.

30 Ernst Eichhorn and Herman Odelberg, 'Guillaume Boyen (Wilhelm Boy), peintre, sculpteur et architecte belge', *Annales de l'Académie d'Archéologie de Belgique* 28:1 (1872) 94–132.

The opposite side contains a four-line poem written in elegiac couplet describing the tomb of the little Isabella of royal birth as well as her short stay on earth and eternal life in Heaven:

REGIA PROGENIES PARVO HOC ISABELLA SEPULCRO
SPES QUONDAM PATRIS MARMORE TECTA JACET;
CUI SPATIUM IN TERRIS IDEO BREVE CONTIGIT ŒVI
ESSET UT IN CÆLIS LONGIUS ANTE DEUM³¹

According to Jeannie Łabno's recent study, "apart from Poland, relatively few monuments were erected to commemorate children in the sixteenth century."³² As Łabno acknowledges, the Polish situation was probably not as unique as it now appears to be,³³ but apparently there was a relatively established tradition of child commemoration in sixteenth-century Poland. Because the monument dedicated to Isabella was the first of its kind in Scandinavia, it is tempting to deduce that the idea came from Catherine Jagiellon, but we have no evidence of this. It is also worth mentioning that the mother's name is not cited in the inscription (or on the modern sign, which describes the monument both in Swedish and English, stating that "Isabella was the daughter of King John III and died at Gripsholm in 1566. Designed by Willem Boy in 1580"). Nevertheless, it was plausibly Catherine who commissioned the portrait of the little Isabella, regarded as a gift to her sister Anna. The potential connection between the portrait and the effigy requires further study. Willem Boy also prepared the funeral monument of Catherine Jagiellon, who died on September 15, 1583.

A detail in Strängnäs Cathedral, which may capture the attention of a bystander aware of the historical course of events, is the current placement of Isabella's tomb.³⁴ The originally planned iron fence is absent, so her tomb seems quite "unprotected" next to the huge equestrian monument of Charles IX (itself surrounded by a massive iron fence). The symbolic architecture between the representatives of the rival families may be hazardous, although it was Charles IX, the younger brother of John III and an ardent Protestant, who dethroned his Catholic nephew Sigismund and, therefore, the Jagiellonian branch from the Swedish throne. Little imagination is required to envision the mighty soldier-king Charles IX riding over the tiny princess, his poor niece Isabella.

³¹ Transcribed in Eichhorn and Odelberg, 'Guillaume Boyen', 126.

³² Jeannie Łabno, *Commemorating the Polish Renaissance Child Funeral Monuments and Their European Context*. London: Ashgate, 2011, 139.

³³ Łabno, *Commemorating the Polish Renaissance*, 252. In contrast to many other European countries, Poland is undertaking an ongoing inventory of monuments by the Institute of Art of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IS PAN) and the National Centre for Historical Monument Studies and Documentation (KOBZDZ), from which Łabno's study profited.

³⁴ Seventeenth-century illustrations do not show the Isabella monument in its current location, see, e.g., "*Summus Basilicæ Strengnesiensis Chorus*" engraved by Johan van den Aveelen (1699), Erik Dahlbergh, *Suecia antiqua et hodierna*, 2. Stockholm: s.n., 1698–1715, 5.

The inscriptions as well as the text on the likeness confirm that it was specifically the name form “Isabella” that was intended to be commemorated to both contemporaries and later generations. Was it also a message conveyed by Catherine and John to the Jagiellonians and their followers that they maintained close links to the family by virtue of choosing this name? Did the choice of the name “Isabella” (and later, “Sigismund” and “Anna”) reflect a strong symbolic connection, mutual friendship and support, both practical and emotional, over past and forthcoming familial tensions, rivalry and conflict? If so, it represents a bond – not only to Catherine’s late sister but to the whole dynasty – in a situation in which other siblings were without offspring and, consequently, the Polish throne was without a successor and the whole dynasty was in danger of extinction.

TABLE I. VASA NAMING PATTERNS

Children of Eric XIV:

- I. With Agda Persdotter (illegitimate):
 - 1. Virginia (1559–1633)
 - 2. Constantia (1560–1649)
 - 3. Lucretia (1564–1574)
- II. With Karin Jacobsdotter (illegitimate):
 - 1. An unnamed child, d. 1565.
- III. With Karin Månsdotter (first illegitimate wife and queen in 1568):
 - 1. Sigrid (1566–1633) (b. before marriage)
 - 2. Gustav (1568–1607) (b. before marriage)
 - 3. Henrik (1570–1574)
 - 4. Arnold (1572–1573)

Children of John III:

- I. With Karin Hansdotter (illegitimate):
 - 1. Sofia (1556–1583)
 - 2. Augustus (1557–1560)
 - 3. Julius (1559–1581)
 - 4. Lucretia (1560–1585)
- II. With **Catherine Jagiellon**:
 - 1. Isabella (1564–1566)
 - 2. Sigismund (1566–1632)
 - 3. Anna (1568–1625)
- III. With Gunilla Bielke:
 - 1. John (1589–1618)

Children of Magnus:

- I. With Valborg Eriksdotter (illegitimate):
 - 1. Virginia (1560–ca. 1572?)
 - 2. Lucretia (1562–1624)
- II. With Anna von Haubitz (illegitimate):
 - 1. Helena (1572–1630)

Children of Charles IX:

- I. With Karin Nilsson (illegitimate):
 - 1. Charles (1574–1650)
- II. With Maria of Palatinate-Simmern:
 - 1. Margareta Elisabeth (1580–1585)
 - 2. Elisabeth Sabina (1582–1585)
 - 3. Louis (1583–1583)
 - 4. Catherine (1584–1638)
 - 5. Gustav (1587–1587)
 - 6. Maria (1588–1589)
- III. With Christina of Holstein-Gottorp:
 - 1. Catherine (1584–1638)
 - 2. Gustav Adolph (1611–1632)
 - 3. Maria Elisabeth (1596–1618)
 - 4. Charles Philip (1601–1622)

TABLE II. JAGIELLONIAN NAMING PATTERNS

Children of Hedwig Jagiellon and Joachim II Hector, Elector of Brandenburg:

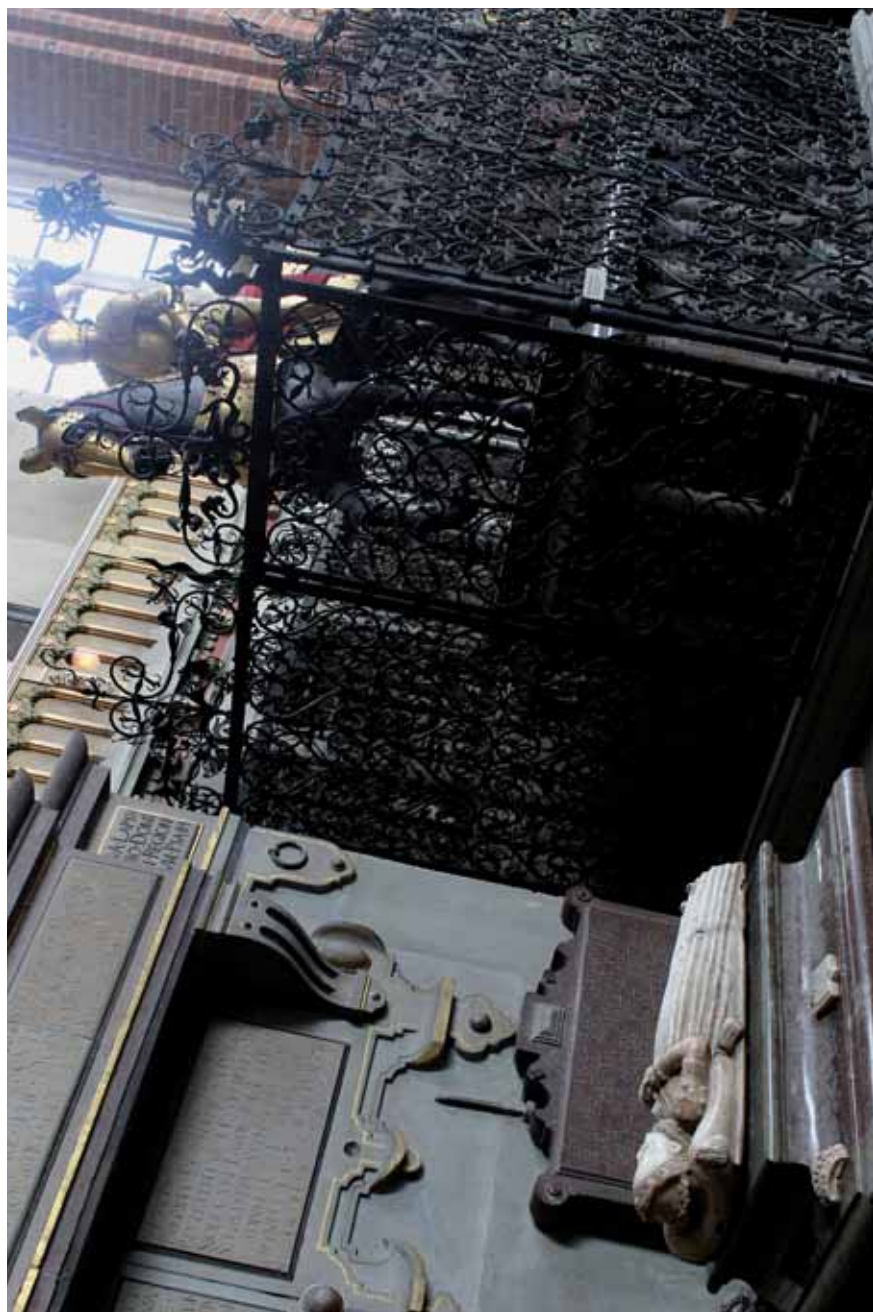
- 1. Elisabeth Magdalena (1537–1595)
- 2. Sigismund (1538–1566)
- 3. Hedwig (1540–1602)
- 4. Sophia (1541–1564)
- 5. Joachim (1543–1544)
- 6. Unnamed daughter (born in 1545)

Children of Isabella Jagiellon and John Szapolyai:

- 1. John Sigismund (1540–1571)

Children of Catherine Jagiellon and John Vasa:

- 1. Isabella (1564–1566)
- 2. Sigismund (1566–1632)
- 3. Anna (1568–1625)



FUNERAL MONUMENTS OF ISABELLA VASA AND CHARLES IX IN SWEDEN'S STRÄNGNÄS CATHEDRAL.
PHOTO BY SUSANNA NIIRANEN

FOREIGN CONNECTIONS

“IF THEY CAME AS A LEGATION, THEY ARE MANY, IF THEY ARE SOLDIERS, THEY ARE FEW”¹: THE MILITARY BACKGROUND OF THE 1551 ATTEMPT TO UNITE HUNGARY

The period between 1550 and 1556 occupies an important place in Hungarian historiography in several respects. On the one hand, the policies and 1551 death of Friar George, who placed the eastern part of Hungary in the hands of Ferdinand, and, on the other hand, the new wave of Ottoman conquest and successful defense of Eger in 1552 have been the subject of significant interest. Even greater interest has surrounded the castle wars of this era, whereas until the recent past the international correlations of these events, their Ottoman background and the happenings that took place between 1552 and 1557 were mentioned only indirectly.²

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- 1 “*Tigranes himself, wishing to be witty and pleasant upon the occasion, made use of the well-known saying, that they were too many for ambassadors, and too few for soldiers.*” Plutarch, *Parallel Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*. http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0045-0125,_Plutarch,_Parallel_Lives_Of_Noble_Grecians_And_Romans,_EN.pdf 840. (accessed on April 24, 2020).
- 2 Imre Soós and Imre Szántó, *Eger vár védelme 1552-ben*. Budapest: Művelt Nép, 1952; Antal Csíipes, *Dobó István élete és szerepe Magyarország XVI. századi történetében*. Budapest: Eger Város Tanácsa, 1972, 99–112; István Nemeskürty, *Elfelejtett évtized*. Budapest: Magvető, 1974; Gábor Barta, *Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség születése*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1979, 106–116; Imre Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen Magyarországon: az 1551–52. évi várháborúk*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985; Gábor Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?* Budapest: Helikon, 1988; Róbert Szvitek, ‘Az 1555-ös török hadjárat a Dél-Dunántúlon,’ in *PPKE Műhely-tanulmányok*, Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem, (1999) 47–64; Szabolcs Varga, ‘Sziget vár és mezőváros története 1526–1566 között,’ in Sándor Bősze, László Ravazdi and László Szita (eds.), *Szigetvár története: tanulmányok a város múltjáról*. Szigetvár: Szigetvár Város Önkormányzata–Szigetvár Várbaráti Kör, 2006; Teréz Oborni, ‘Bornemissza Pál és Dobó István távozása Erdélyből (1556),’ in Teréz Oborni and László Á. Varga (eds.), *Memoria Rerum. Tanulmányok Bán Péter tiszteletére*. Eger: Heves Megyei Levéltár, 2008, 349–362; János B. Szabó, ‘Kinek példa – kinek

The Plutarch quote that appears under the title, referring to a statement from Giovanni Battista Castaldo's secretary, Ascanio Centorio, recently became known in Hungarian historiography as a *bon mot* referring to the preordained bungling of the Habsburg attempt to unite Hungary in 1550.³ The authors of many Hungarian historical works have taken this quote out of context and interpreted it to signify precisely the opposite of what it originally meant.⁴ Ascanio Centorio intended it to highlight the valor of Castaldo and his brothers-in-arms in reference to Plutarch's narrative. He may have used this famous declaration from the Armenian King Tigranes in a reference for the cultured readers of the age to the triumph of the small, Lucullus-led Roman elite army over the eastern despot's enormous horde.⁵

Over recent years, a much clearer image of the intentions and prospects of the Ottoman participants in the events has emerged due to the publications of Pál Fodor and Géza Dávid. For example, it became evident that previous estimates that historians had made regarding the number of soldiers that the Ottomans could put in the field (maximum of 40,000) were much too high. In fact, based on the actual number of military personnel, Ferdinand's armed forces could have potentially halted the 1552 Ottoman offensive. Ferdinand's army was composed of the following units, in addition to royal troops stationed at border castles: 5,700 infantry and 1,400 cavalry led to Transylvania by Castaldo;⁶ 2,000 German

tanulság. Szigetvár első oszmán-török ostroma és az 1555–56. évi dél-dunántúli hadjáratok,' in Pál Fodor (ed.), *Egy elfeledett ostrom emlékezete. Szigetvár 1556*. Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2016, 27–50.

- 3 "And 'with this small army Castaldo set off with the mission of seizing Transylvania from the powerful Turkish emperor. In my opinion, with regard to this little army' – Centorio writes – 'one can say the same thing that King Tigranes asserted about the Roman army that was marching against him under the command of Lucullus, i.e., that they are too many for a legation, though too few for warfare.' However, as we will see, it proved to be enough to befuddle the simple-minded Transylvanians." Lajos Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben,' *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* (1896) 325.
- 4 "A witness aptly characterized the effectiveness of this mercenary army: it was too big for a legation of the royal army, though too small for warfare." Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen*, 54; "Lord Chief Justice Tamás Nádasdy, who traveled to Transylvania as the representative of the king, declared sarcastically that this army is altogether too big for a legation, however it is hardly suitable for an armed force." Ferenc Szakály, 'Egy zsoldosvezér emlékiratai a XVI. század közepén vívott magyarországi háborúkról,' in Szakály (ed.), *Bernardo de Aldana magyarországi hadjárata (1548–1552)*, translated by László Scholz. Budapest: Európa Kiadó, 1986, 9.
- 5 Centorio's text: "...seguito il Castaldo il suo viaggio per andare a conquistare la provincia di Transilvania contra un tanto poderoso Principe come e il Turco, di cui par mi si possa dire quello che disse il Re Tigrane dell'essercito Romano, che sotto la guida di Lucullo l'andava a combattere, che per Ambasciatori erano troppi, e per combattere assai pochi, quasi burlandosi de essi, che a rispetto de suoi che erano da dugento cinquanta mila, gli parevano per il poco numero una insalata..." Centorio wrote the following in note alongside the text: "Facevo detto di Tigrane contra l'essercito di Lucullo che per ambasciatori erano troppi, e per combattere pochi." See Ascanio Centorio degli Hortensi, *Commentarii della guerra di Transilvania*. Vinegia [Venezia]: Apresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, 1564, 66–67.
- 6 Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben,' 323–324. Cf. Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen*, 50–51.

infantry led to the Partium as reinforcements by Sforza Pallavicini in 1551; and 500 heavy cavalry and 1,000 Hungarian hussars.⁷ Moreover, in the summer of 1552, nearly 5,000 soldiers from regiments under the command of the Germans Georg von Helfenstein and Fabian von Schönaich were sent to Transylvania⁸ along with the approximately 9,000 soldiers, primarily foreign mercenaries, from the royal army that suffered catastrophic casualties at the Battle of Palást (Plášťovce, Slovakia) on August 9 and 10, 1552.⁹ Finally, an army composed of an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry arrived to Győr under the command of Moritz von Sachsen in September 1552. Thus over a period of three years, significantly more than 30,000 foreign royal mercenaries were stationed in the Hungarian theater of war for various amounts of time.¹⁰

It can also be clearly demonstrated that by no means did everything proceed according to Ottoman plans in this theater of war. This is why the Ottomans had to change the direction of their planned military operations, which were originally to be conducted against Transylvania in 1552, northward, toward Eger Castle. According to Ottomanists Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, the leader of the military expedition (serdar) may have played a role in the decision [of third-in-command Ahmed] that the expected attack from the east failed to take place, moreover the still-mobile voivode of Moldavia was murdered on September 1 with support from Castaldo and news also arrived about the desertion of Ottoman soldiers.¹¹

And it was increasingly obvious that from the Ottoman perspective the conflict in Hungary was not merely a local affair, but part of a nearly worldwide series of Christian–Muslim clashes that extended from North Africa to the Persian Gulf and of which Hungary represented one of the theaters. It was also clear that this Christian–Muslim conflict, which was taking place at five locations, had thoroughly exhausted the Sublime Porte's material and human resources.¹²

Ferdinand hoped to gain possession of a territory containing significant material and military resources with the acquisition of the eastern part of Hungary in 1550.¹³ However, his hopes were dashed in this regard after he was

7 Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen*, 60; Béla Sarusi Kiss, 'A Bécsi udvari kamarai levéltár Gedenkbücher Österreich magyar vonatkozású iratainak regesztái', 1 (volume 65–67, 1549–1552) *Fons* 15:4 (2008) 511.

8 Béla Sarusi Kiss, 'A Bécsi udvari kamarai levéltár Gedenkbücher Österreich magyar vonatkozású iratainak regesztái', 2 (volume 68–70, 1549–1552), *Fons* 15:1 (2009) 67; King Ferdinand's letter to Castaldo, Vienna, February 14, 1552, *Történelmi Tár* ser. III: 14 (1891) 643.

9 Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen*, 149–150.

10 *Ibid.*, 235.

11 Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, 'Az 1544–45. és 1552. évi mühimme defterikről', in Dávid and Fodor, "Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való": A szultáni tanács Magyarországra vonatkozó rendeletei (1544–1545, 1552.) Budapest: História–MTA Történettudományi Intézet, 2005, 50.

12 *Ibid.*, 44–55; Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire – The Ottomans in Central Europe. A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390–1566)*. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities–HAS, 2015, 103–129.

13 Letter of King Ferdinand I to Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, December 14, 1550. Karl Lanz (ed.), *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V. aus dem königlichen Archiv und der Bibliothèque de Bourgogne zu Brüssel, 1550–1556*, vol. 3. Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1846, 12.

forced to come to terms with the reality of the situation and deal with the political chaos that emerged following the seizure of power. Ferdinand, who around this time was preoccupied with the affairs of the Holy Roman Empire, was unable to mobilize his resources outside of Hungary in order to defend the eastern part of the country,¹⁴ although he told the Hungarian estates at the Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia) Diet in January 1556 that over the previous five years (1551–1556) he had spent no less than 2.5 million forints in an effort to maintain control over Transylvania and the eastern counties of Hungary.¹⁵ The objective of this study is to highlight certain trends in warfare from the period in question through the presentation of parallels in military history. The general characteristics of historical examples connected to Habsburg warfare will perhaps help us to rethink the strategy of Ferdinand I in Transylvania. Our goal is to introduce the general principles that the Habsburg government administration used to organize the conquest of individual territories and the pacification and military defense of provinces regarded as Habsburg possessions. Moreover, the degree to which the Habsburgs counted on local political and military support from the provincial estates in the course of campaigns they conducted with surprisingly small armies considering the magnitude of the conflicts represents

14 Teréz Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei I. Ferdinánd uralma alatt* (FONS Könyvek 1). Budapest: Szentpétery Imre Történettudományi Alapítvány, 2002; Oborni, 'Bornemissza Pál és Dobó István távozása Erdélyből (1556)'. See also Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 53–73. Although Ferdinand had to spend a very large sum of money on the defense of the other parts of the country as well as a result of the Ottoman war: during the war year of 1552, a total of 334,000 forints were allegedly allocated to the Transdanubian castles. Gyula Szekfű, 'A tizenhatodik század', in Bálint Hóman and Gyula Szekfű, *Magyar történet*, vol. 3. Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1936, 125. Total military expenditures in Hungary were much higher than this during the period in question. In the relatively peaceful year of 1553, the King's Court Bursar paid 503,505 Rhenish guilders to the military paymaster of Hungary and an additional 49,719 Rhenish guilders for other military expenses (war materials, food, etc.). See István Kenyeres, 'A Habsburg monarchia katonai kiadásai az Udvari Pénztár és a hadi fizetőmesterek számadásai alapján, 1543–1623. Adalékok a török elleni küzdelem finanszírozásának történetéhez', *Levéltári Közlemények* 78:1 (2007) 94. Part of this sum may have been used to liquidate arrears for military service pay. For more on this problem, see Zoltán Köröpi, 'Ami a magyarországi hadjárat után történt. Bernardo de Aldana és a spanyol zsoldosok sorsa 1552 után', *Fons* 12:3 (2005) 380–392.

15 Vilmos Fraknói (ed.), *Magyar Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 3 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Hungariae 3). Budapest: Athenaeum, 1876, 546. Although Ferdinand's claims must be handled cautiously given the political circumstances in which he made them, the data regarding military expenditures shows that in 1553 the king's Court Bursar paid 387,375 Rhenish guilders to the military paymaster in Transylvania, while in 1554 the 3,000 soldiers in the royal army stationed in Transylvania received total pay of 156,000 Rhenish guilders, or around one-fifth of the total revenue of the Kingdom of Hungary. Géza Pálffy, *A császárváros védelmében. A győri főkapitányság története 1526–1598*. Győr: Palatia Nyomda, 1999, 91. (The king's Court Bursar likewise paid 94,769 Rhenish guilders of this total sum. Kenyeres, 'A Habsburg monarchia katonai kiadásai', 94.) For the revenue of the Kingdom of Hungary at this time, see István Kenyeres, 'A királyi Magyarország bevételei és kiadásai a 16. században', *Levéltári Közlemények* 74:1–2 (2003) 59–103; and István Kenyeres, 'I. Ferdinánd magyarországi pénzügyigazgatási reformjai és bevételei', *Történelmi Szemle* 45:1–2 (2003) 61–92.

a separate interesting question. The question may legitimately arise regarding whether Western European examples show historical parallels of any kind with the activities of Habsburg military forces in Hungary and Transylvania. It appears that they do and consequently it can be argued that under the prevailing circumstances Ferdinand's military and political administration employed the maximum available force in its effort to take the eastern part of Hungary under Habsburg control. Interestingly, the magnitude of military campaigns conducted in Habsburg heartlands were not greater than those carried out in Hungary and Transylvania. The utilized Western examples that can be compared to the situation in Transylvania are difficult to approach from a logistical standpoint (Navarre, the conquest of Naples, the pacification of the Low Countries) and/or from a political standpoint connected to distant territories (e.g., Naples or the events in the Low Countries). Even if these situations were dissimilar, seen purely from the perspective of military history – strategy, army organization and the provisions of reinforcements – there are many parallels that place everything that the Habsburg military administration represented and implemented in connection to Hungary between 1550 and 1553 in a different light.

THE QUESTION OF THE MILITARY FORCES NEEDED TO MAINTAIN AUTHORITY

Through the examples shown below we hope to demonstrate that in the early 1550s the Habsburg government administration likely wanted to reach its objectives in the eastern part of Hungary using a logical strategy that had already proven itself to be effective on several occasions. Certain elements of this strategic model – which Ferdinand Habsburg utilized as well – followed the courses of action taken in the Western territories. However, the military failure in Hungary in the years 1552–1553 cannot likely be attributed exclusively to the Habsburg administration's mistakes. From this perspective, it is worthwhile to thoroughly examine the role that the Hungarian and Transylvanian estates may have played in all of this and, looking beyond the scope of the entire empire, to consider how well-organized and powerful the Ottoman military in Ottoman-controlled Hungary was and the degree of competence displayed among its senior officers.

The Defense of Naples and Milan at the Time of Charles V

For the Holy Roman Empire, control over Milan was of key importance during this period, since it was located in one of the strategically important territories in terms of ensuring the Habsburg status quo in the Low Countries. As a result of this circumstance, the Habsburg army that participated in the 1525 Battle of Pavia was reasonably large: the troops that went into battle against the main forces of the French king were composed of between 2,152 and 3,500 cavalry and light cavalry and 28,179 infantry (17,950 German, 7,050 Spanish and 3,179

Italian).¹⁶ However, just four years later, in 1529, only around 7,000 soldiers defended Milan.¹⁷ A couple of decades later, prior to the 1559 Peace of Cateau-Cambresis, a large force composed of 24,760 soldiers was again stationed in Milan (9,201 *landsknechte*, 8,075 Italian infantry, 4,864 Spanish infantry, 1,886 light cavalry, 619 heavy cavalry and 115 garrison soldiers). Following the Peace of Cateau-Cambresis, the size of the military forces stationed in the province declined to 6,000 German infantry, 6,000 Spanish infantry, 3,000 Italian infantry, 1,200 light cavalry (*jinetes*) and 600 heavy cavalry (*hombres de armas*).¹⁸ Strikingly, the three Habsburg armies that fought along the Hungarian marches under the command of Castaldo, Pallavicini-Teuffel and Moritz von Sachsen during this same decade, between 1550 and 1553, were on the whole somewhat larger than the approximately 25,000-man wartime armies and 17,000-man peacetime armies described above. That is, during these years, the size of the armies stationed in the exceedingly important Spanish Habsburg province were essentially the same as those deployed to defend the Kingdom of Hungary, which foreign authors frequently portray as being of much lesser importance, and Transylvania.

From the standpoint of the present question, we find interesting sixteenth-century parallels in other Habsburg possessions in Italy as well. The Kingdom of Naples was the other province that from the point of view of the Habsburg dynasty was extremely important in strategic terms. At the time of the League of Cognac (1526–1529), Naples was a significant theater of war. The military forces of the French monarch conducted a prolonged siege of this city by land and water during this period.¹⁹ A few months following the conclusion of the Treaty of Cambrai, during a military review held in Naples, there were still 15,800 soldiers stationed in the region (6,000 Spanish, 5,400 German infantry and 4,400 Italian infantry). The monthly cost of maintaining this military force was between 50,000 and 55,000 ducats.²⁰ It is revealing that the number of soldiers stationed in the Kingdom of Naples declined significantly over the following decades, though came to compose a permanent, professional army.²¹ The so-called “old” *tercio* of Naples constituted the core of the city’s garrison and was supplemented with smaller permanent units.²² The military forces were

16 James D. Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War: Campaign Strategy, International Finance, and Domestic Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 44–45; for the size of the army, see Enrique Martínez Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey. Los ejércitos de la Monarquía Hispánica. (1480–1700)*. Madrid: Actas, 2008, 85.

17 Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War*, 124; Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 716.

18 Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 720.

19 For the League of Cognac, see Karl Brandi, *Carlos V. Vida y fortuna de una personalidad y de un imperio mundial*. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1998, 207–221; Alfred Kohler, *Karl V. 1500–1558. Eine Biographie*. Munich: C. H. Beck Verlag, 2000, 181–200.

20 Tracy, *Emperor Charles V, Impresario of War*, 124.

21 Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 85–112.

22 In Spanish scholarly literature, the four permanent *tercio* founded during the second half of the 1530s are called the “old” *tercio*, thus distinguishing them from the *tercio* established in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The four “old” *tercio* were the Tercio Viejo de Nápoles, the Tercio Viejo de Sicilia, the Tercio Viejo de Lombardia and the Tercio Viejo de Cerdeña.

scattered throughout the kingdom; for example, in the region of Campania, to the cities of Avellino, Benevento, Salerno, Roccasecca and the Castel dell'Ovo in Naples. There were also permanent garrisons in Gaeta and the castles of Castelnuovo as well as smaller units stationed on the island of Capri. In 1536, the permanent army of the Kingdom of Naples was composed of a total of just 3,220 soldiers, including the 1,590 troops in the infantry *tercio* at the time of the official establishment of the Old Tercio of Naples (Tercio Viejo de Nápoles). In addition, 19 heavy-cavalry companies – 12 Spanish and 7 Italian – composed of 644 *hombres de armas* and 5 light-cavalry companies composed of 164 *jinete* served in the permanent army of the kingdom. By 1564, the number of soldiers in the infantry *tercio* had risen to 4,518. In 1570, the 4,000-man permanent *tercio* was supplemented with a further 16 companies of infantry – 11 Italian and 5 Spanish – with total personnel of 1,020 soldiers and 5 companies of cavalry with total personnel of 450 soldiers.²³ The fact that during the sixteenth century the permanent army defending the Kingdom of Naples consisted of only a couple thousand troops also serves as a parallel. Although the Old Tercio of Naples was regarded as one of the Habsburg Empire's most powerful military units, these armies were comparable in size to the permanent royal armed forces stationed at castles and garrisons located on the territory of the Kingdom of Hungary during the same period.²⁴

The question arises: why did the Habsburg dynasty defend a strategic territory such as Naples with a seemingly small military force? One of the reasons is obvious: the maintenance of a permanent army is very expensive. There simply was not enough money to station idle units larger than those described above for years on end at garrisons located in the kingdom. Moreover, the successful integration of the territory into the empire made the stationing of larger numbers of troops there unnecessary. The Spanish had, in fact, conquered the territory in the late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century with a small-scale expeditionary force and significant support from their allies in Naples. The Neapolitan élite regarded the Spanish to be the lesser of two evils in comparison to the French from both historical and cultural standpoints. The noble and ecclesiastical élite in southern Italy remained loyal to the occupying Spanish following the uprising in Naples led by the so-called Anjou faction at the time of the League of Cognac offensive in the years 1527–1528.²⁵ This may be due to the fact that Habsburg Spain offered excellent individual career opportunities through which the Neapolitan élite could successfully integrate with the supranational aristocracy of the Habsburg Empire.

23 Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 736–737.

24 Géza Pálffy, *A Magyar Királyság és a Habsburg Monarchia a 16. században*. Budapest: História-MTA, 2010, 150; Pálffy, *A császárváros védelmében*, 103, 128, 165, 174.

25 Brandi, *Carlos V. Vida y fortuna de una personalidad*, 206–216; Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, *El reino de Nápoles en el Imperio de Carlos V*. Madrid: Museo del Prado, 2001, 368.

Navarre

The old medieval Navarre is one of Spain's exceptionally colorful territories in geographical terms. Navarre is embedded between Castile and the French region of Béarn with Aragon lying to its east and the Basque provinces (Guipúzcoa and Álava) to its west. The Pyrenees divide the region into Upper Navarre, now the province of Navarre in Spain, and Lower Navarre, also known as *Ultrapuertos*, now located in France. The manner in which Navarre became part of the kingdoms of France and Spain is very instructive in several regards. The Spanish acquired their own "Transylvania" with the 1512 conquest of Navarre as a result of the region's geographical attributes and rugged, mountainous terrain. Without going into the history of Navarre in detail, it is worthwhile to note that even following the Castile-Aragon conquest, this province retained its legal autonomy, viceroy-led administration and historical local laws, the so-called *fuero*, for many centuries.

By the spring of 1512, several invasions from the territory of the Kingdom of Castile, primarily from the province of Guipúzcoa, put Navarre's border-defense capabilities to the test. In April 1512, Ferdinand of Aragon held negotiations with the lords of Navarre and their main representative, Pedro de Navarre. Although Pedro de Navarre and Royal Council of Navarre President Juan de Jaso rejected Ferdinand's initial demands during these talks, they offered the pledge of the Cortes of Navarre not to permit any army preparing to conduct military operations against the Holy League to cross the territory of Navarre and promised to place borderland castles under the control of Navarrese captains designated by Ferdinand. On July 10, 1512, Castilian armies attacked Goizueta, near the northern frontier of Navarre, from Vitoria in the Basque province of Álava. Somewhat later, Ferdinand asked for the authority of the Aragonese Cortes to attack Navarre, which he received after a period of approximately two months. However, the conquest of Navarre had nearly been completed by this time.²⁶

How big was the army that invaded Navarre? The forces that marched westward from Vitoria under the command of Fadrique Álvarez de Toledo, 2nd Duke of Alba, was composed of 2,500 light cavalry (*jinete*), 12,000 infantry, 1,500 lancers and 20 cannons. The approximately 6,000-man army laid siege to Pamplona on July 25, 1512, then on September 9 occupied the important castle at Tudela. Following the occupation of Upper Navarre, the Duke of Alba reinforced his army with 1,150 infantry – 400 infantry sent by the Bishop of Zamora and 750 redeployed from North Africa. Then, in early autumn, 2,900 more infantry and 300 more light cavalry joined the ranks of this army. This augmented force crossed the Pyrenees and marched against Lower Navarre.

26 José María Jimeno Jurío, 'La guerra de 1512–1522 y su repercusión sobre los territorios de la corona de Navarra,' in *Vasconia: Cuadernos de historia–geografía* (475 Aniversario conquista de Navarra: jornadas históricas) II (1989) 12–32; Luis Suárez Fernández, *Fernando el Católico y Navarra. El proceso de incorporación del reino a la Corona de España*. Madrid: Rialp, 1985.

By October 1512, 6,600 infantry and 1,600 light cavalry were left to defend Lower Navarre.²⁷

The French-Navarrese counterattack ensued without delay: Louis XII, in alliance with John III of Navarre, launched an offensive from three directions with a 30,000-man French-Navarrese army, first against Lower Navarre, then against Upper Navarre. Odet de Foix, Viscount of Lautrec led an army of 10,000 infantry and 400 cavalry toward Guipúzcoa, while Dauphin Francis, later King Francis I of France, guided a similar-sized army (which included 6,000 Swiss infantry and 2,000 heavy cavalry) toward Pamplona and other military forces under the command of John III marched in the direction of the latter city as well. The 15,000 to 16,000 Aragonese defenders were dispersed to defend various castles. The armies of Dauphin Francis and John III united near Pamplona and laid siege to this Duke of Alba-defended city beginning in early November. The 20,000-man French-Navarrese army attempted without success for several weeks to take Pamplona before 6,000 infantry under the command of the Duke of Nájera arrived to relieve the city. The poorly reinforced French-Navarrese army withdrew with Aragonese-Castilian and Navarrese forces in pursuit. The conquest of Navarre was, in effect, completed by the end of December.²⁸ On December 17, the Marqués de Comares was appointed to serve as the first viceroy of Navarre after it was connected to the Crown of Aragon. In March 1513, the Cortes of Navarre was convened. At this meeting of the Navarrese parliament, which all but the pro-French lords attended, Ferdinand of Aragon swore an oath to preserve the Navarrese rights and reconfirmed the kingdom's prerogatives and privileges (*fueros*) and excommunicated the Navarrese king. At the 1515 Cortes of Burgos, the Kingdom of Navarre was transferred from the Crown of Aragon to the Crown of Castile, thus determining the later status of the realm. Unsuccessful subsequent French-Navarrese military campaigns conducted between 1516 and 1521 were unable to change this status and Upper Navarre became a permanent part of Castile, then Spain.²⁹

What conclusions can we draw from the conquest of Navarre? Many similarities can be found in the ways in which Ferdinand of Aragon built his base of Navarrese support prior to the attack, summoned his supporters to conduct talks in Burgos immediately before the attack was launched, and organized his military forces and reinforcements. A couple of decades later, the treaties of Gyalu (1542) and Nyírbátor (1549) pertaining to Transylvania, the entry of the royal armies and the organization of reinforcements were conducted according to similar principles. It would be worthwhile for us to compare the organization

27 Pedro Esarte Muniain, *Navarra, 1512–1530. Conquista, ocupación y sometimiento militar, civil y eclesiástico*. Pamplona: Pamiela, 2014; for the size of the armies, see pages 109–111. For the Duke of Alba's military campaign, see the following work, which was originally published in Salamanca in 1513: Luis Correa, *Historia de la conquista del Reino de Navarra por el duque de Alba*. Pamplona: Imprenta de Longás y Ripa, 1843.

28 For the French-Navarrese counterattack, see Esarte Muniain, *Navarra, 1512–1530*, 112–153.

29 For the incorporation of the Kingdom Navarre into the Kingdom of Castile, see Jimeno Jurío, 'La guerra de 1512–1522'; Suárez Fernández, *Fernando el Católico y Navarra*.

of administration in the two territories as well: in the person of the Marqués de Comares an energetic magnate undertook the process of forming the new Navarrese administrative structure.³⁰ Indeed, the exclusion of the Navarrese monarch and Isabella, the dowager queen of Hungary, and her son from politics also yields parallels. The 1513 assembly of the estates of Navarre, the Cortes held in Pamplona, specifically the participation of the Navarrese magnates supporting Argonese–Castilian interests, can be compared to the manner in which the Habsburg administration attempted to organize the governance of Transylvania following the entry of Castaldo's armies.³¹

Could there have been anything else behind these parallels other than sober political considerations? There may have been considering the fact that King Ferdinand I of Hungary, who determined Habsburg strategy connected to the unification of Hungary at the highest level, was able to gain personal experiences in his youth. Ferdinand's grandfather described to him on a daily basis the events that had taken place in Navarre and the tactical maneuvers that had been employed there. The fact that the young *Infante* was likewise present when Ferdinand of Aragon held talks with the Navarrese estates in Burgos in the spring of 1512 and acquired personal experiences in the course of the integration of Navarre also serves to support this supposition.³² Ferdinand was able to call forth his youthful experiences connected to Navarre when as a mature monarch he formulated the policies and strategies implemented in the 1540s and 1550s with regard to the unification of Hungary.³³

The Low Countries 1567–1572

The long war in the Low Countries is customarily portrayed as one of the bloodiest, intensive, and large-scale military-history events in sixteenth-century Western history.³⁴ The Spanish intervention following the 1566 rebellion began in the summer of 1567 as the subjugation of a smaller military force in a province of Spain. The policy of treating the conflict in this way appeared to be successful until 1572, when – for reasons that will not be examined here – the rebellion escalated very quickly. Philip II of Spain, in his effort to quell the rebellion in the Low Countries – which he regarded as a Spanish Habsburg “core territory” – operated for around five years with military forces and strategies that were

30 Esarte Muniain, *Navarra, 1512–1530*, 153–180.

31 Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei*, 23–36.

32 Arsenio Lope Huerta, ‘El abuelo Fernando y los cuidados al nieto,’ in Alfredo Alvar Ezquerro (ed.), *Fernando I, 1503–1564: socialización, vida privada y actividad pública de un Emperador del Renacimiento*. Madrid: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004, 106.

33 Raymond Flagel, ‘Don Fernando en Flandes (1518–1521) Un príncipe sin tierra,’ in Alvar Ezquerro (ed.), *Fernando I, 1503–1564*, 253–272; Peer Schmidt, “‘Infans sum Hispaniarum.’ La difícil germanización de Fernando I,” in *ibid.*, 273–286.

34 This section is based on the following works: Henry Kamen, *El gran duque de Alba. Soldado de la España Imperial*. Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2004; Geoffrey Parker, *El ejército de Flandes y el camino Español. 1567–1659. La logística de la victoria y derrota de España en las guerras de los Países Bajos*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2000; and Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 774–833.

comparable to those that his uncle, King Ferdinand I of Hungary, had employed in Transylvania between 1549 and 1556. Although Philip II and Ferdinand I employed very different strategies after their initial, smaller-scale military interventions in the Low Countries and Transylvania, respectively, both failed to produce the desired results. Ferdinand withdrew his armed forces from Transylvania, while Philip II greatly increased the size of his army in the Low Countries and maintained this level of military strength in the region for many decades at a nearly unbearable expense.³⁵ Although the *fiscus* of Philip II was more or less able to pay the cost of maintaining an army of between 50,000 and 80,000 soldiers in the Low Countries, all specialists agree that the financial sacrifices made to retain control of this region pushed the Catholic Monarchy into a prolonged state of bankruptcy during the seventeenth century. Ferdinand's attempt to unite Hungary with much more limited financial and military resources failed in a similar manner within a couple of years. Ferdinand had not nearly enough financial and political power at his disposal to overcome Ottoman military superiority and prevent his authority in Transylvania from collapsing.³⁶

Following the rebellion in the Low Countries in 1566, Philip II ordered Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, 3rd Duke of Alba, the grandson of the conqueror of Navarre, to suppress the rebellion at the head of 49 companies composed of 8,795 soldiers.³⁷ A 1,250-man cavalry unit supplemented these infantry companies.³⁸ Philip II attempted to defend what was considered to be one of the Catholic Monarchy's most wealthy and important territories with this small army. Citing the previously mentioned words of Ascanio Centorio, can it be claimed that the Spanish forces – which were almost exactly the same size as those that Castaldo led into Transylvania in 1551 – that occupied the Low Countries were too big to be a legation and too small to be an army?

During these years, the Spanish royal army fought only a couple of skirmishes against the rebels in the Low Countries. Commanders typically avoided open-field engagements and – just as in the Hungarian borderlands – waged so-called “small wars,” or *guerrillas*.³⁹ During the initial phase of the conflict in the Low Countries that lasted until 1572, the opposing armies fought more significant engagements – such as the Battle of Jemmingen on July 21, 1568, and the Battle of Jodoigne on October 16, 1568 – with between 12,000 and 15,000 soldiers. The Ottoman and Habsburg military forces that fought the Battle of Palást were composed of between 10,000 and 12,000 soldiers and were thus only slightly smaller than those in the Low Countries.

35 For detail regarding these expenses, see Parker, *El ejército de Flandes y el camino Español*, 140–157; and Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 804–811.

36 See Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei*; For the 1555–1556 “endgame,” see B. Szabó, ‘Kinek példa – kinek tanulság’, 27–50; and Oborni ‘Bornemissza Pál és Dobó István távozása Erdélyből’.

37 René Quatrefages, *Los Tercios*. Madrid: Consejo Insular Mallorca, 1983, 197–198.

38 Parker, *El ejército de Flandes y el camino Español*, 692; Ruiz, *Los soldados del Rey*, 874–875.

39 János B. Szabó, ‘Aszimmetrikus hadviselés a XVI. században: magyarországi és a németalföldi hadszíntér példája’, *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 130:3 (2017) 827–854.

The armies that clashed in other battles fought in the Low Countries during this period were rather small, numbering from between 1,000 and 2,000 soldiers at the Battle of Oosterweel in March 1567 and at the Battle of Dahlen in April 1568 to between 3,500 and 4,000 soldiers at the Battle of Heiligerlee in May 1568. A Spanish force composed of around 8,000 men relieved the city of Goes on October 20 and 21, 1572.⁴⁰

The Eastern Part of the Kingdom of Hungary

Numerous factors impeded the implementation of the Treaty of Nyírbátor concluded in 1549 with the aim of reuniting the Kingdom of Hungary. Already by 1547, Ferdinand had begun to think that Charles V had abandoned him in his struggle against the Ottomans. The Gerard Veltwijck-led legation confirmed this opinion: Ferdinand could not count on sufficient money and military forces to defend his possessions in Hungary as a result of the Habsburg Empire's wars, and for this reason it was necessary to conclude a peace agreement in order to prevent further Ottoman attacks.⁴¹ Charles V himself recommended in political instructions written to Philip on January 18, 1548, that the heir to the Spanish throne preserve the peace concluded with the Ottomans in order to ensure that he would have the freedom to handle imperial affairs as he saw fit and reduce the chance that he would become involved in a multi-front war. Charles V also drew the attention of the future Philip II to the fact that the Spanish kingdoms were increasingly reluctant to provide financial and military support to the Holy Roman Empire and were even less inclined to offer such support to the Kingdom of Hungary.⁴²

Ferdinand's aspiration to unite the western and eastern parts of the Kingdom of Hungary and to build up the castle in Szolnok were incompatible with the political course that the emperor found to be useful in the conduct of relations with the Ottomans. According to Charles, Ferdinand had, on the one hand, provoked the Ottomans with his expansion in Hungary and, on the other hand, exaggerated the Turkish danger.⁴³ Emperor Charles V had already suggested to

40 Parker, *El ejército de Flandes y el camino Español*, passim.

41 Bart Severi, "'Denari in loco delle terre...'" Imperial Envoy Gerard Veltwijck and Habsburg Policy towards the Ottoman Empire, 1545–1547, in *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 54 (2001) 211–256; María José Rodríguez-Salgado, 'Eating Bread together: Hapsburg Diplomacy and Intelligence-Gathering in Mid Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in Emilio Sola Castaño and Gennaro Varriale (coord.), *Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Monografías Humanidades 56). Universidad de Alcalá, 2015, 97–99.

42 Instructions of Charles V to Philip II, January 18, 1548. For detailed information on these instructions, see Geoffrey Parker, *Felipe II. La biografía definitiva*. Barcelona: Planeta, 2016, 90–96, and Manuel Fernández Álvarez, *Carlos V, el César y el Hombre*. Madrid: Espasa Fórum, 1999, 705–719.

43 Charles V to Mary I of Hungary, December 16, 1550. Cited in María José Rodríguez Salgado, '¿Carolus Africanus? El Emperador y el Turco', in José Martínez Millán (coord.), *Carlos V y la quiebra del humanismo político en Europa (1530–1558)*. Madrid: Sociedad estatal para la conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001, 527, based on Karl Lanz's

Ferdinand in 1548 that he strengthen family ties by marrying one of his daughters to Prince Philip. In May 1550, Charles V informed Ferdinand via Mary of Hungary that he would like to resolve the issue of succession to the imperial throne by having him designate Philip as his successor and showing support for the election of the *Infante* as Holy Roman Emperor. However, this proposal aroused resentful opposition from both Ferdinand and his son, Archduke Maximilian. The predominantly Protestant imperial estates feared the prospect of *Infante* Philip, the embodiment of what they perceived to be the Spanish Catholic threat, becoming emperor rather than Ferdinand or Maximilian, who appeared to maintain much more flexible attitudes toward the Reformation.⁴⁴

In December 1550, when the internal Habsburg dispute regarding succession issues became obvious even to outsiders at the Imperial Diet in Augsburg,⁴⁵ Charles explicitly accused Ferdinand of having deceived him with regard to the Hungarian question and in truth wanted to use him to support his new conquests, although with these steps he had violated the 1547 Habsburg–Ottoman peace agreement.⁴⁶ In response, Ferdinand asserted that Charles had already contravened the agreement with his capture of Mahdia – that is, that he had not paid much attention to the pact at a location that was more important to the Spanish – and emphasized the fact that the five-year truce concluded with the Ottomans would expire in the summer of 1552.⁴⁷

On March 9, 1551, Charles finally managed to reach a family pact, which Ferdinand I reluctantly signed and to which Maximilian was willing to agree only verbally. According to this agreement, Ferdinand and his son would have supported the election of Philip as Holy Roman Emperor and recognized the Italian territories that were under imperial authority. In exchange, Philip would have designated Maximilian as his successor to the Spanish throne and pledged not to interfere in the affairs of Hungary unless Maximilian or Ferdinand expressly asked him to do so.⁴⁸ It was thus hardly an accident that the implementation of the Treaty of Nyírbátor concluded on September 8, 1549, dragged on until June 1551, since the army that set forth to occupy the eastern part of Hungary was composed primarily of imperial soldiers and was commanded by imperial officers, while Ferdinand – as previously mentioned – provided his consent with regard to the issue of succession to the imperial throne only in March 1551.⁴⁹

famous source publication. László Bárdossy also touched upon this dispute: László Bárdossy, *Magyar politika a mohácsi vész után*. Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 314–317.

44 Álvarez, *Carlos V, el César y el Hombre*, 743–745.

45 Ferdinand Braudel, *A Földközi-tenger és a mediterrán világ II. Fülöp korában*, vol. 3. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó–Osiris Kiadó, 1996, 977–978.

46 *Ibid.*

47 For the dispute between Charles and Ferdinand with regard to the Hungarian question, see Rodríguez-Salgado, ‘¿Carolus Africanus? El Emperador y el Turco’, 521–530; and Rodríguez-Salgado, ‘Eating Bread together’.

48 Parker, *El ejército de Flandes y el camino Español*, 104–105; Friedrich Edelmayer, ‘Los hermanos, las alianzas dinásticas y la sucesión imperial’, in Alvar Ezquerro (ed.), *Fernando I, 1503–1564*, 170–179; Martínez, *Los soldados del Rey*, 271; Álvarez, *Carlos V, el César y el Hombre*, 705.

49 Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei*, 177–215.

After returning from the Imperial Diet at the end of March, Ferdinand ordered his troops in Hungary to assemble in Eger in preparation for action. Italian imperial officer Giovanni Battista Castaldo was appointed to serve as *locumtenens bellicus* at the head of this army, which was composed of 5,400 infantry and 1,400 cavalry, including 3,000 veteran Spanish soldiers.⁵⁰

The situation that awaited them in Transylvania was still not peaceful even after the sound of gun clatter, which had resounded throughout the previous year, had faded elsewhere. However, Friar George again overcame the difficulties he faced when royal emissaries András Báthory and Tamás Nádasdy arrived to assume control over the part of the country. At the same time, Queen Isabella and her followers did everything under their power to prevent Friar George from carrying out the stipulation of the Treaty of Nyírbátor. A diet was convened in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) on February 22 in order to hear the emissary of the sultan. However, the diet was unwilling to decide anything without the presence of friar George. Again only the supporters of the queen appeared at the subsequent deliberations held in Nagyenyed (Aiud, Romania) on March 22. During this assembly, the queen's followers dismissed the treasurer, who had already departed in the direction of Nagyenyed with army of 1,000 gun-equipped infantry and 600 cavalry, from his office and declared him to be disloyal.⁵¹ Friar George thus exercised authority at the subsequent diet held in Torda (Turda, Romania) in early May of 1551. The treasurer proclaimed an insurrection and drew the queen's troops into a siege ring in Gyulafehérvár. Queen Isabella initially fled to Szászsebes (Sebeș, Romania), then – after the entry of Castaldo's army into Transylvania in June prompted her to conclude that resistance was futile – signed a declaration of resignation on July 19, 1551. In this declaration, Isabella ceded the entire eastern part of Hungary and the Holy Crown to King Ferdinand I in the name of her son, John Sigismund. In exchange, the latter was granted the Duchy of Opole with an annual stipend of 25,000 gulden, while Isabella herself received 140,000 gold forints in return for the engagement gift that her late husband, King John, had given her in the form of castles, estates and royal proceeds.⁵² As a result, the royal emissaries were able to take control of castles that belonged to lords such as Péter Petrovics who had supported Isabella until that time, while Ferdinand's envoy in Constantinople prematurely announced to the sultan on July 18 that Habsburg forces had occupied the eastern part of Hungary, for which, in accordance with existing custom, the king was prepared to pay a tribute to the Ottoman ruler. Ottoman authorities placed the envoy under arrest and began organizing a punitive expedition.⁵³

50 Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben', 323–324. Cf. Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen*, 50–51.

51 Teréz Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát. Fráter György életútja (1482–1551)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2017, 210–213.

52 Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát*, 214–219.

53 Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, *„Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való”. A szultáni tanács Magyarországra vonatkozó rendeletei (1544–1545, 1552)*. Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2005, XLI.

In early July, Sultan Süleyman dispatched two armies to Transylvania in order to defend the country of Isabella and her son, though this intervention proved to be too late. Beylerbey Sokollu Mehmed arrived to the village of Szalánkemén (Stari Slankamen, Serbia) along the Danube River on August 3, though Isabella and her son left Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) along with Péter Petrovics three days later. Isabella had already ceremoniously turned the Holy Crown over to Ferdinand's emissaries in Felvinc (Unirea, Romania) and eventually took up residence in Kassa, where for almost a half year she waited in vain for Ferdinand, who had entered a period of severe political, military and financial crisis, to pay the stipulated compensation. Finally, in June 1552, Isabella returned to her former homeland, Poland.⁵⁴

Since Friar George continued to send the country's customary annual tribute to the Sublime Porte even after the departure of the queen dowager, the status quo endured in a nominal sense for a little while longer. However, the leadership of the Ottoman Empire nevertheless soon put Ferdinand's new administration to the test in the eastern part of the country: in the autumn, royal troops not only had to take and maintain possession over territories under the control of the Szapolyai dynasty, but had to defend them against a formidable Ottoman invasion as well.

SUMMARY

What are the lessons that may be drawn from the historical events introduced above? The described examples demonstrate that Castaldo's army was not merely a "big legation" or a weak army and that it was not a military force that during the age in question counted as significant and rational in size. There may have existed a conscious Habsburg strategy that based on previous military and political experiences as well as the rationalization of military financing served to gradually conquer or pacify a given territory. From this perspective, Castaldo's army can obviously not be handled separately from the subsequent royal military forces under the command of Sforza Pallavicini and Erasmus Teuffel or from the Moritz von Sachsen-led troops stationed in Győr, just as could be seen in the case of the expeditionary forces that marched against Naples, Navarre and the Low Countries. It can be shown through the strategy employed by the Habsburg administration that Ferdinand engaged in very serious military-organization activity between 1550 and 1553 in the interest of occupying the eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary. More and more units received important duties as part of the effort to unite the country and the failure of this endeavor was the product of complex causes.

The Hungarian theater of war clearly represented a very significant priority in the policies of Ferdinand I between 1549 and 1553. The presence of Spanish and

54 Lajos Szádeczky, *Isabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban 1552–1556*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1888, 3–4; Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát*, 219–220.

Italian military leaders (Aldana, Pallavicini, Castaldo) and the several thousand Spanish and Italian mercenaries under their command also suggests that even at this time Charles V supported his younger brother's Hungarian policy.⁵⁵ The three military leaders and other important Spanish and Italian senior officers never regarded themselves merely as the servants of Ferdinand I, since they termed themselves to be the military leaders of His Imperial Majesty.⁵⁶ They owed loyalty primarily to Charles V and only secondarily to Ferdinand I. It is a fact that some of these military leaders were forced to face a challenge in East Central Europe that none of their previous experiences could help them overcome, namely the extremely well-organized and by Western standards shockingly large, powerful and fearsome Ottoman military. However, it cannot be an accident that those who came from Western Europe more or less successfully held their own position in Hungary and later returned to the service of the Catholic Monarchy. These officers and senior officers later utilized the experiences they had gained in the Hungarian theater of war in the struggles waged against the Ottomans in the Mediterranean region and had successful military careers. The destinies of Bernardo de Aldana and Álvaro de Sande following their expeditions in Hungary provide outstanding examples of this.⁵⁷

55 Zoltán Korpás, *V. Károly és Magyarország*. Budapest: Századvég, 2008.

56 For more on Pallavicini, see Korpás 'Ámi a magyarországi hadjárat után történt'; for more on Álvaro de Sande, see Zoltán Korpás, 'Álvaro de Sande hadjárata Trencsén vármegyében – 1545,' in Lilla Krász and Teréz Oborni (eds.), *Redite ad Cor. Tanulmányok Sahin-Tóth Péter emlékére*. Budapest: Eötvös Kiadó, 2008, 199–210; for more on Bernardo de Aldana, see Korpás 'Egy spanyol zsoldosvezér levelei a XVI. század közepén vívott magyarországi háborúkról. Adalékok Bernardo de Aldana magyarországi tevékenységéhez (1548–1552)', *Fons* 4:1–2 (1999) 3–129.

57 Korpás, 'Álvaro de Sande hadjárata Trencsén vármegyében'; Korpás, 'Ámi a magyarországi hadjárat után történt', Korpás, *V. Károly és Magyarország*, 205–262.

Mónika F. Molnár*

ISABELLA AND HER ITALIAN CONNECTIONS

When dealing with the Italian relations of Isabella Jagiellon one has to speak first of all about the role of her Italian mother, Bona Sforza. She was not only a tender mother, but also a supporter and counselor of her daughter during her lifetime. Isabella inherited from her a number of graceful characteristics of Italian nature, as testified by Bishop of Nocera Paolo Giovio (1483–1552), a contemporary historiographer, physician and museologist from Como: “*Isabella fanciulla di virile et erudito ingegno; e quel che molto importò per allettare l'animo di lui* [i.e., the Polish king] *amabilissima per vaghezza Italiana e per leggiadria Polonica.*”¹ Furthermore, Isabella became acquainted with Italian Renaissance culture through her mother. Like Queen Bona, Isabella also made many efforts to maintain this culture in a totally alien, Central European milieu. Her court frequently included many courtesans inherited directly from Bona Sforza. Taking into consideration the above facts, I first investigate the role of Bona Sforza in Isabella's life. Moreover, I analyze some of the Italian contacts of their family, people who played an important role in political or court life in Kraków or in Transylvania, using lesser-known primary sources. Finally, I present some similarities in the destiny of the Italian queen and mother Bona Sforza and that of her daughter Isabella Jagiellon.

BONA SFORZA (1494–1557) AND HER INFLUENCE

It is a well-known fact that before becoming queen of Hungary, Isabella was educated at the court of her father, King Sigismund I of Poland (ruled 1506–1548), in Kraków. This court was largely influenced by the king's Italian wife, Bona Sforza. The Sforza princess originated from a prominent Italian noble family. She

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1 Paolo Giovio, *Delle istorie del suo tempo*, translated by Lodovico Domenichi. Venezia: Al Segno della Concordia, 1608, 547.

was born from the union of Gian Galeazzo Sforza and Isabella of Aragon² (her maternal grandmother was thus Ippolita Maria Sforza) in 1494, an extremely unlucky year. Indeed, 1494 was the year when Charles VIII of France attacked the Italian Peninsula. During the following Italian Wars (1494–1559), the Italian states could not protect their independence from French and Spanish domination.³ Bona Sforza's family was also a direct victim of these wars, since Bona Sforza's father, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, died at the age of 25 in October 1494, when Bona was just eight months old. According to many contemporary chroniclers like Machiavelli, Guicciardini and Domenico Malipiero, his death was due to poisoning ordered by his uncle and regent of Milan, Ludovico Maria Sforza (also known as Lodovico il Moro). Lodovico il Moro had made some previous efforts to obtain the Duchy of Milan from Gian Galeazzo. After the death of Gian Galeazzo, the infant Bona Sforza and her mother had to renounce the throne of Milan and escape to Naples, to the court of their relative Frederic II of Aragon. As compensation the ladies received from Ludovico Sforza, who had also been the Duke of Bari since 1479, some territories in Puglia and Calabria. This story may remind us of the fate of Isabella Jagiellon, who would receive the duchies of Oppeln and Ratibor from her enemy, Ferdinand I (1526–1564), in exchange for renouncing the throne of the Principality of Transylvania.

In Bari, Isabella of Aragon started to build a court by inviting numerous humanists and physicians into her service. Despite having her own court and relative independence Isabella of Aragon was always dissatisfied with her status of victim of historical circumstances. Thus as a little girl, Bona was inspired by both her mother's powerful personality and the tension that grew inside her as a result of her fate. Bona trusted her mother wholeheartedly and started to transform her own personality in an effort to emulate that of her mother.⁴ Bona's education in Bari was overseen personally by her mother, as decades later she would educate her own daughter Isabella in Kraków. Bona Sforza was educated in the spirit of Renaissance humanism: she studied history, law, theology and the natural sciences, besides receiving instruction in dancing and singing. She also spoke fluent Spanish and Latin.⁵ Later on Isabella of Aragon assigned the task of educating Bona to Crisostomo Colonna, who described his pupil in 1516 with the following words: *"molto colta, di temperamento sanguigno, di altezza media, né troppo magra né troppo grassa, di buona indole, conosce quattro libri di Virgilio, molte lettere di Cicerone, diversi epigrammi, sa a memoria il Petrarca,*

2 Achille Dina, *Isabella of Aragon duchessa di Milano e di Bari, 1471–1524*. Milano: Tip. S. Giuseppe, 1921.

3 Michael Mallett and Christine Shaw, *The Italian Wars, 1494–1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Pearson, 2012.

4 Gerardo Cioffari, 'Bona Sforza. Aspetti religiosi ed umanitari della sua personalità', in *La Regina Bona Sforza tra Puglia e Polonia. Atti del Convegno promosso dall'Associazione culturale "Regina Bona Sforza" sotto il patrocinio dell'Regione Puglia della Provincia, del Comune e dell'Univesità di Bari*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1987, 70.

5 Krzysztof Żaboliński, 'La Regina Bona e la sua corte (Królowa Bóna i jej dwór)', in *Bona Sforza "Una principessa italiana sul trono di Polonia."* Pessano: Mimpe-Docete, 2004, 30.

scrive e parla in modo particolarmente dotto."⁶ Bona was acquainted with Latin literature and history, she was a good dancer and rider, and a passionate hunter. She started to become familiar with the art of governance by learning how the Kingdom of Naples functioned. She would use this knowledge later, as the wife of King Sigismund of Poland so efficiently that an Italian diplomat wrote about her in 1532: "*la rezina... è fatta onnipotente et ha tolto tutta l'autorità al marito.*"⁷ Bona's mother did not give up the hope of reacquiring the Duchy of Milan even after Ludovico Moro lost power in 1500 and when he died in 1508. For this reason Isabella tried to marry her daughter to Massimiliano Sforza, the first-born son of Ludovico il Moro. Massimiliano became Duke of Milan in 1513, using the chaotic situation caused by the Italian Wars between France and Spain. However, in 1515 the Duchy of Milan was occupied again by Francis I of France.⁸ Following these events, Princess Bona was advised by the husband of her great aunt Bianca Maria Sforza, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I, regarding her marriage plans. Maximilian suggested that she marry King of Poland Sigismund I Jagiellon, who had recently lost his first wife, Barbara Szapolyai. Taking this advice, the 25-year-old Bona Sforza married the Polish king, who was 51 years old, in April 1518. Their first daughter, Isabella, was born on January 18 of the following year. Bona, who was named after her paternal grandmother, Bona of Savoya (wife of Galeazzo Maria Sforza in the years 1468–1476), followed the family tradition when she gave the name Isabella of Aragon, the name of her mother, to the newborn Isabella Jagiellon.

On the one hand, many contemporary writers condemned Bona Sforza for her behavior as a young wife of her old husband, Sigismund. According to a Milanese manuscript, probably from the seventeenth century, she was criticized for three things in Poland: her *monetae falsae*, *facies picta* and *vulva non stricta*.⁹ The first refers to the supposition that there had been fake coins mixed in with Bona's dowry, the second suggests that the Italian princess introduced the excessive use of cosmetics in Poland and the third alludes to the reputation of girls coming from Italian ruling families for not having lived an ascetic life before marriage.

On the other hand, other chroniclers wrote about Bona Sforza in a totally different manner. These sources emphasized how much Bona had changed when arriving to the court of Kraków: she became graceful, she initiated changes to both domestic and foreign policy, she revitalized cultural life and tried to reform the royal court in Kraków, obviously to her own taste in an Italian manner. The energetic, ambitious, proud and determined young queen soon managed

6 Henryk Barycz, 'Bona Sforza, regina di Polonia', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 11. Roma, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1969, http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/bona-sforza-regina-di-polonia_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/ (accessed on March, 1, 2020).

7 Barycz, 'Bona Sforza'.

8 Bona fought for the throne of Milan even while living in Poland.

9 György Domokos, 'Izabella királyné levelei a Modenai Állami Levéltárban', *Turul* 87:1 (2014) 25; Abou-el-Haj Rifa'at, 'Ottoman Diplomacy at Karlowitz', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 87:4 (1967) 498–512.

to take control over her aging king. This fact was noticed already in 1525 by contemporary political actors, who wrote that the Italian queen had virtually cast a spell over her husband.¹⁰ Living on Wawel Hill, the site of one of the largest royal courts in Europe, Bona could not only take part in the reception of ambassadors from the Ottoman Empire, Russia, the Kingdom of Hungary and countries in Western Europe, but was also able to play an active role in political decision-making. Her strategy was always to collect information from different sources and to adapt her decisions to the actual situation.¹¹ Although normally the royal orators as diplomats worked under the authority of the royal chancellery and were therefore Polish by nationality, some exceptions to this rule are known. For instance, the Italian Ludovico Alifio enjoyed the royal couple's trust to such a great degree that he was elected to the position of chancellor. Moreover, Queen Bona also trusted the Italian lawyers Giambattista Ferdinando from Bari (who later gained noble rank in Poland) and Antonio Laterciano from Taranto.¹²

Having been educated in the spirit of Renaissance humanism, Bona Sforza influenced through her own taste the culture and activities of patronage of the Jagiellonian court as well.¹³ In this respect, her helpers were the members of her court brought from Italy to the very different environment in Poland. The queen was accompanied by, among others, 13 Italian ladies-in-waiting, including Beatrice Zurlo and Lucrezia Alifio, sister of the above-mentioned lawyer and royal chancellor Ludovico Alifio. Some of the ladies in her service, such as Beatrice Roselli, Porzia Arcamone and Laura Effrem, married Polish noblemen.¹⁴ Her own Italian tailors also composed part of her inner court. As Queen Bona liked to eat well, the kitchens on Wawel Hill were also dominated by Italians. The head of the kitchens was Cola Maria de Charis from Naples, who later received knighthood from King Sigismund I. Most of the ingredients used in the royal kitchens were also imported from the queen's homeland: spices, olive oil, oranges, lemons and rice regularly arrived to Kraków from Italy.¹⁵ The person responsible for the royal gardens and stables was a certain Tarambino from Ferrara. Similarly, Bona's doctors and pharmacists also came from different parts of Italy, e.g., Giovanni Andrea Valentino came from Modena, Cola Categnani

10 Barycz, 'Bona Sforza, regina di Polonia'.

11 Gerardo Cioffari, *Bona Sforza: donna del Rinascimento tra Italia e Polonia*. Bari: Levante, 2000, 82. The description of the atmosphere of the court of Kraków in 1527: "*Qui sono oratori francesi, angli, ongari, et de re Ferdinando, sono ancora li ordinarii nuncii tartari, moschi, vallachi; el re de Svetia ha mandato oratori... Qui ne la corte nostra, piena de varie nationi, se dicono molte cose...*" (letter from G. A. Valentino to the Duke of Mantova Federico II Gonzaga).

12 Cioffari, *Bona Sforza*, 83–87.

13 Wojciech Szymon Rothbard, *The Cultural Influence and Artistic Patronage of Queen Bona Sforza in Early 16th Century Poland–Lithuania*. Master's thesis, Budapest: Central European University, 2010.

14 Cioffari, *Bona Sforza*, 87.

15 Żaboliński, 'La Regina Bona e la sua corte,' 33.

from Brindisi and three physicians – Iacopo Zofo, Bartolomeo Minerva and Iacopo Ferdinando – arrived from Bari.¹⁶

The queen's court musician and chapel composer who stayed in Poland for 30 years and greatly influenced the development of Polish music was Alessandro Pesenti from Verona. The Italian who had the biggest impact on Bona's life was her confessor, Padre Marco della Torre. This Franciscan monk, who earned his university degree in Padua, had the primary task of governing the queen's court, though he also became Bona's counsellor, thus acquiring a significant degree of political power in Poland. As far as foreign affairs were concerned, Padre della Torre tried to strengthen the relationship between Poland and the Republic of Venice. In domestic affairs he concentrated on religious questions, notably impeding the spread of Protestantism in his new country. The Italian community of merchants, artists and other employees of the court found in him a leader who also administered to them spiritually at a separate chapel in the Franciscan Church of Kraków.¹⁷

Bona Sforza was connected most closely to cities in southern Italy such as Bari and Naples, though culturally speaking she had important contacts with the courts in Ferrara and Mantua in northern Italy. The Gonzaga court of Mantua was led by Isabelle d'Este, one of the most educated ladies in contemporary Italy and a relative of Bona with whom she had a very close relationship. The regular exchange of gifts between the Isabella d'Este and Bona were signs of their friendship.

Due to her many contacts and multifaceted interests, Queen Bona established a regular postal service between Poland and a series of Italian cities, such as Milan, Venice, Florence, Ferrara, Mantua, Modena, Naples and Bari. The queen had special officials for each and every personal and political issue in Italy.¹⁸ Her most important goal was to become politically independent from the Habsburgs and she also used the marriage of her first-born daughter to reach this objective. Unlike her mother, Isabella of Aragon, a faithful friend of the Spanish Habsburgs, Bona Sforza became the fiercest enemy of Ferdinand I Habsburg, forming a political bond with Alfonso I d'Este, ally of the French. In the years 1547–1548 she attempted to form a direct alliance with France as well.¹⁹

In her private life Bona became a faithful and loving wife, and devoted mother of six children. She also attempted assiduously to maintain morale at the court. She was especially fond of her first-born daughter, Isabella, who had been named – as mentioned above – after her mother. Unlike her mother, who had betrothed Bona to Sigismund I Jagiellon following the advice of Habsburg Emperor Maximilian I, Bona Sforza pursued a strongly anti-Habsburg policy, offering the hand of her daughter Isabella to King John I Szapolyai of Hungary,

16 Nicola Mongelli, 'Iacopo Ferdinando barese a Cracovia, medico di Bona e Sigismondo e il suo "Tractatus" (1543)', *Archivio Storico Pugliese* 34 (1981) 211–280.

17 Żaboliński, 'La Regina Bona e la sua corte', 34.

18 Her agent in the court of Mantua, for instance, was Giacomo da Montagna until his death in 1546.

19 Barycz, 'Bona Sforza, regina di Polonia'.

rival to Ferdinand I Habsburg, in an evident sign of this policy. The wedding of 20-year-old Isabella was commemorated among others by Jacopo Ferdinando da Bari, the above-mentioned physician of Queen Bona.²⁰

Isabella's 52-year-old new husband tried to do his best to make his young wife feel at home in her new environment. Isabella may have been less concerned about her husband's age due to the example of her own parents: her father, King Sigismund, was the same age when Isabella was born as King John was at the time of their wedding. Isabella likely received precise instructions from her mother regarding how to behave with her husband in light of their big age difference.

ITALIAN FAMILY LINKS

Besides her mother, Bona Sforza, there were also other Italian relatives of Isabella who could support her in times of need. One has to consider that Isabella had many Italian relatives, not only among the Sforzas, the Savoyas and the Aragones, but also the Estes of Ferrara. In order to illustrate this Italian familial network, I would like to quote a lesser-known, recently discovered source. In 2013, the Vestigia Research Group led by György Domokos at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University found while doing research in Modena the correspondence of Isabella with the Este court of Ferrara from the years 1540–1541. Queen Isabella exchanged letters with her third cousin, Duke of Ferrara Ercole II d'Este (1534–1559).²¹ In the first letter, written in Buda on March 31, 1540, she wrote mostly about the export of grain. In the third letter, dated March 15, 1541, however, she thanked the duke for the greetings he had sent following the birth of her son and the condolences he had expressed when her husband had died. In the remaining part of the letter Queen Isabella described in detail the hopeless situation that had emerged as a result of the Habsburg attack and subsequent Ottoman "assistance."²² She expressed the desperate need to strengthen relations with her relatives in the hope of receiving advice and help. Contrary to the commercial letters written in Latin from a year before, she wrote these letters in Italian and emphasized the family relationship already in the salutation, using the form *consanguineo nostro carissimo et honorevolissimo*, and when signing she used the moving formula: *bon sorella Ysabella regina*.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA CASTALDO

Giovanni Battista Castaldo²³ was another Italian who exercised a significant impact on the life of Isabella even if he was not in her service. On the contrary, Castaldo took part of the Habsburg army, thus he played an important role in

20 Mongelli, 'Iacopo Ferdinando barese a Cracovia', 238–242.

21 Domokos, 'Ízabella királyné levelei'.

22 See the article by Teréz Oborni in this volume.

23 Mariano D'Ayala, 'Vita di Giambattista Castaldo, famosissimo guerriero del secolo XVI', *Archivio Storico Italiano* Serie 3 45:1 (1867) 86–124.

the queen's life as an adversary. Castaldo was born in 1493 in Nocera (Campania) to a noble family. He became a *condottiere* in the service of Emperor Charles V, and he excelled with his military actions both in the Italian Wars and elsewhere. As is well-known, in 1551 Castaldo entered Transylvania and without resistance occupied the principality on orders from Emperor Charles V and his brother, King Ferdinand I Habsburg.²⁴

As a result of the previously mentioned Vestigia Research Group project, Chiara Carpentieri found at the Biblioteca Ambrosiana of Milan a manuscript that contains extraordinary documents concerning the military campaign by general Castaldo against the Turks in the years 1551–1552. Carpentieri translated and published two documents from that codex, one written in Latin and another in Italian. These sources are extremely interesting from our point of view, as they show that Isabella – probably as a result of her Italian education – trusted Castaldo so much that she gave to him the Holy Crown of Hungary in his capacity as a representative of King Ferdinand I. This Italian letter was written in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) on July 19, 1551, bearing the title *Documento che certifica il passaggio della corona del regno d'Ungheria*. It can be read as one of the preparatory texts for the Treaty of Alba Iulia (July 21, 1551) in which Queen Isabella transferred the jurisdiction over Hungary, Transylvania, Croatia and Dalmatia to King Ferdinand I Habsburg. The document guarantees that Castaldo, Tamás Nádasdy, and András Báthory would personally take the crown to King Ferdinand in the capacity of *supremi regni Hungarorum capitanei*.²⁵ Following this event, as agreed with Friar George, Castaldo accompanied the queen from Alba Iulia to Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) and on July 21 Isabella gave him the crown and the other regalia. These facts are well-known in Hungarian historiography, but this letter is an additional source regarding the events.

The second letter is dated June 4, 1553, and was written by Isabella in Italian vernacular. Isabella, after being deprived of the title of queen, lived far from Transylvania, in Krzepice,²⁶ Poland. In this letter, a worried Isabella wrote to Castaldo asking him to keep her better informed of events.²⁷ It is no surprise that Isabella was worried, as Castaldo's situation in Transylvania was indeed

24 Lajos Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben', *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 9:1 (1896) 299–325.

25 Chiara Maria Carpentieri, 'Minima hungarica. Jegyzetek a lombardiai könyvtárakban őrzött, magyar vonatkozású XV–XVII. századi kéziratokról és nyomtatványokról', in György Domokos, Norbert Mátyus and Armando Nuzzo (eds.), *Vestigia. Mohács előtti magyar források olasz könyvtárakban*. Piliscsaba: Pázmány Péter Katolikus Egyetem Bölcsész- és Társadalomtudományi Kara, 2015, 31–45, <http://vestigia.hu/vestigia.pdf>. 40 (accessed on March 1, 2020).

26 Lajos Szádeczky, *Isabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban, 1552–1556*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1888; Endre Veress, *Erdély fejedelmi interregnuma: Izabella királyné diplomáciai működése, 1551–1556*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1899.

27 "Non voglia mancar di farlo, assicurandoLa che tanto mi sarà grato questo e più, come se al presente avessimo da la M.tà del ser.mo de' Romani tutto quello è tenuta darmi; perchè di quello siamo sicurissime: che sempre avremo S. V. per protettor nostro, non mancherà di esserne dato. Ma della salute Sua non abbiamo quella certezza che noi desideriamo di aver, della quale rendasi V. S. sicura che così siamo curiosi, come siamo della propria del nostro ill.mo figlio, per non dir mo più, la quale desideriamo al pari della vita. Procuri adunque V. S. di star sano con tener memoria di noi e viva felice

critical. After the murder of Friar George in December 1551, Castaldo – as representative of King Ferdinand – in effect lost Transylvania. Formally this would happen only later, in 1556, when Isabella and John Sigismund returned to Transylvania.

In 1553 Castaldo's situation became unbearable for three reasons: first, because of the hopelessness of his attempt to resist the Ottoman offensive led by Kara Ahmed Pasha; second, due to the rebellion of his own unpaid troops; and third, because of the antipathy of the Transylvanians towards him. The Transylvanians even restarted the negotiations with the sultan with permission of Castaldo himself. Despite Castaldo's difficult position, Isabella still looked at him as the guarantor of the clauses of the Treaty of Alba Iulia of 1551 and an intermediary between her and King Ferdinand. For these two reasons, in her letter Isabella refers to Castaldo as her protector and asks him to keep her informed about his health, which was "as important to her as that of her own son."²⁸ However, Isabella's hopes were not fulfilled, since Ferdinand, who was clearly dissatisfied with the military results of the Italian general, recalled Castaldo from Transylvania and sent him to Belgium during the spring of 1553. Later Castaldo served as a member of the government of the Duchy of Milan, where he died in 1563.

THE COURT OF GYULAFEHÉRVÁR AND ITS ITALIAN PRESENCE

Isabella learned from her mother how to be a protector of her compatriots. As I have shown above, the support and closeness of Italians were always important for Bona Sforza, thus she built her court in Kraków based on the entourage that had accompanied her from Italy.²⁹ Moreover, she and her husband, King Sigismund, actively supported many different forms of Italian visual and decorative art: jewelry, textiles, garden architecture and sculpture, and their court followed Italian tastes. Her activity as a patron of the arts and the modernization of the court introduced Italian Renaissance style to Polish cultural life,³⁰ which had previously been under German influence. Queen Isabella evidently was influenced both by the Polish Renaissance court of her mother and later also by the Hungarian Renaissance milieu that had developed at the court of Buda during the reign of King Matthias Corvinus. During her time in Transylvania, Isabella consciously transformed Gyulafehérvár into a small-scale version of Wawel Hill and Buda Castle.³¹ Besides the artisans who transformed Gyulafehérvár for representational

e longa vita. Da Crzepicze, a li 4 di giugno 1553. D. V. S.ria, come sorella, Isabella." Carpentieri, 'Minima hungarica', 44.

28 "Ma della salute Sua non abbiamo quella certezza che noi desideriamo di aver, della quale rendasi V. S. sicura che così siamo curiosi, come siamo della propria del nostro ill.mo figlio, per non dir mo più, la quale desideriamo al pari della vita." Carpentieri, 'Minima hungarica', 44–45.

29 Żabolićki, 'La Regina Bona e la sua corte', 33.

30 Rothbard, 'The Cultural Influence', 62.

31 Szabolcs Ö. Barlay, *Romon virág: fejezetek a Mohács utáni reneszánszról*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1986.

purposes, there were also a number of Italian *condottieri* and engineers³² who worked on the modernization of the castles and fortresses throughout Transylvania.³³ Isabella had many Italian courtiers in Gyulafehérvár such as her Italian secretary, Paolo Savorgnano.

The best-known Italian man at her court was probably the doctor and theologian Giorgio Biandrata. Biandrata was born in Saluzzo, studied medicine in Montpellier and Pavia and finally earned his doctorate in gynecology. He dedicated his scientific manual (*Gynaeceorum ex Aristotele et Bonaciolo a Georgio Blandrata medico Subalpino noviter excerpta de fecundatione, gravitate, partu et puerperio*) to Bona Sforza and to Isabella Jagiellon. He was invited in the court of Sigismund I in 1540 to be the personal physician of Queen Bona Sforza. Isabella “inherited” Biandrata from her mother in 1544, when he moved from Kraków to Gyulafehérvár. Biandrata remained with Isabella until 1552 as her court physician and advisor.³⁴ In 1547 Biandrata was already a renowned figure who was described by a Hungarian contemporary eyewitness the following way: “uomo di grande signorilità, nato all'amicizia..., altamente apprezzato a Venezia per la sua dottrina e pratica del mondo, nome pronunciato in Italia non solo con onore ma anche con orgoglio.”³⁵

After leaving Transylvania, Biandrata returned there once more during Queen Isabella's lifetime. Biandrata traveled from Pińczów (Poland) to Transylvania in June 1559 to treat the dying Queen Isabella. Following the queen's death, Biandrata returned to Poland. With the passage of time, Biandrata became known throughout Europe for his diplomatic skills and the originality of his religious ideas.³⁶ However, since he was persecuted by both the Lutherans and the Calvinists, in 1563 Biandrata accepted the invitation of John Sigismund to move back to Transylvania in order to become the physician and advisor of the prince. Biandrata remained in Transylvania even following the death of the young ruler in 1571 and died in Gyulafehérvár in 1588.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion one can make two assertions: first, that Isabella's Italian “network” was more complex than was previously thought, and even the most recent research may provide further important details with regard to this topic; and

32 Leone Andrea Maggiorotti, *Gli Italiani nell'Architettura Militare dell'Epoca Moderna e Contemporanea*, vol. 2, *Gli architetti militari. L'opera del genio italiano all'estero*. Roma: Libreria dello Stato, 1932.

33 Gianluca Masi, *I rapporti tra il Granducato di Toscana e il Principato di Transilvania (1540–1699)*. PhD diss., Ca' Foscari University of Venice, 2013.

34 Domenico Caccamo, *Eretici italiani in Moravia, Polonia, Transilvania (1558–1611): Studi e documenti* (Biblioteca del “Corpus Reformatorum Italicorum” 2). Firenze: Sansoni, 1970, 22.

35 Antal Verancsics to Gáspár Békés, May 29, 1547: László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. VI (*Vegyes levelek 1538–1549*) (Monumenta Hungariae Historica I; Scriptores 9). Pest: Eggenberger, 1860, 256.

36 For this aspect of Biandrata's life, see the article by Mihály Balázs in this volume.

second, that Isabella's destiny shows some interesting similarities to the fates of her direct Italian female lineage, Bona Sforza and Isabella of Aragon. She married an older sovereign in order to give birth to a male child, just as Bona Sforza did. Moreover, she fought desperately for herself and for her son to regain the rights that she had lost, just as Isabella of Aragon, her grandmother, had done. From some perspectives, their destinies were similar to those of Italy and Hungary, since after the flourishing medieval and Renaissance period, both countries would become the theaters of wars fought by the neighboring great powers.

BACK TO THE FAMILY – ISABELLA IN POLAND, 1552–1556

In 1551, after signing the agreement of Nyírbátor with Ferdinand, Isabella, widowed queen of Hungary, and her son John Sigismund left the kingdom, first stopping in Košice (Kassa in Hungarian), then moving on to Silesia. However, the city of Opole was not able to sustain the royal inhabitants; Isabella and her son spent the following period in Poland before returning to Transylvania in 1556. During these difficult times, Isabella negotiated with Ferdinand and others and also tried to secure the support of her brother, the king of Poland, her mother and others. This interesting and difficult period of Isabella's life has been the subject of several more-detailed studies in the past.¹ This paper reexamines the Polish sojourn of Isabella with a focus on familial relations and the position of Isabella within her family, among her blood relatives and towards the dynasty that she "left" after marrying a Hungarian king from the Szapolyai family. Some examples will be shown of how the familial dynamics and the status of the Jagiellonian queen of Hungary changed amid these special circumstances.²

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1 This period, and especially its diplomatic aspects, was the subject of the extensive but old works of Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, especially book 5, 329–418; Alfons Huber, 'Die Erwerbung Siebenburgens durch König Ferdinand I im Jahre 1551 und Bruder Georgs Ende', *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 75 (1889) 481–545; Alfons Huber, 'Die Verhandlungen Ferdinands mit Isabella von Siebenburgen 1551–1555', *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 78 (1892) 1–39; Lajos Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban, 1552–1556*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1888; Janusz Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka Polski w połowie XVI wieku (1540–1571)*. Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1932; Anna Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August: król polski i wielki książę litewski: 1520–1562*, 2nd ed. Kraków: Universitas, 2010, especially 220–236; more recently Angelika Orgona, 'Jan Zygmunt. János Zsigmond lengyelországi udvara', *Folia Historica* 21 (2000) 6–32.

2 The research for this paper was partially conducted as part of the project *Jagiellonians: Dynasty, Memory, Identity* funded by the ERC Starting Grant no. 335814 led by Natalia Nowakowska at the University of Oxford.

By marriage, the woman officially moved to another family, usually giving up her rights to parental property and succession, and, at least in legal terms, exchanging it for a new familial and dynastic identity. This was Isabella's situation when she married John I Szapolyai, king of Hungary, formally expressed also in the marital contract.³ This did not mean the end of all contacts, of course. Besides the formal and legal aspect, the cutting off of ties with the previous family and patrimony is also used as a rhetorical argument by Isabella when explaining her reluctance to leave Hungary after the death of her husband (*consideret se ex Regno Polonie esse expeditam, esse autem Regni Hungarie Reginam*) together with her son, the Hungarian heir.⁴ However, the peculiar position in the following years led Isabella not only to insist on her royal status independent of her original family, but also to invoke and re-activate those kinship ties to a greater – and perhaps unexpected – extent. The design of familial dynamics became even more special when she returned to the parental country for a certain period.

Historians have often commented on close familial relations between Isabella and her parents, King Sigismund and Queen Bona, which is also reflected in their correspondence from the years that Isabella spent in Hungary and Transylvania. Their ties were considered stronger than usual, although contemporary diplomatic and written exchange in general did not lack elements of familial rhetoric as a tool of persuasion. After the death of King John – when Isabella found herself in a difficult situation with the small child amid the divided local Hungarian power players, the claims of Ferdinand of Austria and the Turkish danger – her parents tried to help her through diplomacy, although were limited by the complicated situation in the region. Public and private motivations in Polish foreign policy towards Hungary had to be balanced.⁵

While the final decision for Isabella and her son to leave Transylvania came only in 1551, the possibility of her move (mostly within the Kingdom of Hungary) was repeatedly brought up, touched on and discussed at certain times during the previous decade. Already in 1541, Isabella considered an agreement with Ferdinand, which would mean leaving Buda with the baby boy and taking possession of Szapolyai patrimony in the northern part of the kingdom.⁶ Indeed, according to

3 Maciej Dogiel (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Regni Poloniae et Magni Ducatus Lithuaniae*, vol. 1. Vilnius: Ex Typographia Regia et Reipublicae, Collegii scholarum piarum, 1758, nos. 60–62, 136–140. For other documents issued by King John confirming the renunciation of both paternal and maternal succession rights by Isabella, see *ibid.*, nos. 63 and 65–68, 140–146.

4 Karolina Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 48. Roma: Institutum Historicum Polonicum Romae, 1960–1992, no. 387, 149 (1540).

5 For a recent summary of diplomatic and familial exchange after 1541, see Szymon Brzeziński, 'Dynastic Policy and its Limits: The Jagiellonians and Post-1541 Hungary', in Attila Bárány (ed.), *The Jagiellonians in Europe: Dynastic Diplomacy and Foreign Relations*. Debrecen: University of Debrecen "Lendület" Hungary in Medieval Europe Research Group, 2016, 209–217.

6 Legation of Imre/Emeric Bebek to Ferdinand on behalf of Isabella, Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (hereafter: AGAD) in Warsaw, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 7, fol. 165–169; edition in Péter Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri legationum sorozatának magyar vonatkozású iratai*, vol. 2. (1526–1541). Miskolc: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár, 2003, no. 192, 411–414; Ferdinand offered her the possibility of going to Pozsony/Bratislava or Nagyszombat/Trnava

the Treaty of Gyalu of December 29, 1541, (reportedly signed without Polish knowledge and agreement) Isabella was to go to the region of Spiš (Szepesség in Hungarian, Zips in German) with her son and receive an annual pension while giving up all castles in Hungary and Transylvania and relinquishing the Holy Crown to Ferdinand; but in the end this did not take place and the queen stayed with her son in Transylvania with the support of local dignitaries and the sultan.⁷ The possibility of leaving was discussed again in the summer of 1543, and then, importantly, in the years 1548–1549.⁸ One of the important factors was the death of Sigismund I in 1548, and the negotiations of Sigismund II Augustus with the House of Austria, together with their treaty with the Ottomans, which also implied an agreement on the issue of Hungary.⁹

The death of King Sigismund deprived Isabella and his other children of his help and support in these dangerous times, as Bona noted.¹⁰ The issue of the move came up already before Sigismund died and was being negotiated with Polish diplomatic assistance. In their first exchange, the new king promised his help and offered to his sister to return to Poland and to possibly marry again, but also urged her to be careful because of the internal conflicts in Transylvania and also because of the sultan's stand and to wait to reach consensus about her departure. He also recalled the importance of keeping the revenues from her castles and towns and taking all her possessions with her to Poland, which later proved to be a crucial problem.¹¹ Better conditions for Isabella as a regent were being negotiated, but she was skeptical. While the conflicting sides, Friar George and Péter Petrovics, both sent their *legationes* to Poland in late 1548, Isabella asked her brother to help her to go to Poland if necessary, and even her new marriage was discussed.¹² Isabella

with an annual pension and then hereditary possessions, see *ibid.*, no. 193, 414–417. Already in 1540, Sigismund suggested in a letter (October 30, Vilnius) to Isabella that she should go to Trenčín, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 9, fol. 35–36; edition in Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri legationum*, no. 175, 348–349.

7 The Treaty of Gyalu, December 29, 1541, in Roderich Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge. Fürstentum Siebenbürgen (1526–1690)*. Vienna: A. Holzhausen, 1911, no. 18, 95–98 (and related documents to 104). A discussion of the treaty and its aftermath in Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 44–50; and Teréz Oborni, A 'gyalui szerződés', in Teréz Oborni, *Udvar, állam és kormányzat a kora újkori Erdélyben (tanulmányok)*. Budapest: ELTE, 2011, 52–63.

8 Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 63, 65.

9 See a summary of the events and negotiations of 1548–1549 in Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 225ff.

10 Letter of Bona to Isabella, May 2, 1548, in Teki Górskiego, Biblioteka Kórnicka, Ms. 221, 405–410, especially 408: "*Itaque in tot tantisque malis ac periculis, quae nos undique circumstant, tanto nobis mors Serenissimi Regis ac patris omnium nostrum acerbior est, quanto magis et Serenitas vestra et certi liberi nostri, eius presentia, eius ope, eius tutela in hac orphanitate viduitateque nostra indigere videmur.*"

11 Already before Sigismund's death, Bona wrote to Isabella (March 9, 1548) about her return to Poland, which her envoy Filip Padniewski discussed with Bishop of Várad Friar George, see Teki Górskiego, Biblioteka Kórnicka, Ms. 221, 392. He promised to guide her to the border and Bona was looking forward to welcoming her, sending her envoy back to complete the negotiations. Legation of the king to his sister by Filip Padniewski, royal secretary, *ibid.*, 444–446, June 28, 1548.

12 Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 38, 68–69 (Stanisław Bojanowski, royal secretary to Albert of Prussia, Piotrków, November 6, 1548): "*Item Regina Hungariae Isabella*

relied on familial relations and the support of her mother and brother to some extent, but they had to consider the implications of their decisions for the position of Poland, thus once again having to reconcile the private, familial bonds with public interests, as Sigismund I had earlier been forced to do in the difficult period of 1540–1542.¹³ This is reflected in the ongoing exchange that occurred in 1549, when the Poles still preferred to support Isabella in Transylvania rather than in Poland and tried to strengthen her position there via diplomacy. Bishop Zebrzydowski's mission to Isabella advised maintaining a careful position (in order to avoid angering the sultan and thereby presenting a danger to Poland as well in that event of Isabella's departure) and recommended not leaving for Poland, where it would be hard to provide necessary living conditions as well, especially as Isabella would not be able to leave with all her possessions and even Queen Bona was already contemplating leaving for Italy.¹⁴ The agreement between Friar George and Ferdinand in the summer of 1549 counted on Isabella leaving, which did not, however, take place.¹⁵ She still turned to Poland as an option if necessary, but before diet in Alba Iulia allegedly urged: "I do not want to force any of you to do anything, I am not so stranded as not to have a place to hide with my son, but you do not have another Transylvania..."¹⁶

The Treaty of Prague between Sigismund Augustus and Ferdinand in 1549 meant neither an automatic end of Isabella's reign in Transylvania nor the renunciation of Poland's interests on the Danube. This difficult situation, Sucheni-Grabowska argues, could have served to strengthen Isabella's position with Sigismund Augustus as her protector, both at the time and in the future.¹⁷ Still, various internal conflicts and external threats in the end forced Isabella to

extrema sollicitudine urget, ut ex Ungaria in Poloniam reducatur. Sed hactenus non est constitutum, vel ad minus dilatum est negotium veteri mentione Ducis Bavariae, Episcopi Salzburgensis..."; Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 49, 187 (Ludovicus Montinus Mutinensis to Albert of Prussia from Piotrków, November 5, 1548): "*Et Petrus Kowicz [Petrovics] Ungharus non permittit Reginae Isabellae, quod discedat ex Transilvania pro habendo coniugio cum Archiepiscopo Saltzburgensi [Ernestus dux Bavariae]. Hic tamen eam expectamus.*"

13 See above, Brzeziński, 'Dynastic Policy and its Limits', 209–217.

14 Instruction of Sigismund Augustus for Zebrzydowski to Isabella, in AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 12, fol. 179–184, 184–186v, e.g.: "*Visum illis tandem fuit, quod sine magno discrimine rerumque suarum iactura Maiestas eius ex Transilvania discedere et ad Regnum nostrum venire non posset... Porro in hoc Regno nostro vix habere Maiestatem eius posse, ubi commode sit cum a nobis non ita multe possideantur, vix ut ipsi nos pro dignitate nostra sustentare queamus. Serenissima vero parens nostra in Italiam cogitat, quae eius cogitatio discessum ex Hungaria Maiestatis eius impeditura videtur. Quamobrem visum esse consiliariis nostris, a quorum sententia nos non libenter discedimus, magis ex commodo, dignitateque eius Maiestati fore, si pedem illinc non moverit...*" See also Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 70; Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 225–226.

15 The August 1, 1549, Treaty of Nyírbátor between Ferdinand and Queen Isabella; for the discussion surrounding this treaty, the original text of which was never found, see Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge*, no. 19, 110–113; Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 73.

16 Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 229–230 and note 35; Huber, 'Die Erwerbung', 502.

17 For the Treaty of Prague (and the so-called *Szapolyai Clause*), see Dogiel (ed.), *Codex diplomaticus Regni Poloniae*, vol. 1, 215. This is the reasoning of Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 228–231, as opposed to Pajewski and others.

leave with her son and they were forced to rely on the support (both material and diplomatic) of their family in Poland.¹⁸ Isabella signed the agreement with Ferdinand on July 19, 1551, in Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár in Hungarian).¹⁹ In return for the Hungarian crown, John Sigismund was to receive the duchies of Opole and Ratibor/Racziborz (with revenue of ca. 25,000 florins annually) and she was to get Münsterberg/Ziębice and Frankenstein/Ząbkowice in Silesia (valued at 140,000 florins) in exchange for her possessions in Hungary.

Before they approached their new estates, Isabella stayed with her son at the court in Košice for several months.²⁰ They set out on the journey via Poland, where they spent around a week in Kraków (from February 9, 1552) and at the turn of February and March met the Polish king in Krzepice. In March her short visit to Opole and the Silesian estates nevertheless only confirmed the fears of the previous inspection by Maciej Łobocki about the insufficient state of the residence and revenues to provide for the royal inhabitants in an appropriate way. Isabella's envoy reported to Ferdinand about her high hopes for a new living place (although various enemies of Ferdinand discouraged her from leaving Košice, she believed his words and went to an unknown place) and her disappointment after seeing the conditions in Opole, urging him to satisfy the conditions they agreed on and supply them with a proper place if her son was to marry Ferdinand's daughter.²¹ In another reply, Isabella's envoy, Maciej Łobocki, explained her situation to Ferdinand once again and informed him that she had to leave the duchy and stay with her mother, hoping that she would

18 For Isabella asking her brother for help, see AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 13, fol. 78ff.; reply of Sigismund Augustus to Isabella (September 24, 1549) in which he promises to help his sister, but cautions not to inform Süleyman about her intention to leave Transylvania because of possible negative reaction; cf. Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones*, vol. 39, especially 81, 83, 85, 86.

19 Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge*, no. 20–23, 114ff, text A (Isabella) 119–124.

20 From Košice Maciej Łobocki inspected the estates in Silesia and found them to be insufficient; Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 337. For more on the role of Łobocki, see Szymon Brzeziński, 'Maciej Łobocki. Egy 16. századi lengyel–magyar pálya', in Ildikó Horn and Gábor Várkonyi et al. (eds.), *Művészet és mesterség. Tisztelgő kötet R. Várkonyi Ágnes emlékére*, vol. 1. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2016, 123–137; for this stage of his life, see 135–136. On the first years of Isabella and John Sigismund in Poland, see Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 77–98.

21 For details regarding the legation of Isabella to Ferdinand (March 1552), see Biblioteka Jagiellońska (hereafter: BJ), manuscript 175/2, 50: "*Eo cum Illustrissimo communi sibi cum Maiestate vestra filio properabat, locum illum iam mente complectens, et satis idoneum ad habitandum sibi cum filio fore sperans. Cum eo venisset, aliter se habere omnia, qua existimabat animadvertit. Aedificia alia ruinam minantia, alia magna vi lignorum suffulta, habitacula dedita opera supellectili, omnibus que rebus ad usum quotidianum necessariis spoliata, caetera solitudinem et inopiam referentia reperit. In prediis horrea exinanita, stabula pecudibus vacua, agros sementem desiderantes inveniit, deprehendit et piscinas partim ruptas, partim piscibus vacuas, cuncta denique quod domino careret indicantia... Porro, cum nihil in praesentia cerneret, unde sibi, filio et aulae suae ea quae sunt ad victum necessaria suppeditarentur, frumenta a Margrabiensibus redemit, omnem suppellectilem domesticam magno sumptu denuo consuisivit...*" The same legation in AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 15, fol. 25–32.

come back to Silesia again when Ferdinand had improved the situation.²² She turned back to her family in Poland and hoped to achieve a better agreement with Ferdinand and push him to satisfy the conditions, which was to take years and achieve little success.

I do not intend to present a chronological overview of events in the 1550s, nor a complex picture of the network of diplomatic negotiations related to Isabella and John Sigismund. I rather want to point at several patterns of familial dynamics and practice, and importantly also the employed rhetoric. The following part of this study focuses on several areas of action related to Jagiellonian familial dynamics while Isabella and John Sigismund were in Poland. It was in some ways similar, but also some extent different, from the situation when the members of royal family resided in different countries. Isabella was in a dependent position and had to rely on her original family in many respects. Firstly, she and her son needed material help and support from their family members in order to provide necessary living conditions for them (donations of estates on which to live and what to live from, expenditures related to them in accounts, etc.). Secondly, they met more often and spent time together (especially in the case of Bona and the princesses); among other times, they gathered in person at festive occasions like weddings. They met in order to negotiate and deal with important issues (e.g., at congresses like that held in Kock in 1554, etc.), and exchanged letters and envoys, especially coordinating diplomatic positions and negotiations with other parties.

MATERIAL HELP AND PROVIDING FOR LIVING

It would have perhaps been much easier if Isabella's father had built a house in Kraków for her before she married off to Hungary, we may say with a bit of exaggeration. When she was leaving Kraków after her wedding celebrations in 1539 some already feared her stay in the neighboring kingdom would not be long-lasting – which chronicler Łukasz Górnicki, a contemporary of Isabella, reports with hindsight when quoting royal jester Stańczyk talking to King Sigismund in a well-known episode. Had her father built a house for her in Kraków, she would have had a place to reside when she returned.²³

Sigismund Augustus made some arrangements in preparation for his sister and nephew when the Silesian plan did not work out at the diet in Piotrków in March 1552. He had ordered the renovation and preparation of the lodgings at the royal castle at Krzepice.²⁴ The king mentions the queen of Hungary in his

22 BJ 175/2, 66–67: “*Cogitur itaque Serenitas sua propter famem et omnis victus inopiam discedere ex illo ducatu ad Serenissimam dominam matrem suam, cum scitu tamen et admissione Maiestatis vestrae, non vult enim Serenitas sua, tanquam Maiestatis vestrae observantissima sine scientia Maiestatis vestrae quicquam facere, ut illic per matrem una cum Illustrissimo communi Maiestatis vestrae et suo filio alatur interim quoad novus commeatus in Opoliensem Ducatum adveniat.*”

23 Łukasz Górnicki, *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej od r. 1538 do r. 1572*, edited by Kazimierz Józef Turowski. Sanok: Nakład i druk Karola Pollaka, 1855, 35.

24 Urszula Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów w Polsce*. Warszawa: PWN, 2011, 100.

letter to Mikołaj Rudy Radziwiłł dated March 26 of the same year from Piotrków, informing him that they had met in Krzepice and commenting on the state of the promised Silesian residence “where we have seen that they [referring to Ferdinand] did not think so much about providing for our sister, her royal majesty, with her son as she was promised in conditions appropriate for her royal status, but most probably the biggest effort was invested so that her royal majesty together with her son would leave Transylvania as quickly as possible. In any case, we can only thank God for everything.”²⁵ On this occasion, related to Isabella and his stay in Krzepice, the king granted several privileges at the diet in Piotrków in March 1552: he confirmed various privileges granted to the town of Krzepice by his predecessors in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,²⁶ granted new ones,²⁷ changed the date of annual markets,²⁸ granted the patronage over the parish church in the royal village of Starokrzepice to the Augustinian canons from the town of Krzepice.²⁹ In a few days, Spytek of Tarnów received an annual pension from the captaincy of Krzepice for his merits and services to the king and Isabella and her son.³⁰

During the diet (March 25, 1552, Piotrków) the king appointed Wojciech Nowopolczyk (Novocampus), professor in Kraków and a humanist, to serve as the teacher of John Sigismund. He ordered an annual pension of 300 florins, which was a very high and exceptional sum – one of the highest at the court of Sigismund Augustus. This shows the great prestige and significance of the function.³¹ The court of Isabella and John Sigismund in Poland consisted of both

25 Irena Kaniewska (ed.), *Listy króla Zygmunta Augusta do Radziwiłłów*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999, no. 120, 230–231, this quote on 231.

26 AGAD, *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 190v–195 (March 15, 1552); Teodor Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria, excussis codicibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi asservantur*, pars 5, *Sigismundi Augusti regis tempora complectens, 1548–1572*, vol. 1, *Acta cancellarium, 1548–1572*. Varsoviae: C. Kowalewski, 1919. no. 1165.

27 On the supplication of Spytek of Tarnów, palatine of Sieradz, see *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 195v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, 5/1, no. 1166.

28 *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 196; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, 5/1, no. 1167.

29 *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 209v–210; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, 5/1, no. 1168.

30 *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 198v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, 5/1, no. 1187: “ob eius egregia in nos remque publicam Regni nostri merita, tum rationem habentes gratitudinis et impensarum quas nobis et Serenissimae dominae Isabellae eadem gratia Reginae Hungariae, Dalmatiae, Croatiae, etc Reginae, filioque ipsius, Sorori et Nepoti ex ea nostris charissimis, cum summa alacritate exhibuit.” Krzepice is mentioned once again, when Bona wanted to use the residence before her departure to Italy and the king reminded her that it belonged to Isabella; AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 16, 98v–99 (August 20, 1555).

31 *Metryka Koronna* 82, fol. 76v–77v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, vol. 5, no. 5590; Teodor Wierzbowski (ed.), *Materyaly do dziejów piśmiennictwa polskiego i biografii pisarzy polskich*, vol. 1. Warszawa: Druk M. Szkaradzińskiego, 1900, no. 138, 93. See Borkowska, *Dynastia Jagiellonów*, 373; Orgona, *Jan Zygmunt*, 14–16; Ildikó Horn, ‘Minerva és szablya. János Zsigmond portréja’, in Gyöngy Kovács Kiss (ed.), *A Fortuna vagy Fatum árnyékában? Fejezetek az Erdélyi Fejedelemség történetéből*. Cluj-Napoca: Komp-Press Kiadó–Korunk, 2014, 31–49, here 35–36.

Polish and Hungarian dignitaries who accompanied them from Transylvania: among others, the above-mentioned Maciej Łobocki, Hungarian secretary Mihály Csáky and Italian secretary Paolo Savorgnano.³²

Later in the same year Sigismund Augustus donated further possessions in Sanok to Isabella, granted her the right to reside in the captaincy of Sanok (which was held by Piotr Zborowski, castellan of Sandomierz) and to annually receive royal revenues from there. Sanok was conveniently located for access to the Kingdom of Hungary and Transylvania, which made the Austrians cautious. The king explains in the charter that “because Isabella could not live in the Kingdom of Hungary due to bad fortune and until now she has not received her possessions,” he desired to provide for her in her necessity “out of brotherly love and obligation” towards his sister.³³ Contemporary accounts in chronicles describe the course of events and praise the king for taking care and providing for his sister, who was not sufficiently compensated by Ferdinand and could not live with her son according to her status. Orzechowski describes the festive welcome of Isabella and her son in Kraków, then their stay at Krzepice, where the king joined them for the celebrations before Lent during the diet held in Piotrków. The king was said to be happy that she managed to leave the dangerous country and was anxious to help his poor sister, a queen of such dignified status, when he learned she was in need. The chronicler lists the donations he made and comments that “had his brother not provided for her, she would have been left in miserable way, deprived of all riches...”³⁴

In February 1556, when Queen Bona left Poland and had to hand over her possessions to the king, some of them were granted to Isabella as well, such as the estates of Wieluń, Radom and Sambor (importantly with salt mines and related business).³⁵ Sigismund Augustus summarized in the charter the previous

32 For more on the court of John Sigismund in Poland, see especially Angelika Orgona, ‘Jan Zygmunt’ and Horn, ‘Minerva és szablya’.

33 Document dated June 15, 1552, issued in Toruń, *Metryka Koronna* 80, fol. 267–267v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, 5/1, no. 1274: “cui cum per iniquitatem fortunae in Regno Hungariae comoranda facultas sit adempta, et ad hoc usque tempus tutum sui ac rerum suarum receptum non habeat, quo fraterna nostra erga prefatam Serenissimam sororem nostram pietate et debito, necessitati presenti prospicere cupientes...” The king later issued a charter by which, after the death of Peter of Zborow, he granted the captaincy to Sebastian Liubomirski with the provisions reserved for Isabella, as earlier in Knyszyn, November 8, 1553. *Metryka Koronna* 84, fol. 444v–445v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, vol. 5, no. 6373.

34 T. Działyński (ed.), *Annales Stanislai Orichovii Oksził*. Poznań: Libraria J. K. Zupańsciana, 1854, 117–119: “...Et cum illi Oppoliensis territorii fructus ad rationem a Ferdinando redditam non responderet, essetque angustior, quam qui tanti nominis Reginam cum filio sustentaret, Rex inopiam sororis de sua copia subleverat, ac complura territoria necessarii victus gratia illi attribuerat, ut Sanock in Russia, ut Krzepicium in Siradia. Bona etiam mater de suo Wielunium illi addiderat, eoque subsidio annonae solitudinem filiae, nepotisque aluerat... ut nisi Rex frater subvenisset, illa hominis ad miseri morem, omni nudata ope, victu etiam necessario caruisset.” Similarly also Górnicki, *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej*, 35–36.

35 Charter of February 9, 1556, issued in Vilnius, *Metryka Koronna* 87, fol. 228v–229v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, vol. 5, no. 7381; and charter of February 8, 1556, granting Isabella the right to transport salt by river from Sambor and keep it in the warehouse

donations he made after her arrival to Poland and transferred to her the possessions of her mother.³⁶ He donated the above-mentioned possessions to Isabella (*soror nostra karissima*) for her lifetime or until she resided in Poland or in Silesia as a widow (*ad finem vitae ipsius Serenissimae dominae sororis nostrae, aut quamdiu Maiestas illius, in Regno et dominiis nostris, vel in Silesia in statu viduali permanscit*). The donation of Bona's estates is discussed in the correspondence and by envoys during the preparation for Bona's departure at her request.³⁷

Besides that, the account books of Sigismund Augustus show only a couple of expenses related to Isabella: payment for the carriage and its decoration (plated with Venetian silver, just as for other female members of the royal family), probably for the wedding of Sigismund Augustus in early 1553³⁸ and for a jewel box in 1554.³⁹ Still, the cost of living and the status appropriate for her position was often the topic of negotiations with Ferdinand.

FAMILY MEETINGS AND FESTIVE OCCASIONS

On certain occasions the family met in a more private or strictly official context. It was not usual for members of the royal family married off to different countries or bound by other obligations to meet frequently in person. This is what Isabella complained about in 1559, when she wrote to her sister Sophia, Duchess of Brunswick–Lüneberg (who married and set off to the German duchy while Isabella was in Poland, in 1556): “God has not granted to the higher social orders what he has granted to the lower orders, the ability to visit their relatives for lunch whenever they wish.”⁴⁰ Although not completely freely, the sisters and other members of their family could meet much more often than usual during Isabella's forced stay back in her homeland. Perhaps Isabella recalled this with a bit of nostalgia when she corresponded with her sister from Transylvania a few years later.

The private meetings were not only pleasant though. Relations within the family appear to have been problematic, especially the ill-famed relationship of Sigismund Augustus with his mother (which has received so much attention in literature),⁴¹ and also the difficult relationship with her daughters-in-law, each

of Bydgoszcz, *Metryka Koronna* 87, fol. 228–228v; Wierzbowski (ed.), *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, vol. 5, no. 7380.

36 *Metryka Koronna* 87, fol. 228v–229v.

37 BJ, manuscript 175/1, fol. 291ff, Bona's envoy, Jan Oczieński, to the king on Bona requesting the same privileges for salt business for Isabella, fol. 297v.

38 Accounts kept by Decius in the years 1552–1567 published in A. Chmiel (ed.), *Źródła do historii sztuki i cywilizacji w Polsce*, vol. 1, *Rachunki dworu królewskiego 1544–1567*. Kraków: Nakładem Akademii Umiejętności, 1911, 30.

39 *Ibid.*, 52. Perhaps more related expenses are to be found in manuscript account books related to the court of Bona and other existing archival sources, as most of the royal accounts remain in manuscript.

40 Aleksander Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie w XVI wieku. Korespondencja Polska*, vol. 3. Kraków: Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1868, no. 4, 20–21.

41 Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 329.

one of the three in certain ways. In his letters to Radziwiłł, Sigismund Augustus repeatedly complained about the chilly conversations with his mother. For example, several weeks before Isabella's return, the king complained that his mother mentioned neither Isabella nor his late wife Barbara (who had died only slightly more than half year earlier): "She did not mention anything about Her Majesty Queen, our recently deceased wife of glorious memory; nor did she make any mention of Her Majesty Queen of Hungary, our sister."⁴²

The family met in Plock in May 1552. Sigismund Augustus came to visit Bona and his sisters, including Isabella with John Sigismund, only for a day, although he stayed in nearby Gostynin for a month.⁴³ The king met his mother in Grodno as well in early 1553, at a critical time when he discussed with her Isabella's problematic meeting with French, which had placed the king in a bad light.⁴⁴ Besides complaining to his friend Radziwiłł about the coldness and accusations of his mother, as usual he reports how risky and unthoughtful it was for Isabella to have met with the French: "We have talked with Her Majesty about other things as well and also about Her Majesty Queen of Hungary who inappropriately, not caring about suspicions, hurried to Radom to the French envoy. That she did that *et contra honestum et contra aequum* was mentioned indeed. Her Majesty as if gratefully accepted, as if *errata sua* like *confiteri visa*. But probably *eam confessionem parva vel nulla prorsus poenitentia subsequi videbatur*."⁴⁵ Isabella and her son spent considerable, although not continuous, time with Bona and princesses in Warsaw as well.

It was also necessary that the family be present together at celebrations and official occasions, such as engagements and weddings, funerals and so on. When Isabella and John Sigismund were in Poland, they naturally took part at these events, i.e., the wedding of Sigismund Augustus and Catherine of Austria in the summer of 1553 and the wedding of her sister Sophia and Henry of Brunswick in Warsaw in January 1556.⁴⁶ In July 1553 the family, including Isabella and her son, gathered in Kraków at the wedding feast of Sigismund Augustus and Catherine of Austria. The presence of the queen of Hungary certainly added

42 Kaniewska (ed.), *Listy Zygmunta Augusta do Radziwiłła*, no. 116, dated January 20, 1552, in Radom, 223.

43 Maria Bogucka, *Bona Sforza*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1989, 133.

44 Kaniewska (ed.), *Listy Zygmunta Augusta do Radziwiłła*, no. 129, 245–247 dated January 7, 1553.

45 *Ibid.*, 246. The original in Polish combined with Latin, translation mine. I have preserved the Latin.

46 For the negotiations and marriage of Sophia, see the part "*De matrimonio Illustrissime Zophiae Reginulae Poloniae cum Illustrissimi Principe Henrico Brunswicensi Duce*" in BJ 175/1, 209–262. Sigismund Augustus proposed the festivity in Vilnius to which he wanted to invite the queen and his sisters, but Bona requested that it take place in Warsaw, *ibid.*, 227, November 29, 1555: "*Ad sponsalia vero sue sorori celebranda petimus ut Maiestas vestra prout merito debet Varssoviam veniat, quando quidem neque nos, nec Serenissima Ungariae Regina una cum sororibus Maiestatis vestre venire Vilnam nequeamus, presertim ob Illustrissime reginulae Zophiae ex hac infirmitate adhuc imbecilitatem.*"

some glamour to the event.⁴⁷ The king welcomed the bride with her entourage (including her brother Ferdinand) at Lobzow and then they set off to Kraków: on the left-hand side of the king, John Sigismund, prince of Hungary, nephew of Sigismund Augustus; and the queen mother together with her three daughters.⁴⁸ The seating order of Queen Isabella and her son at the festive meal at the castle demonstrates her prestigious position within the company.⁴⁹ Clearly, the gestures of importance and honor were also designed to make an impression on Duke Ferdinand, who took part in the wedding and used the occasion to negotiate with Isabella and sent report about the event to the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand, his father.⁵⁰ Meetings of family members, private sojourns and official festivities were important occasions for diplomatic negotiations in the affairs of Isabella and John Sigismund, although a large part of the exchange was still done via envoys and correspondence.

NEGOTIATING AND COORDINATING DIPLOMACY (CONGRESS OF KOCK AND AFTERWARDS)

Sucheni-Grabowska has claimed that Sigismund Augustus, when accepting his relatives in Poland, undertook responsibility for the result of the treaties of his sister with Ferdinand and also for the future destiny of Isabella and John Sigismund in broader dimensions.⁵¹ The foreign policy reflected these familial interests, but the matter of Isabella as a sensitive political issue had to be negotiated in the context of public needs, within the royal council and the diet if necessary. The king and Queen Bona often reminded the diplomatic envoys that they had neither been present nor in any way involved in the treaty between Isabella and Ferdinand with regard to which they were later asked to intervene. Through the marriage bond with Ferdinand's daughter, the Polish king also exposed himself to repeated requests from the other side, as his father-in-law urged him to exert influence over Isabella on the basis of their affinity, at least in rhetorical terms. Familial language as a tool of persuasion was used abundantly in diplomacy.

47 Orzechowski describes the festivities, 'Opisanie obrzęda ślubnego' in Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (ed.), *Zbiór pamiątek historycznych o dawnej Polsce z rękopismów, tudzież dzieł w różnych językach o Polsce wydanych, oraz z listami oryginalnymi królów i znakomitych ludzi w kraju naszym*, vol. 5. Leipzig: Breitkopf i Haertel, 1840, 238–252.

48 *Ibid.*, 244.

49 *Ibid.*, 245. Polish writer Łukasz Górnicki emphasized the higher position of Isabella at the table as compared to Bona due to the importance of her kingdom, or as Bona claimed, "as the Kingdom of Hungary has a place before Poland among the kings"; Kazimierz Józef Turowski (ed.), *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej od r. 1538 do r. 1572 piórem Łukasza Górnickiego, Tykocińskiego i Wasilkowskiego Starosty*. Sanok: Nakład i druk Karola Pollaka, 1855, 45.

50 "Relatio Serenissimi Principis Archiducis Ferdinandi", in Aleksander Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie XVI wieku*, vol. 5. Kraków: Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1878, 66–79 (under 'Dodatki dział IV'–Appendices, part 4).

51 Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August*, 232.

The effort to organize a congress, inspired by Ferdinand (who was alarmed by Isabella's rumored ongoing contacts with Petrovics and Turkish envoys) was part of the responsibility of Sigismund Augustus toward Isabella. The king, both queens and also the Austrian representatives were to get together in order to effectively reach an agreement. Ferdinand's embassy urged the Polish king by referring to the previous alliances, but also to their bonds via marriage and by blood, using familial rhetoric: "...ut habita ratione cum foederum et multiplicis necessitudinis, amicitiae affinitatis et consanguineitatis vinculorum quibus tam arcte cum Serenitate eius coniuncti sumus..."⁵² He asked Sigismund Augustus to convene the queens as soon as possible and to emphatically explain the situation to Isabella in front of the Austrian representatives, to "encourage her, request her and induce her" to come into agreement with Ferdinand.⁵³ He had no doubt that "when the king intervenes with his authority... Queen Isabella would feel his advice and orders," and all the more admonished by the king would come to consent.⁵⁴ Ferdinand believed in the influence of Sigismund Augustus and pressure on his sister.

It took a lot of persuasion, promises and postponing before they all convened in Kock in spring 1554. Sigismund Augustus made efforts to coordinate his actions with Bona and Isabella. His envoys (Jakub Uchański, bishop of Chełm, and Albert Kriski, captain of Dobrzyn) accompanied the Austrian envoys to Warsaw to meet the queens (where, in the end, they met Bona and went to meet Isabella separately in Piotrków) and were prepared to help in the talks and moderate the debate on difficult issues, which they indeed did according to their subsequent reports to the king.⁵⁵ Sigismund Augustus tried to intervene not in a forceful way, but offered his help to his sister. He explained to Isabella that although he was not familiar with the pacts concerning Transylvania which she had concluded with Ferdinand and he did not want to interfere, he desired to help in the matter (*sincero et candido animo adiutam velle*), moved by his brotherly love (*fraternus amor*) to Isabella, but also by his *observantia filialis* towards Ferdinand.⁵⁶ He was in favor of a congress, which could take place close to the

52 Instruction of Ferdinand to Gregorianczy and Logus concerning the matter of Isabella, in BJ 175/2, 14.

53 *Ibid.*, 15: "atque ibidem dictae Serenissimae sorori suae in praesentia ipsorum Oratorum nostrorum, praemissa omnia exponat, et Serenitatem eius hortetur, requirat et inducat, quod a proposito suo ulterius nobis adversandi, et transactiones simul nobiscum initas et conclusas irritas faciendi desistat, sed ad salubriora consilia descendat..."

54 *Ibid.*, 15: "Quandoquidem non dubitemus quod si ipse Serenissimus Rex in hoc negocio auctoritatem suam interposuerit, et Serenissima Regina Izabella senserit, sua consilia et instituta Serenitati eius tantopere displicere, quin toties a Serenitate eius monita, tandem sit melioribus consiliis auscultatura et ad aequitatem condescensura..."

55 Instructions of Sigismund Augustus to Jakub Uchański and Albert Kriski to Bona and Isabella, in BJ 175/2, 102ff.

56 *Ibid.*, 104.

time and location of the diet in Lublin. Isabella first agreed, but then again tried to find excuses to postpone the congress.⁵⁷

The meeting of all actors together with the Austrian delegation at one time was an important condition in order to reach a position acceptable for all parties. Separate negotiations with each of the actors (Sigismund Augustus, Bona, Isabella) resulted in excuses, postponement, blaming or tactically referring to the necessary consent of the others who were not present. Bona explained in Warsaw that although her daughter concluded the agreements with the Holy Roman Emperor without her, she welcomed her simply “out of her maternal love, because the poor lady had nothing.” She even noted that she had done it for the good of His Majesty and while Isabella was with her, she always encouraged her to obey him in so much that Isabella called her *procuratrix* of the emperor.⁵⁸ Bona argued that in such an important matter two women could not decide themselves and her son should decide together with the senators. It was his obligation “out of his office and love to provide for the honor and well-being of his sister.”⁵⁹ In the following meeting when Bona met her son's negotiators without the Austrians, she did not see any sense in inviting Isabella to Warsaw for talks, as proposed by the king. She again argued by pointing out their feminine gender, recalling the examples of Margaret and Queen Mary of Hungary, who were accused of inappropriately interfering with political issues.⁶⁰ Rather than organizing a new congress, she maintained that the Polish king should persuade the Austrians to keep the old agreements and help his sister.⁶¹

57 Reports of the envoys to Sigismund Augustus from the meetings with Bona and Isabella, January 24 and February 2, 1554, *ibid.*, 111–112 (106–113: “*Jacobus Uchanski Episcopus Chelmensis et Albertus Kriski Prefectus Dobrzinensis Serenissimo domino Sigismundo Augusto Poloniae Regi,*” February 2, 1554, Piotrków); 114–121 (“*Idem Jacobus Uchanski et Albertus Kriski Serenissimo Sigismundo Augusto Poloniae Regi,*” January 24, 1554, Warsaw).

58 BJ 175/2, 115–116: “*Ego semper amaui et honorauī suam Maiestatem Regem Romanorum ut dominum et fratrem meum. Et si autem post mortem Serenissimi Regis Hungarie Joannis cum pacta fecisset me inconsulta cum sua Maiestate Rege Romanorum filia mea charissima, eam aduocaui ad me propter amorem maternum, quia paupera domina nihil habebat. Tamen non minus id feci propter suam Maiestatem Romanorum Regem, ne filia mea hincinde vagaretur, et conquireretur de sua Maiestate. Donec una mecum mansit, ego illam hortata sum, ut coleret et obseruaret suam Maiestatem Romanorum Regem, quod quum facerem, illa me procuratricem suae Maiestatis appellabat.*”

59 *Ibid.*, 116–117: “*Ego me nolo immiscere tantis rebus, quae sunt non parui sed magni momenti, ne postea homines dicant, nos duas mulieres tantas res constituere velle, et nolo si quid postea acciderit mali, quod Deus auertat dicant homines quod ego essem in culpa. Opus est vere ut tante rei intersit Serenissimus filius meus, si aliquid debet esse boni, et cum pluribus senatoribus suis consultat, quia ipse tenetur ex officio, et ex amore prouidere et honori et commodo sororis suae.*” Cf. report on the same meetings by the Austrian envoys to Ferdinand, quoted in Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 14–15.

60 *Ibid.*, 118: “*Comemorauit exempla Margarethae Maximiliani filiae et Mariae Reginae Hungariae, quibus vicio datum esse ostendit, quod sese immiscuerint grauibz Regum compositionibus, quamuis initio studium earum plerique omnes approbauerint cum in Polonia, ne initium quidem alicuius rei grandis in sexu foemineo comprobari soleat. Cum ea sit de illo sexu persuasio, quod neque velit, neque possit aliquid praeclarum unquam praestare.*”

61 *Ibid.*: “*Ideo, sua Maiestas melius fecisset ad nos non mittendo, sed per se clare et libere, sicut filius patri Serenissimo Regis Romanorum responderet, nihil opus esse ulterioribus tractatibus, sed restare tantum,*

She blamed Ferdinand, who had not satisfied his duties towards “her poor girl,” and, as a result, she and the king had to provide for the poor woman and her son (*ita impleta non sunt, ut cogor ego cum serenissimo Poloniae rege filio meo illam pauperam et filium illius alere*).⁶² Bona showed a letter from Isabella to the Austrians in order to discourage them from visiting her daughter separately, as she wanted neither to negotiate nor to conclude anything without her brother and mother.⁶³ In this situation, the January 24 report of Sigismund Augustus’ negotiators from Warsaw did not sound optimistic concerning the convocation of the congress and the discussions continued in the same vein. Bona claimed and swore that she wanted to meet at the site of the diet only because of her poor daughter and not in order to interfere in other political issues, complaining emotionally of unfair treatment.⁶⁴

When she nevertheless met the envoys afterwards, Isabella complained that she had to rely on the help of others and on support for subsistence: “*Ego vivam, prout ex vixi alieno auxilio, utcunque videbit tamen sua Maiestas, quia nec sic erit finis.*”⁶⁵ Even if her brother urged her and even if they met, she maintained, she would not change her position unless the Holy Roman Emperor paid and fulfilled his obligations toward her. She did not want any further written agreements and letters, as she already had a box full of them.⁶⁶

On one of the occasions Sigismund Augustus explained that his influence on Isabella was not so powerful as to be able to convince her: “Even though... the Queen of Hungary is in our kingdom, she is not so much in our power that she would do that which we invite her to do...”⁶⁷ The king discussed the organization of the congress in his correspondence with the Radziwiłłs; he tried to avoid

ut satisfiat pactis et conuentis inter suas Maiestates Romanorum Rege et Regina Hungariae antea transactis, priusquam aliquid eorum quae nunc requirit sua Maiestas exigeretur a Serenissima Regina Hungariae...

62 Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 14.

63 BJ 175/2, 120: “...ostendit literas Serenissimae Reginae Hungariae, quibus illa significat, certo sibi constare Oratores Serenissimi Regis Romanorum in reditu a Sacra Maiestate vestra ad se diuertere in animo habere. Itaque rogatam velle suam Maiestatem ut matrem suam colendissimam, ne permittat eos ad se venire cum ita constituerit, quod neque tractare, neque concludere quicquam vellet sine praesentia Sacrae Maiestatis vestrae cum Oratoribus Romanorum Regis etiam si illis adiuncti sint Oratores Sacrae Maiestatis vestrae, propterea causa ista suae Maiestatis et magni sit momenti et periculosa.” The same message in the report of Austrian envoys to Ferdinand, quoted by Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 15: “Nil omnino, nisi scitu et in praesentia regis fratris et reginae matris nobiscum tractaturum.”

64 BJ 175/2, 128–133: ‘*Jacobus Uchanski et Albertus Krziski Sigismundo Augusto Poloniae Regi*’, Warszawa, January 24, 1554.

65 Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 17.

66 *Ibid.*, 18: “Interim nil omnino agere valeo, etiam si frater meus... rex Poloniae utcunque me urgeat, nisi ipse mihi paratam pecuniam persolvat. Neque aliud illi respondebo, nec faciam, etiamsi me conveniet, qui tamen conventus mihi aliqui valetudinarie non placet... Non mihi iam det litteras propter Deum, quia iam plenam habeo schatulam illarum.”

67 *Ibid.*, 24: “Etsi autem... Hungariae regina in regno nostro sit, non ita tamen in potestate nostra, ut per nos aliquid, ut invita faciat, cogi possit...” For the position of Sigismund Augustus, see also BJ 175/2, 22–23.

bringing the issue close to the place of diet assembly (unlike Bona), but would have rather met somewhere else, treating the risky matter in a private and familial context. Radziwiłł advised handling the matters with the queen of Hungary and Austrian envoys by letter rather than holding a congress. He informed his friends that Isabella wrote to him that she did not want to agree on anything without talking to him.⁶⁸ At least in writing, Isabella intended to coordinate her actions with her brother. Each of the actors was careful, as the issue was sensitive and it was hard to consider it a purely family matter.

The congress (March 6–8, 1554) was successful – articles containing Isabella's conditions were agreed upon and sent to Ferdinand.⁶⁹ The results of the congress can also be seen as Isabella's diplomatic success. The joint effort of the king and queen mother with Isabella (*quanto studio et diligentia*) was courteously appreciated also in the response given by Ferdinand to their envoys with articles from Kock.⁷⁰ In retrospect, in June of the same year, Isabella claimed that she gave a mild answer to the Austrian envoys in Kock, partially because her mother and brother convinced her to do so (*idque partim fraternis et maternis persuasionibus addnota, libenter fecit*), and she had high hopes of finally fulfilling the contracts and reaching an agreement, though these hopes were not realized.⁷¹

While the king (addressed by Isabella on several occasions as *frater et benefactor noster*)⁷² provided diplomatic aid to his sister and nephew in negotiating with the Austrians, acting as an intermediary and “close ally” of Ferdinand. However, this did not prevent him from assisting in dealings with the other side in the meantime too, namely with the sultan, the French and the Transylvanians. Only on some occasions did he reprimand Isabella for acting too undiplomatically, e.g., when she hurried to meet the French envoy in Radom.⁷³ Isabella maintained her own interests and did not always act in full concord with her brother's official line – quite understandably in spite of her diplomatic position and public

68 Kaniewska (ed.), *Listy króla Zygmunta Augusta do Radziwiłłów*, no. 162, 291–292 (February 3, 1554, from Knyszyn): Sigismund Augustus claims that Isabella wrote “that she does not want to make any decision with the envoys unless she first discusses it *coram* [in front of] us and orally” (292). Another letter (March 2, from Lublin) reports that he must postpone his journey to Kock, where the queens were already waiting for him, *ibid.*, no. 166, 394–395.

69 Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 114ff. The results and conditions formulated by Isabella: “*Propositio ad Regiam Romanorum Maiestatem*”, BJ 175/2, 25–26, “*Articuli conscripti a Reginali Maiestate*”, 26–30. She promised to be satisfied in presence of her mother and brother as well if these were fulfilled, thus giving them greater significance (*ibid.*, 26: “*Promittit serenitas eius Reginalis se quoque satisfacturam in omnibus voluntati Sacrae Maiestatis vestrae quemadmodum id quoque Serenissimo domino fratri Reginalique Maiestati dominae matri suae Serenitas eius promisit, quod re ipsa praestabit*”).

70 “*Responsio Regiae Romanorum Maiestatis prima ad propositionem factam*”, in BJ 175/2, 32. Still it was not the end and a long diplomatic exchange followed.

71 BJ 175/2, 165: “*Responsum a Serenissima domina Hungariae Regina datum generoso domino Joanni Syrakowski Sacrae Maiestatis Poloniae Oratori*”, Warsaw, July 10, 1554. She could, unfortunately, only repeat the same complaint in response to her brother in the winter of 1555 during the embassy of Heidenreich; *ibid.*, 264.

72 E.g., BJ 175/2, 241 (Isabella to Sigismund Augustus, October 28, 1554).

73 See above, note 45.

claims. In May 1554 Marcin Kromer and Mikołaj Myszkowski reported to the Polish king about some discord between their embassy to Ferdinand and Isabella's representative, Mikołaj Cikowski, who was also present.⁷⁴

Isabella was repeatedly accused of negotiations with the Ottomans and Transylvanians (via Petrovics) practically during the entire period of her stay in Poland by the Austrians (e. g. during the wedding of Sigismund Augustus, during the preparations of Kock congress and afterwards as well), who most probably also used it as the excuse not to satisfy the agreed-upon conditions.⁷⁵ In July 1554 Sigismund Augustus approached his councilors with the issue once again, when the envoy of the Holy Roman Emperor presented the same accusations.⁷⁶ Sigismund Augustus took steps resembling those he had used before in similar situations: he tried to convince the envoy that his sister was not guilty of that of which she had been accused, though still sent his envoy to Isabella to exhort her. As on previous occasions, they also asked to urge the queen mother to help persuade her daughter, a request that Sigismund Augustus once again transmitted to her.⁷⁷ It is very clear how the members of the Polish royal family were asked to intervene in the affair of the exiled Isabella, relying on their familial ties and authority. Not only the Holy Roman Emperor, but also the Ottoman emperor recalled their blood relations (Isabella and Sigismund Augustus) when approaching the Polish king as an intercessor in the matter and asking him to let Isabella and her son leave Poland.⁷⁸ On the occasion (not the only one), Sigismund Augustus appears as the one helping his sister, while Bona, at least nominally, prefers to abstain from risky undertaking, as she does not want to worsen the

74 BJ 175/2, 140.

75 There was always a threat for Ferdinand that Isabella would reach an agreement with the sultan and powerful local figures in Transylvania in the meantime. This is why Austrian envoys repeatedly urged Ferdinand to satisfy the conditions rather than postpone the matter.

76 BJ 175/2, 124–127: “*Sigismundus Augustus Rex Consiliariis Regni in negotio Serenissimae Hungariae Reginae*”, 124: “*Simulque a nobis petiit, ut Maiestatem eius, ne id contra pacta conuenta facere pergat, pro necessitudine quae nobis cum Serenissimo domino Romanorum Rege et pro sanguinis coniunctione quae cum eadem Serenissima domina Hungariae Regina arcta intercedit, etiam atque etiam [corr. eam?] moneremus... Si vero neque pactionum fides neque dehortatio nostra apud Serenissimam dominam Ungariae Reginam valeret, fore ut Princeps suus aliam rationem inire habeat necesse.*”

77 *Ibid.*, 124–125: “*Ei Oratori ita ut ante aliquoties feceramus, respondimus, non existimare nos tale quippiam quo pacta violari viderentur, a Serenissima domina sorore nostra factum esse, quod si quid fiat, Petrovicii studio et opera non consensiente neque conscienti/a Maiestate eius fieri. Sed misimus tamen Nuncium nostrum qui Serenissimam dominam sororem nostram ab eiusmodi cum Turca consiliorum communicationibus et (ut ille appellabat) practicis, nomine nostro diligenter dehortaretur, quique et Serenissimam dominam nostram (nam id quoque simul a nobis petebatur) nomine nostro rogaret ut et Maiestas eius suam in dehortanda Serenissima domina Sorore nostra operam ponere ne grauaretur.*”

78 *Ibid.*, 125: “*...venit ad nos Turcarum Imperatoris Nuncius, qui hoc unum a nobis petiit maxime, ut Illustrissimum Serenissimae dominae sororis nostrae filium, si iuuare et deducendum curare nollemus, saltem redire et reduci in Transylvaniam ne prohiberemus...*” He recalled the same promise given one year previously in Kraków: “*...idem, quod anno superiore, Cracouiae quum apud nos fuisset, responsi dedimus, quemadmodum scilicet Regnum nostrum Serenissimae dominae nostrae et Illustrissimo eius filio venientibus patere vulerimus; ita, quominus vel nunc vel quando volent ex eo egrediantur, per nos non prohiberi Maiestates autem, ipsarum ita nobis responderunt.*”

relations with the Austrians, whom she needed because of the planned departure, though she was willing to negotiate with the Holy Roman Emperor in Olomouc at that point. The king summarized his mother's "official diplomatic" position towards the issue of Isabella.⁷⁹ The Polish king wanted advice from his councilors on what stand to take and what to recommend to his sister and what to reply to the envoys. Jan, count of Tarnów, replied on behalf of the councilors in November 1554. He was reluctant to take a definite stand because "highly important and dangerous things are going on between your Majesty's [Sigismund Augustus] father-in-law and sister," and it could provoke a great deal of misinterpretation and suspicion. The advice was to carefully support the fulfilment of any agreements made, then neither Ferdinand nor Ottoman emperor could criticize the Polish king's actions.⁸⁰ Isabella thanked her brother for his diplomatic help in the spring of the following year as well and repeatedly declared her respect and obedience towards her brother and mother (*obseruantia et obsequium*)⁸¹ and asked her mother and brother to urge Ferdinand to satisfy the agreements, while she was repeatedly asked to clear the suspicions of Transylvanian actions (on Ferdinand's request addressed to the Polish king). In the winter of 1555–1556 she again asked her brother to continue his support in the frustrating negotiations (as he continued to intercede for her on behalf of Ferdinand).⁸²

The family and the Polish Kingdom offered diplomatic aid to Isabella already before her stay in Poland, but while in her home country the mutual pressure and need were even higher on both sides. While they often coordinated their actions, they also retained separate and sometimes differing positions and the authority of the king had its limits despite Isabella's rather dependent status.

THE AMBITIONS OF SON, GRANDSON AND NEPHEW

John Sigismund was a small boy when he came to Poland together with his mother. The older he became, the more his position (and not only that of his mother) had to be taken into consideration by the relevant actors as well. Thanks to his uncle's generosity, he received a good education and was able to

79 *Ibid.*: "Serenissima quidem mater nostra, semper se ab hac de rebus Ungaricis tractatione propter suum in Serenissimam Dominum Romanorum Regem studium ita abhoruisse, ut ne scire quidem de illis, tametsi ad filiam pertinuisent, quicquam voluerit nunc tamen in gratiam nostram, cum Serenissima domina Ungariae Regina agere non recusare si quid eiusmodi ab illa fiat, quod Serenissimus Dominus Romanorum Rex fieri conqueritur ut ab incepto desistat, et servet pactorum constantiam."

80 *Ibid.*, 181.

81 *Ibid.*, 243: "Responsum a Serenissima Hungariae Regina domino Grabowiecki Serenissimi Regis Poloniae Oratori datum": "Serenissima Hungariae Regina multum se debere fatetur Serenissimo domino Poloniae Regi fratri suo oberuandissimo, quod tantum opere et studii imposuerit finiendis his negotiis..."

82 *Ibid.*, 266: "Rogamus atque oramus eius fraternam Regiam Maiestatem dominum nostrum clementissimum, ut tam sedulam et constantem diligentemque curam ac usque adeo amicam patrocinium in nostra hac causa apud Sacram et excellentissimam Romanorum Regis Maiestatem subire dignetur, quam apud nos non grauatur immo libenter in negotiis Sacrae et excellentissimae Romanorum Regis Maiestatis narrat et declarat ac praestat."

profit not only from the service of the courtiers who accompanied him from Transylvania, but could also get acquainted with the local customs at his grandmother's court and the Polish public sphere.⁸³ Although the episode about the broken piece of the Holy Crown in the prince's hand when it was being handed over before their departure from Hungary may have already hinted at the desire of the small prince to once return to his father's inheritance when he grew older, his position and ambitions in the family had to be taken seriously and were not always considered identical with his mother's.⁸⁴

The Austrian sources warn about the rumors of the ambitious boy, who regretted that he had lost Transylvania and wanted to return. It is not known whether this was true or only a tactical piece of information. They reported that he was allegedly not content with what his mother had agreed on and achieved on his behalf until then.⁸⁵ They also reported that the Polish magnates and noblemen maintained that the Kingdom of Hungary lawfully belonged to the young prince and he had the right to claim the crown.⁸⁶ Moreover, there was also a possibility for John Sigismund to gain the Polish throne in case his uncle Sigismund Augustus remained without an heir. Austrians hinted at his sympathies among the Polish noblemen, who considered him born of Polish blood and possibly another king of the esteemed Jagiellonian lineage (*ex sanguine Polono natum, et quod ille Jagelinorum stirpi ex qua serenissimus rex Poloniae septimus numeratur, quae Polonis valde grata et accepta est, proximior haberetur*).⁸⁷

One of the important points of negotiations during the stay in Poland was the title and position of John Sigismund related to the new territories acquired from Ferdinand, besides the financial and material side of the agreement, which

83 See the studies of Orgona, *Jan Zygmunt*; Ildikó Horn, 'Minerva és szablya', 31–49.

84 For information regarding this episode, see Górnicki, *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej*, 35–36; Joachim Bielski, *Kronika polska Marcina Bielskiego nowo przez Ioach. Bielskiego syna iego wydana*. Kraków: W Drukarni Jakoba Sibeneychera, 1597, 596. See also Bogucka, *Bona Sforza*, 169.

85 April 1554, Polish lords to Austrian envoys, as quoted by Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 26: "*non tam curet de contendenda ipsa Regina, quam puero, filio nempe illius... Ipse quoque puer, per se, etiam nunc videtur majores spiritus gerere, quam ut putetur quieturus dum adoleverit – sepe enim prodit se, quod peniteat illum amissi regni, sepe incusat in faciem matrem, quod cesserit sine urgente causa Transylvaniae et anhelat reverti domum. Quia omnia haec contemnat, quae nunc mater illius nomine gerit. Sed ipsemet, per se esset benevolentia vincendus, qui certe minis non terrebitur, sed potius ad querenda auxilia provocabitur.*"

86 Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 120, note 1: "*Relatio episcopi Zagrabienensis et Matthei Logi de rebus in Polonia gestis*", *Polonica* 4, 1554, II, fol. 200–204. The incident of shooting at the window of prince's bedroom on July 18, 1554, in Warsaw, followed by suspicion, diplomatic exchange and accusations against Ferdinand – and Ferdinand also accusing Bona and Isabella of staging the shooting – could only contribute to the sympathy and support for the young prince. For the overview of the events, investigation, reports and what followed, see Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 58ff; Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka*, 141ff. Among the sources, e. g., the report to the Austrians about the investigation written by Jerzy Rakovsky, in Georgius Pray, *Epistolae Procerum*, vol. 3. Posonii: Ex Typographico G. A. Belnay, 1806, no. 13, 44–60; Sigismund Augustus to senators, BJ 175, 197–201.

87 The report of Heidenreich to Ferdinand (January 12, 1555) quoted by Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 78.

for them would mean a less dependent position on the family in Poland as well as on Ferdinand. Isabella insisted that her son receive the title of Duke of Opole as *primus inter reliquos Silesiae principes* and compared it to the prerogatives held by the predecessors among the Jagiellonians in the Silesian duchies, John Albert and Sigismund, at the time future king of Poland and father of Isabella.⁸⁸ At this point she once again recalled her parental family ties in addition to the historical precedent. The same argument was used by envoys of Sigismund Augustus, Mikołaj Myszkowski and Marcin Kromer, when presenting the matter to Ferdinand.⁸⁹ This condition was repeatedly brought up, while Ferdinand kept postponing the date of granting investiture to John Sigismund.

Ferdinand approached not only Isabella and the Polish king, but also the young prince himself in correspondence, trying to secure his favor and consent for the agreements. He addressed John Sigismund as his son and blood relative and wrote about his paternal love for the beloved son. In the correspondence between Ferdinand and Isabella, John Sigismund was often addressed as their “common son,” hinting at the planned wedding with one of his daughters.⁹⁰ Isabella herself also used the same phrases about the need to satisfy the ambitious boy who was growing up quickly and starting to think independently, and she had to bring him up in considerably poorer conditions than in their previous home. At least that is how she presented it to the Austrians. Again, after Kock congress, when the stipulations were still not fulfilled, Sigismund Augustus sent his representative to Vienna to approach Ferdinand with regard to the issue of Isabella. Vice-Chancellor Radziwiłł on his diplomatic mission to Ferdinand warned the Austrians that John Sigismund, who lived with his mother in Warsaw but already “grows a moustache,” wanted to return to Transylvania, although they were against this. He urged the Austrians to send one of the daughters to Poland for education in order to turn John Sigismund’s mind in another direction.⁹¹ Nevertheless, in 1555 Ferdinand still kept delaying and played on the promises of future marriage of his daughter to John Sigismund and his investiture as *primus inter reliquos Silesiae principes*.

88 Legation of Isabella to Ferdinand (March 1552), AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 15, fol. 25–32, here fol. 27–28: “*Quare Serenissima Princeps Sacram maiestatem precatur, ut perinde atque patruus ipsius Rex Albertus quondam et postea pater divae memoriae provinciam hanc tenuit, eam quoque possidere permittat, immunem ab omnibus tam bellicis quam domesticis Maiestatis vestrae oneribus...*”

89 BJ 175/2, 151: “*Ratio ad Serenissimum dominum Romanorum Regem ab Oratoribus Serenissimi domini Poloniae Regis, Nicolao Miskowski et Martino Cromero habita*”: “*Neque vero sine fine exemplo hoc Maiestas vestra Regia faciet. Extant in Archivio regni Poloniae monumenta literarum, quibus et domino Joanni Alberto et domino Sigismundo fratribus, similes quaedam prerogativae in illo, ipso regno Boemiae, a domino Wladislao Rege, socero Maiestatis vestrae olim concessae sunt, cum eis ibidem ille principatus quosdam in Silesia attribuisset.*”

90 E.g., AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 15, fol. 28: “*filio sibi cum Maiestate vestra communi*” and numerous other occasions.

91 Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban*, 48–49.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER, TWO QUEENS

During their stay in Poland, Isabella and her son spent considerable time with the queen mother and the princesses at the court in Warsaw. In the negotiations with Ferdinand, Bona played an important role as well as King Sigismund Augustus. Isabella is often described as Bona's favorite and as also being similar to her mother in her self-assured political activity. They used similar diplomatic language, so to speak, in dealing with the Austrian negotiators, relying in addition to the relevant arguments on their emotional appeal. While both repeatedly argued in the course of diplomatic exchange that they as women could not decide about important things and had to wait for the decision of the king or the diet, they were actively involved in political negotiations and actions. Bona had, according to contemporaries, always exerted influence over her oldest daughter's actions. Venetian Ambassador Paolo Tiepolo, well-informed by Radziwiłł, described general opinion in his report in 1557: "*La regina Bona, madre della regina Isabella, e stata quella, come ognun dice, che ha sempre consigliata e incitata la figliuola di procedere nel modo che ha fatto...*"⁹²

Sometimes the two women acted in cooperation, but at other times there are hints that their actions were not fully coordinated. Isabella acted independently from her mother, for example, when she informed her brother about a suspicious mission of Bona's secretary to the Holy Roman Emperor when he had stopped in Krzepice.⁹³ Isabella was not happy about her mother leaving for Italy; sometime later, in 1558, she wrote to her sister from Transylvania that their mother had left them alone: "she was well-off and abandoned us five [children]."⁹⁴

Her relation to mother Bona is well illustrated by Isabella's role in negotiations and preparations concerning her mother's departure for Italy. She could act as a mediator between her mother and others, but perhaps with limited influence on her mother's position. According to chronicler Łukasz Górnicki, Polish senators tried to make use of Isabella as a mediator with respect to her mother when they wanted to convince her not to leave Poland: according to him, Vice-Chancellor Przerębski approached Isabella in the eastern part of the kingdom when he learned about Bona's intentions. According to Górnicki, it was decided among the lords at the royal council that Isabella would first ask her mother not to leave Poland; but Isabella did not agree to do this, knowing that her mother had already decided and would not have changed her opinion;⁹⁵ later Isabella was in Warsaw with her mother when senators, especially Zebrzydowski, spoke to her. When an edict was issued to prevent anybody from leaving with Bona to Italy, she allegedly sent Isabella, this time as her mediator,

92 Paolo Tiepolo, on the basis of his information from Mikolaj Radziwiłł, *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato; raccolte, annotate, ed edite da Eugenio Albèri, a spese di una società*, ser. 1, vol. 3, 162: "*Relazione di Ferdinando re de' Romani letta in senato da Paolo Tiepolo il 12 Ottobre 1557*".

93 Kaniewska (ed.), *Listy króla Zygmunta Augusta do Radziwiłłów*, no. 141.

94 Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie*, no. 2, 17–18.

95 Górnicki, *Dzieje w Koronie Polskiej od r. 1538. do r. 1572*, 86–87 and 91.

to the king, emotionally persuading him, reproducing her mother's message not to do her injustice. In the end, the king promised Isabella to do everything for her: "When the queen learned this, she sent the Queen of Hungary to the king with tears: 'that injustice is done to her by the one whom she gave birth to and for whom she suffered, by the one who whatever he has in this world, he has from her...' the Queen of Hungary (who was under Queen Bona's guard) had to exaggerate the royal offense towards mother as much as possible. And when the king has shown that the decision does not come from him – and that the lords worry that the queen would carry away the prerogatives and privileges with her – he promised to the Queen of Hungary that he is ready to do all possible for Queen Mother."⁹⁶

Queen Bona's strong presence in the Kingdom of Poland was one of the important prerequisites for Isabella's stay in the kingdom. At the time when Isabella was contemplating leaving Transylvania in 1549, her brother saw Bona's possible departure – which was already on the table – as an impediment to her return to Poland.⁹⁷ Besides the king's consent, the mother's political and material support was crucial, as the situation after the failure of residence in Silesia promised by Ferdinand to Isabella and her son showed. Bona's departure brought about donations of her possessions to Isabella, but it did not take long before she also set her sights on leaving Poland and returning to Transylvania.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 99–102 (quotation 100). Translation from the Polish mine.

⁹⁷ See above, note 14; Instruction of Sigismund Augustus for Zbrzydowski to Isabella, in AGAD, *Libri Legationum*, vol. 12, fol. 179–184 and 184–186v: "*Serenissima vero parens nostra in Italiam cogitat, quae eius cogitatio discessum ex Hungaria Maiestatis eius impeditura videtur.*"

Szymon Brzeziński*

THE DIPLOMACY OF ISABELLA JAGIELLON: THE STRUGGLE TO BECOME A POLITICAL SUBJECT

The reign of Isabella Jagiellon as queen of Hungary was far from being a peaceful and stable period. The princess left Poland to rule in a divided country that was under constant Ottoman threat and claimed by the Habsburgs. She then witnessed further division of Hungary and had to adapt to an entirely new situation in the eastern part of the former kingdom, which later evolved to become the Principality of Transylvania. These turbulent years of losing and regaining power were obviously intensive from a diplomatic point of view. In this paper I give an overview of her efforts using both a chronological and a problematic approach, involving the scope and character of the queen's diplomacy. A central question is that of Isabella's sovereignty as a ruler, widow queen and regent. In other terms, was the queen's so-readily-cited motto *sic fata volunt* adequate as a slogan for Isabelline policy and what was the *fatum* she complained about?

An analysis of pre-modern politics should consider its specific character. Among other features, to a great extent it relied on personal relations and non-state actors. Accordingly, this remained valid for diplomacy and the sphere of "international relations" by today's terms. Historical actors and entities carried out politics not only in different circumstances than modern states, but also by different principles. It is a reason for careful usage of terms like *sovereignty* and *ratio status* and distinction between *domestic* and *foreign* policy (or *private* and *public*). This awareness is also highly desirable in description and evaluation of Isabella's reign.

The diplomatic activity of Queen Isabella has been approached in numerous historical studies. Without an attempt to list even a part of them here, it is worth mentioning that it was framed primarily in broader narratives, such as those pertaining to Habsburg–Ottoman, Polish–Hungarian, Polish–Ottoman

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or Polish–Habsburg relations,¹ or in biographies of other rulers and figures, such as Friar George.² After notable works of older historiography, such as the relevant biography authored by Endre Veress and studies by Lajos Szádeczky and Alfons Huber,³ several scholars focused on Isabella's diplomacy in biographical works, though in rather fragmentary or popular form.⁴ Hungarian and Romanian historians presented Queen Isabella's policies mostly as a part of narrative on the emergence of the Transylvanian state.⁵

If we try to find reasons for which Queen Isabella rarely became a major figure in historical narratives on political history, we should consider the difficulties she encountered in building and exercising power and prestige, that is, in becoming a political subject. This was a process, therefore it is important to describe it according to the political determinants that shaped her policies.

The marriage of Isabella Jagiellon to King John was obviously itself an effect of diplomacy. Contrary to some historiographical opinions, the idea somehow appeared earlier than Jan Tarnowski's October 1537 letter to Ferenc Frangepán.⁶ The project indeed took shape in autumn 1537, but it is necessary to specify that

1 Cf. Janusz Pajewski, *Węgierska polityka Polski w połowie XVI wieku (1540–1571)*. Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1932; Andrzej Dziubiński, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne polsko-tureckie w latach 1500–1572 w kontekście międzynarodowym*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2005; Jacek Wijaczka, *Stosunki dyplomatyczne Polski z Rzeszą Niemiecką w czasach panowania cesarza Karola V (1519–1556)*. Kielce: Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna im. Jana Kochanowskiego, 1998; Martina Fuchs, Teréz Oborni and Gábor Újváry (eds.), *Kaiser Ferdinand I. Ein mitteleuropäischer Herrscher* (Geschichte in der Epoche Karls V.). Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2005; Géza Pálffy, *The Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. by J. Thomas and H. D. DeKornfeld (Social Science Monographs–Center for Hungarian Studies and Publications–Institute of Habsburg History). Boulder CO–Wayne NJ, 2009; Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor (eds.), *Ottomans, Hungarians, and Habsburgs in Central Europe: The Military Confines in the Era of Ottoman Conquest*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

2 Władysław Pociecha, *Królowna Bona (1494–1557): czasy i ludzie Odrodzenia*, t. 4. Poznań: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1958; Anna Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August – król polski i wielki książę litewski 1520–1562*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krupski i S-ka, 1996; Teréz Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát. Fráter György (1482–1551)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2017.

3 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest, Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901; Endre Veress, *Erdély fejedelmi interregnuma (Izabella királyné diplomáciai működése) 1551–1556* (Értekezések a történeti tudományok köréből XVIII/2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1899; Lajos Szádeczky, *Izabella és János Zsigmond Lengyelországban 1552–1556*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1888; Alfons Huber, 'Die Verhandlungen Ferdinands I. mit Isabella von Siebenbürgen', *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 78 (1892) 3–39.

4 Alicia McNary Forsey, *Queen Isabella Sforza Szapolyai of Transylvania and Sultan Süleyman of the Ottoman Empire: A Case of Sixteenth-Century Muslim–Christian Collaboration*. Lewiston, USA–Queenstone, CAN–Lampeter, UK: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009; Małgorzata Duczmal, *Izabella Jagiellonka – królowa Węgier*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2000.

5 Gábor Barta, *Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség születése*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1979; Cristina Feneșan, *Constituirea principatului autonom al Transilvaniei*. București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997.

6 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 25; Walter Friedensburg (ed.), *Nuntiaturbereichte aus Deutschland nebst ergänzenden Aktenstücken*, 1. Abteilung 1533–1559, Bd. 4. Gotha: Perthes, 1893, 342 (a relation of Card. Girolamo Aleandro, March 6, 1539); Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát*, 60–61.

it was already known in April–May.⁷ The result was closely connected to the outcome of negotiations between King John and Ferdinand I, which led to the Treaty of Várad (1538). On the side of Szapolyai, both objectives were negotiated by István Brodarics as parallel political steps.⁸ After signing the treaty, the Polish royal couple – especially Queen Bona – delayed the marriage, uncertain of the consequences of possibly revealing the treaty to the Sublime Porte.⁹ The second circumstance was the parallel negotiations on the long-planned marriage of Isabella's younger brother, Sigismund August, to Habsburg Princess Elisabeth (matrimonial agreement from May 1538). Therefore, the marriage of Isabella was not last of all a counterweight for the Habsburg marriage of the heir to the Polish and Lithuanian throne. After long negotiations the contract with Szapolyai was finally approved and made public in Kraków in late 1538.

Needless to say, the marriage of Isabella remained an essential part of diplomacy afterwards as well. She entered Hungarian politics as an intended co-founder of the ruling house. The first period of Isabella's reign – which lasted until the death of her husband King John – can be characterized as an attempt to secure her position as a royal consort, above all in its financial aspect. Yet, the young queen remained subordinated in her role even if she complained about her situation.¹⁰ The diplomatic actions of the young queen were limited. A main topic in her correspondence is maintenance of close relations with her parents, Sigismund I and Bona, and relatives such as Albert of Prussia and his wife Dorothea. The Polish royal couple repeatedly asked Isabella for news concerning her health and situation. Sigismund I did so already in mid-March 1539.¹¹ This special family bond is present also in the January, 29, 1539 matrimonial contract, the aim of which was to secure Isabella's finances.¹² The contract's accuracy resulted from realism and the awareness of the Jagiellonians of the political situation in Hungary. The negotiations with Szapolyai on the realization of the financial side of the agreement lasted until May 1540 and therefore it was perhaps a main topic of mutual relations in this period.

7 Karolina Lanckorońska (ed.), *Elementa ad fontium editiones* (hereafter: EFE), t. 47. Romae: Institutum Historicum Polonicum, 1979, no. 227, 77, cf. no. 230, 83–85, and no. 248, 105–106; Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, t. 4. 208–210 and 383.

8 Péter Kasza, *Egy korszakváltás szemtanúja. Brodarics István pályaképe*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2015, 132–137. For broader international context cf. Zoltán Korpás, *V. Károly és Magyarország (1526–1538)*. Budapest: Századvég Kiadó, 2008, 183–199.

9 EFE, t. 43, no. 7, 6; t. 47, no. 298, 190–191, no. 300, 192–194; t. 48, no. 303, 4; *Stephanus Brodericus Epistulae*, edited by Petrus Kasza. Budapest: Argumentum Kiadó–Magyar Országos Levéltár, 2012, no. 338, 579.

10 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 57–58; Karl August Muffat (ed.), *Quellen und Erörterungen zur bayerischen und deutschen Geschichte*, Bd. 4: *Korrespondenzen und Aktenstücke zur Geschichte der politischen Verhältnisse der Herzöge Wilhelm und Ludwig von Bayern zu König Johann von Ungarn*. München: Georg Franz, 1857, no. 223, 517.

11 Archiwum Głównie Akt Dawnych, Metryka Koronna, Libri legationum (hereafter: LL), t. 8, fol. 10v, 22v, 45v, 62, 79r–79v, 107, 167r–167v, 186v; EFE, t. 56, no. 1781–1782, 181–182 (for the year 1540; for earlier years cf. vols. 53–55).

12 LL, t. 6, fol. 60v–72v; Brodericus, *Epistulae*, no. 340, 581–585.

For Isabella, the birth of John Sigismund and the death of John Szapolyai (on July 7 and July 22, 1540, respectively) created a substantially new situation. Torn between claims of Ferdinand I and the Porte, she relied to a significant degree on Jagiellonian diplomacy, which tended to continue its conciliatory approach and which was elaborated in relations with John I and Ferdinand I in the 1530s. This was the aim of the missions of Andrzej Czarnecki at the turn of 1540–1541 and Andrzej Górka in 1541. This time, however, it met with serious difficulties that appeared together with the presence in Hungary of the royal daughter and her son. Their personal security represented the primary objective in 1540–1541 and in subsequent years as well. Isabella was seriously limited in any attempts to engage in political activity by Friar George and the lords opposing Habsburg demands to hand over the land. Clear evidence of this limitation can be seen in the absence of the widow queen during some negotiations (as in October 1540) and in Martinuzzi's forcing of Polish diplomats to leave Buda.¹³ In this perspective, the pitiful situation of the queen in Buda besieged by Habsburg troops and endangered by the approaching Ottoman army reflected the scope of her diplomacy. Isabella, although she played certain role as a partner in negotiations, remained an object of the policies of others. As Polish envoy Czarnecki put it, she had "no power of her own to decide."¹⁴

That characteristic can be well applied also to the decade after the fall of Buda (1541–1551), at least to the initial years. Isabella's dependence on Friar George with regard to internal issues extended to matters of diplomacy as well. The organization of power in the Transylvanian state made it harder to build a center of royal authority that possessed adequate resources. Friar George was treasurer under John I Szapolyai and in 1542 he kept his post on behalf of the Transylvanian estates and in 1544 was granted broad authority to control all state revenue, including that derived from the queen's domain (*iudex supremus/iudex generalis*). Another factor was rapidly changing political relations and loyalties.¹⁵ It was not without reason that Jagiellonian diplomacy constantly insisted on providing Isabella with adequate financial resources to exercise power. The contrast between the queen's attitude in 1541 and that in the years 1550–1551 was significant. In the period after moving to eastern Hungary she accepted the Treaty of Gyula, attaining material security for herself and John Sigismund in a rather minimal domain (Szepes/Spiš). However, it happened before the illusions regarding the ability of the Habsburgs to defeat the Ottomans in the Carpathian Basin were dispelled following the catastrophic 1542 campaign

13 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (hereafter: HHStA) Ungarische Akten Allgemeine Akten, Fasc. 45, Konv. C, fol. 76, Konv. D, fol. 11.

14 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, Ms 1598 IV, fol. 43–43v; EFE, t. 48, no. 387, 151.

15 Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Ms 221, 191–194, 206–207, 210–215 (legations of Sigismund I from 1546 and 1547); Teréz Oborni, *Udvar, állam és kormányzat a kora újkori Erdélyben. Tanulmányok*. Budapest: ELTE, 2011; Teréz Oborni, 'From Province to Principality: Continuity and Change in Transylvania in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century', in István Zombori (ed.), *Fight against the Turk in Central Europe in the First Half of the 16th Century*. Budapest: METEM, 2004, 165–179.

and the subsequent Ottoman conquests. Years later, when the queen faced a withdrawal from Hungary based on the Nyírbátor Agreement (1549) that was negotiated by Friar George, she tried to oppose this move diplomatically and militarily. This reflects the change that had occurred during this period with regard to the scope of Isabella's autonomy and maturity as politician – a change which became complete and apparent during the next period of her reign.

In the early 1550s Isabella found herself liberated from the control of Friar George after he was assassinated by Habsburg mercenaries in December 1551. Yet, the conflict with Friar George was soon replaced by diplomatic struggle with Ferdinand I for financial and territorial compensation. This was quickly superseded by – more or less hidden – efforts to regain the Transylvanian domain. These maneuvers were made possible by the backing Isabella found in Poland, but were due largely to Hungarian supporters and the Ottoman Porte. In this period the queen received more acknowledgement as an indispensable party in negotiations. However, Isabella in her diplomacy seemed to benefit less from dynastic ties, as the relation between Sigismund August and Bona broke down and the old queen decided to leave Poland in 1556. In the period after her return to Transylvania, Isabella could finally influence diplomatic initiatives, the first of which were clearly the conflict with Ferdinand I and securing the succession of John Sigismund. The mission of Mikołaj Cikowski to Sigismund August in 1558 represented interesting evidence of the aims of the queen and the scope of her diplomacy.¹⁶ Although Isabella constantly used the argument of being in danger along with her son (no refuge in case of Ottoman attack), prudent tactics and awareness prevailed and the tone of these missions was in general different from the missions of the 1540s.

ENVOYS, COURIERS AND SERVANTS

During her reign, Queen Isabella made use of a number of people whom historiography usually defines as “diplomatic staff.” However, this group was quite heterogeneous and cannot be described as consistent or stable. Among the people in this group, we rarely meet envoys who can be labelled “professional.” It was an exception to the role Antal Verancsics (Antun Vrančić), who served as a diplomat of the Szapolyais until going over to the Habsburg side in 1549. He traveled on behalf of Isabella to her parents (1542, 1543, 1548) and to Ferdinand I (1543). As a member of the humanist *respublica litteraria*, Verancsics could use a network of contacts he made with members of the élite, i.e., during his possible studies in Kraków.¹⁷

16 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, Ms 69 (Teki Naruszewicza, t. 69), no. 218, 767–771, no. 226, 795–798.

17 Wacław Urban, ‘Związki Dalmatyńczyków braci Wrančićów z Polską i Polakami (XVI w.)’, *Przegląd Historyczny* 78:2 (1987) 157–165; Zsófia Gál-Mlakár, ‘Verancsics Antal korának humanista hálozatában. Vázlat egy kapcsolati háló modellezéséhez’, *Publicationes Universitatis Miskolcensis. Sectio Philosophica* 14:2 (2009) 115–144.

Envoys were recruited primarily from the queen's chancellery and court, mostly as secretaries and counsellors (*consiliarius*), though were frequently described merely as servants (*servitor*). To Ferdinand I, Isabella sent Hungarians such as Imre Bebek, András Mágóchy, Péter Perényi (1541), Benedek Bajony (1542), Gáspár Pesti (1547) and György Horváth (1548), the Transylvanian Saxon Peter Haller (1547) and also Marshal of the Court Mikołaj Cikowski (1554), who traveled to Constantinople as well (1546). Antonius from Ragusa served there as envoy of Isabella in June 1551 and Pál Baky in 1553 and 1554 (envoy of Isabella and of Péter Petrovics). Unsurprisingly, in contacts with Poland, Isabella used her countrymen both as envoys and couriers. They appear most notably in the service of the queen during the period she spent in Poland. In addition to Cikowski, Maciej Łobocki, a former follower and counsellor of both John I and Ferdinand I, was a very important person. Łobocki served Isabella beginning in September 1551 and negotiated conditions of withdrawal from Hungary and matters regarding the Silesian principalities (1551–1552) for her.¹⁸ Among others, Jan Sierakowski was sent to Ferdinand I (1554) and Marcin Zborowski to Poland (1556). Frequently only the last name is given in the sources, typically inaccurately, as in the case of “Lantzki,” who served Isabella's secretary in 1554 and was probably Andrzej Łacki, a courtier of Sigismund August beginning in 1558.¹⁹ Sometimes a name is not even recorded (*secretus homo*, *secretarius polonus*, *servitor*).²⁰ This reflects another substantial issue pertaining to Isabelline diplomacy, namely the role of people in Jagiellonian service and connected to the dynasty through ties of personal loyalty. In 1540 Kacper Smolik, later for many years a courtier of Sigismund I and Sigismund August, went from Buda to Moravia to visit Ferdinand I.²¹ Another royal courtier, Marek Osiecki, appeared as envoy to Hungary and then served Isabella in the 1550s.²² In 1551, the queen communicated with her mother Bona via the physician of the latter.²³ Gabriel Grabowiecki, secretary of Sigismund August and Isabella, played an important role.²⁴ The queen frequently used Jagiellonian envoys and couriers whom had been sent to her to deliver her own messages. They then served as messengers and/or envoys in both directions. This practice was connected to the problem of the status of the envoy. The question of whom the envoy represented, as in case

18 On Łobocki, see Waclaw Urban, ‘Łobocki (Łobodzki) Maciej h. Jastrzębiec’, in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* 18 (1973) 374–375; Szymon Brzeziński, ‘Maciej Łobocki. Egy 16. századi lengyel-magyar pálya’, in Ildikó Horn, Gábor Várkonyi et al. (eds.), *Művészet és mesterség. Tisztelgő kötet R. Várkonyi Ágnes emlékére*, vol. 1. Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2016, 123–137.

19 HHStA Staatsabteilungen Polen (hereafter: Polonica), Fasc. 7, Konv. 3, fol. 9; Marek Ferenc, *Dwór Zygmunta Augusta. Organizacja i ludzie*. Oświęcim: Napoleon V, 2014, 221.

20 HHStA Polonica, Fasc. 5, Konv. 3, fol. 8v; HHStA Hungarica, Fasc. 49, Konv. B, fol. 59v–60.

21 HHStA Hungarica, Fasc. 43, Konv. B, fol. 118a; Ferenc, *Dwór Zygmunta Augusta*, 230.

22 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, Ms 1603 IV, 139; EFE, t. 37, no. 803, 44; HHStA Polonica, Karton 7, Konv. 2, fol. 128v, Konv. 3, fol. 4v–5, 9v–10 (his role in 1554).

23 EFE, t. 44, no. 62, 57.

24 HHStA Polonica, Fasc. 7, Konv. 3, fol. 230–234v, Fasc. 8, Konv. 3, fol. 84–86 (years 1554, 1556); cf. Ferenc, *Dwór Zygmunta Augusta*, 274, *passim*.

of joint Polish–Hungarian or Polish–Transylvanian missions, arises repeatedly.²⁵ Sometimes aims of the mission remained unclear, e.g., Antal Verancsics in the years 1546–1548, apart from being a diplomat of Queen Isabella, served Friar George as well and not lastly did not neglect his own interests. The difference between diplomatic mission, espionage/information intermediary and private travel at times appeared to be blurred.

Isabella's diplomats did not form a distinct group. They were employed flexibly, not surprisingly according to the aims and country of the mission. Only a few of them can be classified as “professionals.” However, the applied terminology varied and can be misleading *nuntius/legatus* meant more than *courier*. Personnel of chancellery and some courtiers played a significant role in the missions of Isabella, with a special contribution from the people associated with the Jagiellonians. Servants (partly anonymous for us) carried out the everyday tasks in the queen's diplomacy.

INFORMATION FLOW

An important issue in diplomatic practice connected to Isabella Jagiellon is that of the difficulties she encountered. I mentioned the influence of political patrons, rivals and lack of sufficient resources to develop wide-ranging, stable and efficient diplomacy. In 1545, for instance, the Transylvanian Diet in Torda penalized the dispatch of letters and envoys without authorization from Friar George.²⁶ The peculiar military-political situation in the Carpathian Basin also made it hard to satisfy a crucial condition for successful diplomatic activity – information flow. Serious troubles emerged in this domain already in the years 1540–1541. In Poland the political élite suffered from lack of information regarding Isabella and her son, a problem about which the Polish royal couple frequently complained.²⁷ The cause of this seems to have been permanent unrest on the Habsburg–Ottoman borderlands. However, especially at times of greater strategic importance such as the year 1551, the Habsburg side intentionally disrupted the usage of routes and the circulation of news and people acting in the service of the Szapolyais. This occurred in 1551, when Isabella intervened with Ferdinand on behalf of her envoys imprisoned and despoiled by Gábor Perényi.²⁸ Earlier this year Ferdinand I personally gave orders concerning a courier (Jan Grudzieński) sent by Isabella to Poland and who had fallen into captivity along the way.²⁹ The imprisonment of envoys and couriers, just as the

25 Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Ms 221, 184–194 (Polish envoy to Constantinople as an envoy of Isabella, 1546).

26 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 1). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1875, 217.

27 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, Ms 1598 IV, 73v–84.

28 HHStA Hungarica, Fasc. 57, Konv. B, fol. 83–83v, Konv. C, fol. 45–45v, 64, 73; Fasc. 58, Konv. A, fol. 94–94v, Konv. C, f. 77–78, 106–107; Fasc. 61, Konv. C, fol. 38v–40.

29 HHStA Hungarica, Fasc. 57, Konv. B, fol. 83–83v, Konv. C, fol. 44–45v, 64, 73.

confiscation of letters, was by no means an exception in this age. It certainly was not merely a distinctive feature of relations with Ottoman Empire. The history of Isabella's reign provides plenty of examples of such difficulties.³⁰ In 1551, for instance, an envoy of Isabella traveled to France in disguise.³¹

A related problem was slower-than-expected information flow.³² Letters got lost, so decision-makers, among them Isabella, were forced to puzzle over ways to transfer news and people.³³ Additionally there was a great deal of gossip and spurious news. This coincided partly with military and political turmoil. Typically rumors – intentionally or unintentionally – concerned military events and the size of armies, but also concerned marriages and deaths. For example, Isabella was said to have married Friar George (1540) or to have been murdered by Menyhárt Balassa (1558).³⁴ Thus within the context of Isabella's reign we face a variety of difficulties in exercising control on information flow, its safety and reliability.

FEMALE RULE – WOMAN DIPLOMACY?

The entire reign of Isabella should be perceived from the perspective of her position as a female ruler. She left Poland at the age of 20, thus as an adult, with formed habits, royal aspirations and expectations concerning issues like building a court, revenue or the autonomy of a sovereign. Her parents paid much attention to her education and future – she was undoubtedly their beloved child, just as Sigismund August. Isabella spent most of her childhood and youth in the parental court: together with her brother she accompanied the royal couple during their stays in Vilnius, contrary to the other daughters of Sigismund I and Bona. Later on, the king and queen continued to pay special attention to Isabella. Historians have generally pointed out the influence of Bona in shaping the model of political activity for the queen of Hungary. Leaving Kraków entailed a certain growth in personal autonomy for Isabella, as was seen also by some contemporaries.³⁵ To become a political subject meant marking her own position

30 HHStA Polonica, Fasc. 8, Konv. 2, fol. 103–104, 106–106v; EFE, t. 36, no. 700, 150–153: informational chaos of 1541, t. 44, no. 38, 39, t. 48, no. 405, 186; *Történeti Lapok* 2 (1875), no. 42, 660–661, no. 43, 677–679; Árpád Károlyi (ed.), *Codex epistolaris Fratrís Georgii Utyesenovics (Martinuzzi dicti) 1535–1551. Fráter György levelezése 1535–1551*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1881, no. 143, 220–221.

31 Károlyi (ed.), *Codex epistolaris*, no. 160b, 247–248.

32 HHStA Hungarica, Fasc. 47, Konv. C, fol. 23–23v (a delay of over two months in a letter sent from Ferdinand I to the provost of the Spiš Chapter, 1542); Fasc. 55, Konv. A, fol. 1–1v (delay of Polish and Transylvanian envoys, 1548); Károlyi (ed.), *Codex epistolaris*, no. 109, 173–174.

33 HHStA Polonica, Fasc. 6, Konv. 1, fol. 2; Lipót Óváry (ed.), *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történelmi Bizottságának oklevél-másolatai*, vol. 2. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1894, no. 635, 137.

34 EFE, t. 39, no. 1232, 33, t. 43, no. 209, 166, t. 48, no. 378, 132.

35 EFE, t. 48, no. 316, 26; Mikolaj Nipszyc on Isabella to Albrecht Hohenzollern in 1539 (*„gefencnknis von ihrer hefftigen mutter”*).

as a female ruler as well, especially after July 1540, when she acted in the multiple role of regent, widow queen and mother of an elected king.

Female rule was of course not an exception at this time. Quite to the contrary, female rulers governed in many European countries and provinces in the middle of the sixteenth century. Probably the most well-known of these rulers was Queen Elizabeth I, or Mary Stuart. Worth mentioning in continental Europe are Regent of Spain Johanna of Austria, Governor of Netherlands Margaret of Parma or Queen Margaret of Navarre.³⁶ In the Eastern European context, relevant are Mary of Hungary and Bona Sforza. The mother of Isabella was perhaps the prime example: despite all differences (including personality and political-dynastic circumstances), she also caused controversies and faced resistance to her policies in domestic matters. In her attitude toward Isabella (similarly to Sigismund I), Bona repeatedly demonstrated respect for her daughter's autonomy in decisions concerning her eastern Hungarian domain.³⁷ It of course served as a useful diplomatic pretext as well, as Bona clearly wished that Isabella remain in Hungary from the turn of 1542/1543 until 1555 and return to the country after 1551.

In accordance with the European debates on the rule of women, contemporary opinions on Queen Isabella's reign consisted, on the one hand, of general stereotypes of female rule and, on the other hand, of comments on her specific actions. Both coexisted in some sources in order to make the texts more persuasive. Mikołaj Rej's malicious characterization of Isabella in his *Żwierzyniec* (1562) as an "odd lady" of weak "feminine intellect" who caused much trouble for other rulers is an emblematic and frequently quoted comment.³⁸ Similar views, although in more moderate form, were expressed by opponents of the queen such as Friar George.³⁹ In this view Isabella was a troublemaker who through conflict with Ferdinand increased the Ottoman threat and helped Süleyman to conquer all of Hungary.⁴⁰ It was a part of a narrative that aimed to prove that stewardship over the queen was necessary because of her sex and in order to properly bring up John Sigismund. An additional element of this opinion was the critique of Isabella's foreign Polish milieu.⁴¹ It completed an image of an unsteady, unreliable female ruler. Through views of authors like Ferenc Forgách this negative opinion was transmitted in a certain segment of historical tradition.

In her diplomacy, Isabella could make use of the role she had to fulfill. She applied the rhetorical pattern of the unfortunate widow and mother many

36 Cf. Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki (eds.), *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*. Urbana–Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

37 E.g., LL t. 9, fol. 138 (year 1541).

38 Mikołaj Rej, *Żwierzyniec*, edited by Wilhelm Bruchnalski (Biblioteka Pisarzy Polskich 30). Kraków: Akademia Umiejętności, 1895, 110. <http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/doccontent?id=1237> (accessed on August 28, 2019).

39 Károlyi (ed.), *Codex epistolaris*, no. 161, 249–251, no. 191, 299, no. 241, 366; on the upbringing of John Sigismund: no. 200a, 310, no. 201b, 313–314.

40 EFE, t. 50, no. 551, 50–51.

41 Cf. Oborni, *Udvar, állam és kormányzat*, 42.

times, complaining about her living conditions or the treatment to which others subjected her.⁴² In fact, Isabella's status enabled her to play any role at all in the diplomatic game over Hungary and Transylvania. In a monograph on Polish–Ottoman relations, Andrzej Dziubiński pointed out the role of “woman diplomacy” in the context of letters from Sultan Süleyman's wife Hürrem Sultana (Roxolana) to Isabella and Bona in 1542 and 1543 as well as in correspondence between Roxolana and her daughter Mihrimah, wife of Rüstem Pasha, with Sigismund August in 1548 and 1549.⁴³ The quite unusual engagement of women in Ottoman diplomacy (during the sixteenth century, a similar situation occurred only in 1580 with the letters of a wife of Selim II) should not be regarded as unique on a European scale. The rhetoric of “female solidarity” as a tactical step in this concrete situation was remarkable, but the practice of diplomatic contacts of queen consorts and female rulers occurred on a regular basis. Ottoman diplomacy as a whole supported the Szapolyais during the entire period, but was far from treating Isabella as a political subject. The first encounter between Sultan Süleyman and John Sigismund near Buda in 1541 was characteristic of this: Isabella did not speak to the padishah and only her baby son was presented to the Ottoman ruler.⁴⁴ Later on, the Porte continually supported the Szapolyais, though always treated John Sigismund (“King Stephen”) as the genuine vassal ruler of Hungary or wanted someone to represent him in governance until he came of age.⁴⁵

CONCLUSIONS

The diplomacy of Isabella Jagiellon can hardly be described in the categories of the diplomacy of a modern state and its narratives. Moreover, it sometimes does not fit within the frameworks of “Polish,” “Hungarian” or “Transylvanian”

42 Biblioteka Książąt Czartoryskich, Kraków, Ms 1598 IV, 43–45; Biblioteka Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich Wrocław, Ms 179/II, 95–97, 168–169, 195–196.

43 Dziubiński, *Stosunki*, 151–152, 195–197; cf. HHStA Staatsabteilungen Türkei (Turcica) 1, 8, Konv. 2, fol. 44, 45; *Austro-Turcica 1541–1552. Diplomatische Akten des habsburgischen Gesandtschaftsverkehrs mit der Hohen Pforte im Zeitalter Süleymans des Prächtigen*, bearb. von Srećko M. Džaja unter Mitarb. von Günter Weiß in Verbindung mit Mathias Bernath, hg. von Karl Nehring (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 95). München: Oldenbourg, 1995, no. 136–137, 377–378.

44 Óváry, *A Magyar Tudományok Akadémia*, no. 389 and 390, 80–82: audience with Süleyman and Isabella's complaint about omitting her in new partition of Hungary.

45 Cf. Ernst Dieter Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente im Österreichischen Staatsarchiv, Band 1. (1480–1574)* (Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs. Ergänzungsband 10/1). Wien: Generaldirektion des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs, 1991, no. 63, 41–42, no. 162, no. 167–172, 72–75, no. 178–181, 77–78, no. 204, 84–85, no. 237, 95–96; Anton C. Schaendlinger, *Die Schreiben Süleymans des Prächtigen an Karl V., Ferdinand I. und Maximilian II. Transkriptionen und Übersetzungen* (Osmanisch-türkische Dokumente aus dem Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien, Bd. 1.). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1983; Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, „Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való.” A szultáni tanács Magyarországra vonatkozó rendeletei (1544–1545, 1552) (História Könyvtár. Okmánytárak 1). Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 2005, no. 49, 269–272, no. 186, 426–429.

foreign policy or “Polish–Hungarian relations.” It was close to dynastic patterns of the age, but with serious limitations and local peculiarities. A justified question is, how did it look in the context of the development of European diplomacy of the age? In making comparisons we should be careful and abandon the traditional criteria of modernity, such as the clear distinction between the “old” and allegedly worse (that which was predominant in Eastern and Northern Europe) and the “new” and supposedly better (that originating in Renaissance Italy).⁴⁶ In this period in East Central Europe, as proved by the example of the Austrian Habsburgs, more traditional forms not only co-existed, but could be effective as well. For example, the lack of standing embassies did not determine the degree of efficiency, the scope and the professional character of diplomatic activity.

For most of her reign in Hungary/Transylvania, Queen Isabella lacked a clear, developed center of power and a stable financial footing, being largely dependent on non-dynastic actors. Crucial decisions were made mostly at other courts (the Habsburg, the Ottoman and, to some extent, the Jagiellonian in Poland). This could have been the “bad fortune” of which she repeatedly complained. To become a political subject remained for Isabella a never-ending challenge that she met with some success only in the last years of her rule. As in other areas of the nascent Transylvanian state, it was a gradual process of building institutions and adapting them to a new political situation that did not end with her death. However, if we attempt to present an assessment of her efforts, given the numerous obstacles, it was rather positive. The main goal of Isabella’s last years – to settle relations with the Habsburgs and compel them to recognize her power in Transylvania – remained unfulfilled, though this objective was reached by John Sigismund. First of all, Isabella managed to secure her son’s rule, which was the primary task of female regents. From that point of view, her diplomatic activity proved successful over the longer run.

⁴⁶ For the traditional view and distinctions mentioned here, see the influential work: Matthew Smith Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450–1919*. London–New York: Longman, 1993, on Eastern Europe, 27–32.

GOVERNANCE

“GEORGIUS MONACHUS CONTRA REGINAM” – QUEEN ISABELLA AND HER REIGN OVER THE EASTERN KINGDOM OF HUNGARY (1541–1551)

Historiographer Farkas Bethlen (1639–1679) provided the most detailed accounts of the fall of Buda, one of the most harrowing events in the sixteenth-century history of Hungary, and the destinies of Isabella and her son, whom the sultan sent to Transylvania after taking the city, in his book *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*.¹ In this work, which contains copies of contemporary letters to support these narratives, Bethlen remarked more than once that Queen Isabella maintained only nominal rule over her realm and that all royal prerogatives and power in fact lay in the hands of Friar George (1482–1551), whose actions were continuously aimed at undermining the queen. Isabella, whom Sultan Süleyman had driven out of Buda, found herself facing an extremely difficult situation.² As she attempted to establish a new country for herself and her son in the eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary, she was also engaged in a relentless power struggle with Friar George, her late husband's leading counselor. The Friar, who was described as omnipotent by contemporaries, in 1551 came out on top in this power struggle. However, Friar George, the lord-lieutenant (*locumtenens*) of John

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1 Wolffgangi de Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*, vol. 1. Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782.

2 György/Juraj Utišenić/Utišeniović (1482–1551). For more on the life of Friar George see the following works: Antoine Béchet, *Histoire du ministere du Cardinal Martinusius*. Paris: Par la Compagnie des Libraries Associez, 1715; Mihály Horváth, ‘Utišezzenich Fráter György (Martinuzzi bíbornok) élete’, in *Horváth Mihály kisebb történelmi munkái*. Pest: Ráth Mór, 1868, 1–427; Ognjeslav Utišeniović, *Lebensgeschichte des Cardinals Georg Utišeniović genannt Martinusius*. Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1881; Gábor Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?* Budapest: Helikon, 1988; Ante Sekulić, *Naš velikan graditelj povijesti Juraj Utišiniović Martinušević: 1482–1551* (Knjižnica hrvatske povijesti i kulture 2). Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap, 1996; Adriano Papo and Gizella Nemeth Papo, *Frate Giorgio Martinuzzi. Cardinale, soldato e statista dalmata agli arbori del Principato di Transilvania*. Canterano: Aracne Editrice, 2017, and Teréz Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát. Fráter György (1482–1551)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2017.

Sigismund II King Elect of Hungary was not able to enjoy his dubious victory for very long: in December of the same year, assassins acting at the behest of Ferdinand I murdered him at his castle in Alvinc (Vințu de Jos, Romania).

THE FALL OF BUDA AND EXPULSION OF ISABELLA AND HER SON

Piotr Porębski was one of the Polish lords who arrived to Hungary with Queen Isabella from the royal court in Kraków in 1539.³ Porębski served as Isabella's secretary, though also performed the duty of keeping her parents informed about what was happening in Buda. Our present knowledge suggests that he was the author of the anonymous account describing the Ottoman occupation of Buda and the queen's departure from the city.⁴ Antal Verancsics produced several writings that represent basic sources for reconstructing the fall of Buda, notably the "Verancsics-yearbook" that he wrote along with several other authors entitled *Memoria rerum*.⁵ These works reveal that Ottoman military forces reached the vicinity of Pest on August 26, 1541, and that the following day the sultan and his immediate entourage pitched camp north of Buda, somewhere in the vicinity of Óbuda – to which the chronicle of Verancsics refers as *Sicambria*. According to the chronicle, the sultan chose to establish his camp at this location because to the south of Pest the waters of the Danube and the flatlands alongside the river were full of corpses as a result of the nearly one-year Habsburg siege.⁶

3 Piotr Porębski (c. 1498–1569): Kraków canon, Queen Isabella's secretary from 1539 to 1549, first in Buda, then in Transylvania. *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 27. Kraków: PAU, 1983, 662–663; Péter Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri Legationum sorozatának magyar vonatkozású iratai*, vol. 2, 1526–1541. Miskolc: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár, 2003, 13.

4 For a copy of the account, see Biblioteca Academiei Române, Cluj-Napoca, Colecția J. Kemény, Mss. KJ. 289. Tom. I. 257–268; published in László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 1, *Történelmi dolgozatok deák nyelven, 1490–1551* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 2). Pest: Eggenberger, 1857, 162–173.

5 Antal Verancsics/Antun Vrančić (1504–1573): prelate, diplomat, humanist historiographer, born in Sebenico (Šibenik, Croatia) and studied in Padua. Entered the service of King John of Hungary in 1530, then after the monarch's death in 1540 lived alongside his widow in Transylvania. In 1549, he allied himself with Ferdinand and in 1569 became the Archbishop of Esztergom. For Verancsics's career, see Tomislav Pavičić, *Antun Vrančić. Znameniti šibenski Humanist*. Šibenik, Muzej Grada Šibenika, 2004; Zsófia Gál-Mlakár, 'Adatok Verancsics Antal udvarának történetéhez', *Fons* 14:2 (2007) 279–337; Zoltán Gözsy, 'Verancsics Antal és a humanista történetírás', in Zoltán Csabai et al. (eds.), *Pécsi Történeti Katedra. Cathedra Historica Universitatis Quinqueecclesiensis*. Pécs: PTE, 2008, 335–348; see publication of the chronicle *Memoria rerum* in László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 2, *Történelmi dolgozatok magyar nyelven, 1504–1566* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 3). Pest: Eggenberger, 1857, 5–119. Antal Verancsics was not the author of the Hungarian-language memoir containing the four chronicle-like works, although one may presume that these were written at his request. Among the four authors, only the citizen of Buda Tamás Bornemissza can be identified with complete certainty. See József Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria Rerum*, epilogue and notes by József Bessenyei. Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1981.

6 Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 2, 55.

Friar George, who had defended Buda Castle against the armies of Ferdinand I, led a small delegation on behalf of the royal council to greet the sultan on the same day he established his camp in the area of Óbuda.

Before following the course these events further, it would be worthwhile to examine the sessions of the royal council at which pro-Szapolyai lords discussed the issue of the sultan's reception. Ottoman troops were still just approaching Buda in the summer of 1541 when Isabella convened her counselors and asked them how they should receive the sultan, who had arrived with the declared objective of helping the young son of his ally in the fight against Ferdinand Habsburg. No minutes of this session of the royal council have survived – indeed, presumably none were taken. However, later sources do contain some information about this meeting. In one such source, the aforementioned prelate and diplomat Antal Verancsics made the following assertion, which he based on statements he had heard from Isabella's Italian secretary, Paolo Savorgnano: "When the armies of His Royal Majesty [Ferdinand I] laid such vigorous siege to Buda that there remained no hope of resisting it, Friar George, Péter Petrovics, István Werbőczy and others reportedly persuaded the queen through urgent counsel to beseech the Turks for assistance. The queen, who by all accounts abhorred the Turks, long resisted, though the arguments of her counselors finally convinced her to call in the Turks after all..."⁷

Both contemporaries and subsequent observers attributed the decision to seek Ottoman military support and to receive Süleyman and his army as friends to the influence of the most powerful lord among Isabella's counselors, Friar George. Historical sources explicitly refute the claim that Hungarian lords who supported King John had requested the intervention of the sultan, ascribing the decision to launch the Ottoman campaign against Hungary to the Sublime Porte and Süleyman himself.

The only real question may have been how to receive Süleyman and his dangerously large army following their arrival to Buda. Among the magnates, Friar George undoubtedly exercised a great deal of authority, though Bálint Török and Péter Petrovics were no less influential. According to a widely held opinion during this period, Friar George and Bálint Török recommended to the queen that the sultan be received cordially because the Turks had enticed both of them with the promise that they would receive appointment to serve as governor of the country. Antal Verancsics published an excerpt from a letter suggesting that Bálint Török and István Werbőczy had persuaded the queen during the meeting of the royal council following the arrival of the Ottoman troops to Buda to receive the Turks obligingly. This letter originated when Verancsics wanted to correct the noted Italian historiographer Paolo Giovio, who had asserted in his *World Chronicle* that at the urging of Friar George, Isabella had decided place trust in the sultan and to send her son to the Turkish camp. According to Verancsics,

⁷ National Széchényi Library, Budapest. Manuscript Collection, Fol. Lat. 4397, fol. 226–227; Gábor Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 96, 101–102. See also József Podhradczky, 'Martinúziának', *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1:1 (1855) 256–257.

Friar George and Bálint Török believed the words of the Turks, albeit for different reasons – the latter because in the course of his military service along the marches of the Kingdom of Hungary he had made many Turkish “soldier friends” with whose help he hoped to attain the position of governor of Hungary. Verancsics maintained that Werbőczy’s faith in the Turks was the product of his old age, intellectual simplicity and guileless nature and that as a result of his sincere belief in the validity of the treaty of alliance that King John I of Hungary had concluded with Süleyman in 1528, he had argued in support of the sultan’s integrity at the final meeting of the royal council.⁸ However, Werbőczy’s hopes vis-à-vis the Turks were soon to be dashed.

Returning to the history of the tragic days, as recorded in Verancsics’s chronicle, on August 28, 1541, Süleyman sent an amiable letter to Isabella via his *chavush*, Ali Orudj, in which he thanked the queen for her defense of Buda and announced that he wanted to see the young son of his former protégé and ally, King John, and to consult with the Hungarian magnates regarding the future of the country. The sultan also sent gifts to the queen and the young boy – four suits of clothes interwoven with gold and three beautiful horses with gilded harnesses. Süleyman also sent presents of gilded velvet garments to influential magnates, the chief magistrate of Buda and the city’s prominent citizens. According to Verancsics’s chronicle, the sultan asked Isabella to send her son to see him, since the Quran prohibits men from entering the house of unknown women as guests, and told the queen that he wanted to take care of the boy as if he were his own son and, in addition to Buda, would give him Vienna as a gift if possible.

The magnates prepared to meet the sultan with great pomp and enthusiasm, while the prospect of taking revenge on the “German emperor” with Turkish military assistance brought them some degree of happiness as well. However, Isabella was afraid. One of the authors of *Memoria rerum* recalled that the queen “weeps, laments and grieves and makes inquiries regarding the ways and means by which she might deliver herself of the need to send her son to the emperor.”⁹ Piotr Porębski confirmed that Isabella initially sought excuses to avoid sending her young son to Süleyman’s tent, though that the members of the royal council eventually convinced the queen that she must accept the invitation of the sultan because not doing so would be a sign of mistrust.

Tense deliberations regarding the future of Hungary, its capital city and the Szapolyai heirs were taking place not only at Buda Castle: the Imperial Divan had convened in the sultan’s tent to discuss these same issues. According to the historiographer Farkas Bethlen, the notoriously anti-Hungarian Mehmed Pasha of Belgrade¹⁰ proposed killing the Hungarian magnates, destroying

8 ‘Paolo Jovio Novocomensi, antistiti Nucerino Antonius Wrancius Sibenicensis dalmata S. P. D’, in Paulo Giovio, *Historiarum sui temporis*. Venetiis, 1566, 184–192, passim.

9 Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái*, vol. 2, 57.

10 Farkas Bethlen stated that Bali Pasha was present at the Ottoman camp near Buda, though Bali was in fact not there, though his brother Mehmed was. Yahyapaşazade Mehmed was sanjakkbey of Smederevo (1527–1534, 1536–1543, 1548–1550) and governor-general of Buda (1543–1548). His brother, Yahyapaşazade Bali Bey, served as governor of several sanjaks close to the Hungarian

their castles, taking those who resisted captive, sending the queen back to her parents in Poland and taking the prince to Constantinople to have him raised in accordance with the Muslim faith.¹¹ Mehmed Pasha also said that Hungary should be transformed into a province in order to eliminate the constant need to send troops to the country at great expense from faraway Asia or Egypt and that a wise and moderate governor must be placed in charge of this new domain of the Ottoman Empire. However, Rüstem Pasha (c. 1500–1561) expressed a different opinion, advocating peaceful measures at the meeting of the Imperial Divan despite his known penchant for aggressive action. Rüstem declared that the sultan, who was proud of his reputation for honesty, must keep his promise to protect the queen and her son, if for no other reason than to prevent Christians from charging him with breaking his word. The letter that Isabella sent to Rüstem Pasha appealing for his help along with gifts of her own jewelry for him and his wife Mihrimah may have played a role in Rüstem's formulation of more moderate viewpoints. The meeting of the Imperial Divan finally produced a decision: the occupied territories, which included Buda Castle, would become a Turkish province, while the queen and her son would receive Transylvania along with the section of Hungary extending from Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) at its apex in the north to Temes and Máramaros counties in the southeast and northeast, respectively. Süleyman retained Friar George in his position as guardian of Isabella and her son to which the late King John had appointed him, and invested him with unrestricted authority to govern the realm. The sultan furthermore appointed Péter Petrovics to serve as the commander of Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania), while he imprisoned Bálint Török, who in fighting on behalf of Ferdinand had inflicted significant damage upon the Turks.¹²

Süleyman designated August 29, not incidentally the anniversary of the Battle of Mohács, as the date on which the young prince would visit him. When it was time for Isabella's son to leave for the sultan's camp north of Buda, the queen wept as she handed the one-year-old boy to his nurse, entrusting Bálint Török to take care of him and commenting that Friar George, a Pauline monk, could not sympathize with her parental worry because he had no children of

border, including of Smederevo (1513–1515, 1517–1518, 1521–1523, and 1524–1527), Shkoder (1519?–1521), Bosnia (1521), and Vidin (1524). See Aleksandar Fotić, 'Yahyapaşa-oğlu Mehmed Pasha's Evkaf in Belgrade', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 54 (2001) 439; Gábor Ágoston, *Ottoman and Habsburg Military Affairs in the Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*. 2017. Published at <https://georgetown.academia.edu/GaborAgoston>; and Pál Fodor, 'Wolf on the Border: Yahyapaşaoğlu Bali Bey (?–1527). Expansion and Provincial Élite in the European Confines of the Ottoman Empire in the Early Sixteenth Century', in Pál Fodor, Nándor E. Kovács and Benedek Péri (eds.), *Şerefe: Studies in Honour of Prof. Géza Dávid on his Seventieth Birthday*. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, 2019, 57–88.

11 Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. 1, 387–388.

12 "*Reginae cum ejus filio traditurum [i.e., Süleyman] in instanti totam Transsylvaniam, simul cum ea Hungariae parte, quae complectitur totum tractum a Cassovia incipiendo, usque ad Máramarosensem & Tömösváriensem Comitatus.*" Bethlen, *Historia*, vol. 1, 389–390.

his own.¹³ The stately procession departed around noon, carrying the prince in a gilded carriage along with his nanny and two other matrons. The leaders of the large delegation headed this procession: Friar George, Péter Petrovics, Bálint Török, István Werbőczy, his son Imre Werbőczy, Orbán Batthyány, János Podmaniczky, Miklós Cserepovith and behind them the other members of the entourage – Buda Chief Magistrate Miklós Turkovics, Péter Márkus and other citizens of Buda.

After arriving to the Turkish camp, the nanny took the prince to Süleyman's tent, where the sultan took him into his arms, kissed him, mentioned to those around him the child's similarity to this father and then held the boy out to his two sons present on this occasion – Selim and Bayezid – so that they could kiss him as an adopted brother. As he held the Szapolyai prince in his arms, the sultan was able to personally refute the rumor – which sources indicate either Mehmed Pasha or Hieronymus Łaski had propagated – that the boy was actually a girl.¹⁴ According to one of the legends surrounding this event, the sultan then placed a scepter in young John Sigismund's hands and said the following words: "Behold the son of my brother, King John, I give you this crosier (!) and you shall duly and befittingly rule over your people in the mountains and valleys of your kingdom."

The reception then began for the Hungarian lords, who during this protracted affair in the sultan's tent perceived the gathering of Janissaries outside and heard the shouts of military commands. The lords began to suspect that the Turks were preparing to take Buda Castle, a rumored course of action that they had regarded as improbable. The elderly women who had accompanied the prince and his nanny began to sob, believing that they would never be able to return the boy to his mother. In the meantime, an army of around 3,000 Ottoman Turkish soldiers marched to Buda Castle via Szombat (Saturday) Gate, currently known as Bécsi (Vienna) Gate. At the head of this force was the beylerbey of Anatolia, who in the late afternoon declared that Buda Castle and the surrounding city thenceforth belonged to the sultan and ordered all citizens and residents of the castle district to leave immediately – a command with which most of them promptly complied. The Turks took those who had remained into custody, seized their possessions and confined them in an old barn or stables below the castle in the current vicinity of the Lánchíd (Chain Bridge), from where – according to one of the authors of *Memoria rerum* – "they released them unclothed, prodding and cursing them."¹⁵

13 *"...az Fráter Gyergy barát, szerzetes, és nem levín soha nős, sem fias ember, nem tudja micsoda legyen az magzati szerelem, te rád, Terek Bálint, ki tudod mind ezeket, mert felesíged és gyermekid vadnak, az én tulajdon egyetlen egy fiamat ajánlom, és tetőled az császárnak köldek, és hagyom teneked, hogy úgy viselj gondot reája, mint az tiédre, hogy ne veszjen, de bikiével megint hozz ötet haza."* Szalay (ed.), Verancsics Antal m. kir. helytartó, esztergomi érsek összes munkái, vol. 2, 58.

14 *"Az gyermeket kezibe veví, forgatni kezdí az két tenere között, és egykorban a sok szó között nagy okkal, hogy senki esziben ne venné, az kezít ingecske alá, természetire tevé, és akkor megtapasztaltatá, hogy fírfi, nem líán vót volna."* Ibid., 59.

15 Ibid., 62.

János Podmaniczky, Miklós Cserepovith, Péter Babay Kis, Péter Márkus and their Turkish escorts returned the child prince back to his mother shortly after midnight on August 30. Isabella was overjoyed to see her son, though her fear also became more intense and she thus doubled the number of guards posted at the castle. The Hungarian magnates undertook negotiations with the sultan and his pashas that stretched on for days at the Turkish encampment. Isabella soon realized that Süleyman had detained her counselors and therefore took the tactical step of writing a letter to the sultan in which she thanked him for his kind reception of her son and the hospitality he had extended to the lords. The queen then concluded the letter by again asking Süleyman to take her and her child under his protection. As the queen composed her letter, the Hungarian lords who had remained behind as “guests” of the sultan became involved in a dispute with high-ranking Ottoman military officers: the Turks demanded control over Buda, while the Hungarians insisted that this was not possible, even claiming that as private citizens they could only submit this question to the diet. Finally, the Turkish pashas shouted down the Hungarian lords, warning them that if they valued their lives they would refrain from exasperating the sultan, whose decisions they had no right to criticize.

On August 30, the leader of the Janissaries sent a message to the captain of the Buda Castle guards demanding that he open the castle gate. At this time, Isabella merely requested that the Turkish troops not be permitted to enter the castle as long as she was there. Although the sultan pledged to comply with the queen’s request, his soldiers broke this promise and more and more of them entered the castle district every day and plundered the civilian houses located there. According to Piotr Porębski, on August 31, Friar George paid a visit to Isabella in the company of Ali Orudj during which he and the Turkish *chavush* told the queen that Süleyman had the best interests of both she and her son in mind and informed her of the sultan’s gracious decision.

In his message to Isabella, Süleyman first of all emphasized that the late King John had placed his wife and his son under his guardianship, claiming that he had made the long trip to Hungary in his old age in order to protect the widow and her child from the German king. Süleyman stated in the message that he saw clearly what the situation was in Hungary, namely that the lords surrounding the queen could not find accord even among themselves and were not loyal to her, since in the past they had always provided their support to whichever king promised them more land and endowments. The sultan continued his message to the queen with the claim that “you, as a womanly creature, and your son being still in the cradle and in the arms of his nurse” were unfit to carry out the task of governing the country, which required a man.¹⁶ Süleyman then informed Isabella that he had already been compelled to come to the defense of Hungary many times in the past and that he could no longer afford to do so because other countries also required protection, thus he would take Buda under his control in order to safeguard the city against the Germans and return it to Prince John

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

Sigismund when he reached the age of 20. The sultan promised that he would permit John Sigismund to rule over the land as king just as he had done in the case of his father and that he would place a provision in his will commanding his sons to respect this pledge.

Süleyman also wrote in his message to Isabella that in order that she and her son have a place to live, he would give them Transylvania and the main castles on the western periphery of the region – those in Lippa (Lipova, Romania), Solymos (Șoimoș, Romania), Karánsebes (Caransebeș, Romania) and Temesvár – along with the territories that Friar George and Péter Petrovics had possessed following the reign of King John. Süleyman designated himself as the guardian of Isabella and John Sigismund and Friar George as his successor in this capacity and furthermore ordered that Péter Petrovics be placed in charge of military affairs, while the Romanian voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia and the pasha of Buda should be prepared to provide assistance to the queen and her son if necessary. Finally, the sultan instructed the queen to immediately pack up and leave with her son for Lippa.

Isabella, perceiving the sultan's obvious deceit, became angry and bitter, or as the chronicle of Verancsics wrote "she was full of venom," and wept as she commented upon her own misfortune and then thanked the sultan in response for the charity he had shown toward her. In her fury, Isabella lashed out at Friar George, declaring that although she was just a poor, ignorant womanly creature, if the magnates had acted according to her will, things would have turned out differently, Buda would not have fallen into pagan hands. The queen then told Friar George "now you, as men, can lie in in the bed you have made for yourselves," while if she and her son had to leave, they would leave.¹⁷ Friar George later contended that things had turned out for the best in this regard, because had they surrendered to the German king, the Turks would have taken Buda from both the them and the Germans and would have occupied the entire country. Friar George and Ali Oruç then returned to the sultan's camp, where talks continued for several days as Isabella prepared despairingly for the trip to Lippa.

The following day, the Agha of the Janissaries again met with Isabella and asked her to leave as soon as possible and to give him the keys to the castle. Because all the horses and oxen at the castle had been slaughtered and eaten during the long siege, it was necessary to quickly acquire both new draft animals as well as carriages. According to some sources, the sultan himself sent oxen to the queen. On September 2, Süleyman and his sons entered the castle district and pronounced the Friday *Khutbah* at the Church of the Assumption, which they declared to be a Muslim place of worship. On the seventh day, September 4, an Italian interpreter presented the flag of the Transylvanian sanjak to the queen's son and again announced that, following the sultan, Friar George would serve as the prince's guardian and the administrator of his domains and would govern the country that had been allotted to the boy until he came of age. On the evening of September 4, the lords also returned home – with the exception of Bálint Török,

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.

whom the Turks had taken into captivity.¹⁸ Isabella and her entourage left Buda the following day, carrying the Holy Crown of Hungary with them. The dismal procession headed slowly toward Szolnok, from where it would continue to Lippa, one of the final Szapolyai possessions. Several of Queen Isabella's ladies-in-waiting and other members of her entourage died of the plague during the trip, while many of the Hungarian lords joined the procession, including János Podmaniczky, András Báthory, Gáspár Drágffy, Miklós Patóchy and many other nobles who had been supporters of King John. Isabella and her depleted retinue arrived apprehensively to Lippa on September 18. Süleyman had commanded István Werbőczy to remain in Buda to serve as the magistrate for the remaining Christian inhabitants of the city, though he died of poisoning three days after the sultan issued his order. A new era had begun for the queen dowager and the eastern part of Hungary.

THE EARLY YEARS: ESTABLISHING THE CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEW COUNTRY (1542–1544)

The territory (*ditio*) over which Isabella and John II assumed control was composed of the eastern portion of the Kingdom of Hungary, that is, the counties lying to the east of the Tisza River, Transylvania and Kassa-based Upper Hungary. Transylvania, which constituted the largest part of eastern Hungary, had possessed a certain degree of political autonomy already during the Middle Ages, when a voivode appointed by the king governed the region. Although the sultan divided the territory that had been placed under the authority of the Szapolyai family into two separate sanjaks (Transylvania and the Temesköz-region), he did not introduce Ottoman imperial administration in these domains. Farkas Bethlen asserted that the leading Hungarian magnates, acting upon a proposal from the queen, agreed to a distribution of authority over smaller regions within the new Szapolyai-governed realm. According to this agreement, the existence of which is substantiated in documents from the Hungarian diet, Péter Petrovics was given control over the Temesköz, including Lippa and Temesvár, while Friar George was granted the authority to govern the dioceses of Várad and Csanád and the area lying between the Körös and Tisza Rivers and Lénárd Czecezy was accorded jurisdiction over Upper Hungary. Under this arrangement, Queen Isabella retained control over Transylvania and Máramaros County.¹⁹ Thus the part of the country ruled in the name of the Szapolyai family embraced the vast eastern section of the previous Kingdom of Hungary, for the

18 Bálint Török de Enying (1502/1503?–1550): Hungarian magnate, major landowner and military commander who became notorious for switching his allegiance between John I and Ferdinand I on several occasions. The sultan took Török captive during Hungarian–Turkish negotiations near Buda in 1541 and he ended his life at the Yedikule Fortress in Constantinople. See József Bessenyei (ed.), *Enyingi Török Bálint okmánytára*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1994.

19 Bethlen, *Historia*, 408–409; Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1 (*Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae I*). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 106.

most part those territories that the Hungarian diet meeting on Rákos Field east of Pest had placed under the dominion of the infant crown-prince as elected King John II. The new Szapolyai realm had to quickly be organized into a new state entity and its internal system of government built upon the legal and constitutional foundations established over the previous centuries. Moreover, a new residence had to be established for Isabella and young John Sigismund, one that would also serve as a center of government and royal authority.

Hereinafter we shall follow the process by which the eastern part of Hungary was transformed into an autonomous country under the rule of Queen Isabella and her son. The proceedings at provincial assemblies of the Transylvanian estates provide the best opportunity to examine this process. These provincial assemblies continued to convene based on the legislative traditions of the Kingdom of Hungary even after the arrival of Queen Isabella and her son to Transylvania. However, the functions and legislative practices of these provincial assemblies, also known as partial assemblies (*congregatio particularis*), underwent a relatively rapid transformation during the 1540s, when they began to exercise prerogatives that had previously fallen under the exclusive authority of the general assembly (*congregatio generalis*) of the Kingdom of Hungary.²⁰ The mid-level administrative organization of the new country did not present many difficulties: the counties, the cities and the Saxon and Székely seats (i.e., administrative units, *szék* in Hungarian, *sedes* in Latin) continued to operate in the established manner. However, the estates had to regulate high-level government administration and the prerogatives of those who possessed supreme power through the adoption of new fundamental laws.

The rule of Queen Isabella and her son in the eastern part of Hungary was initially based on the so-called “appointment” they had received from Sultan Süleyman, though the diets of the Transylvanian estates soon affirmed their royal status. John II attained his regal title via election as king, while in Isabella’s case only confirmation from the estates was necessary, since ranks she had attained in her own right had sanctioned her reign: the legitimately crowned queen of Hungary (*regina Hungariae legitime coronata*), the widow of King John, the mother of elected King John II and one of the guardians that the sultan had designated for the royal successor.

Queen Isabella encountered exceptional difficulties during the initial years of her rule in Transylvania (1541–1544). The castle in Lippa to which Isabella and her entourage arrived in September 1541 had been one of the queen’s engagement gifts from John Szapolyai I. The castle was cold and dreary, while its proximity to Turkish-held territory alarmed Isabella, just as had been the case in Buda. A letter that Isabella wrote to the chief captain of Kraków and the commander-in-chief of the Polish army, Piotr Kmita Sobieński, reveals that

20 Teréz Oborni, ‘From Province to Principality: Continuity and Change in Transylvania in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century’, in István Zombori (ed.), *Fight Against the Turk in Central-Europe in the First Half of the 16th Century*. Budapest: METEM, 2004, 165–180; Teréz Oborni, *Erdélyi országgyűlések a 16–17. században*. Budapest: Országgház Kiadó, 2018, 104–118.

she was not very enthusiastic about going to Transylvania because she thought that there were too many nationalities living in the region and that the frequent conflict between them made the prospect of living there dangerous.²¹ The queen regarded Kassa to be the best place for her to settle – an opinion that her parents shared as a result of the fact that the city was located relatively close to Poland. In the autumn of 1541, Sigismund “the Old” advised his daughter to try to comply with the stipulations of the Treaty of Várad that John I had concluded with Ferdinand, to move to Kassa and to take the fortune that belonged to her and her late husband along with her if she did.²² Isabella’s counselors urged her not to take up residence in the latter city because it was near lands under the control of her pro-Ferdinand enemies. With regard to this advice, the queen commented that it had been issued “as if I were not now in the maw of the Turks.”²³ The Sublime Porte would not have even permitted Isabella to establish her royal residence in Kassa: when Andrzej Górka met with Süleyman as an envoy of the king of Poland, the sultan repeatedly stated that he had given Transylvania to Isabella and her son and that the queen should not therefore want to live in the city.²⁴ Friar George also opposed the idea of residency in Kassa and during a dispute with Isabella regarding her possible departure from Transylvania allegedly declared that the queen could go wherever she wanted to go, though she could not take her son with her. In the fall of 1542, Piotr Porębski sent a report from Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) regarding the state of affairs surrounding Isabella to Archbishop of Gniezno Piotr Gamrat and to Kraków merchant and royal banker Seweryn Boner in which he conveyed the opinion of Péter Petrovics that Isabella’s parents should dispatch a Polish military contingent composed of 300 cavalry and 200 infantry to escort the queen to Szepes Castle northwest of Kassa. Porębski furthermore wrote that they should also send sages, soldiers, servants and stewards who could be of service to Isabella in her time of need because everybody but Petrovics, the *ispán* (comes) of Temes County, had abandoned her either because, in the case of her other chosen counselors, they had not received provisions or, in the case of her attendants, they had realized that real power lay in the hands of others.²⁵

21 “*In Transilvaniam etiam nollemus ire, quia illic propter diversitatem nationum sunt semper factiones et tumultus...*” Letter from Isabella to Palatine of Kraków Piotr Kmita, Lipa, November 19, 1541. Biblioteka Jagiellońska (Kraków), Manuscript Archives, Acta Tomiciana Rkp. 6560, 736.

22 “*...vestra tutius commigrare qua Cassovia, qua cum sit terris nostris vicina, poterit a nobis si usus sit celeriter illi consuli... illud autem curet summo studio ut res suas et thesauros Serenissimi mariti sui secum exportare possit.*” Letter from King Sigismund I to his daughter, Vilnius, December 25, 1541. *Ibid.*, 444–445.

23 “*Cassoviam domini consilarii nostri nolunt nobis ad inhabitandum concedere allegant vicinitatem adversariorum, quasi vero nunc non essemus in faucibus Turcorum...*” Letter from Isabella to Palatine of Kraków Piotr Kmita, Lipa, November 19, 1541. *Ibid.*, 736.

24 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné (1519–1559)*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 209.

25 “*Nemo nunc est praeter Dominum Comitem temesiensem, alii in domus proprias abierunt. Magister curiae a longo tempore desideratur, servitores etiam quia vident alibi esse potentiam et auctoritatem deserunt eam libenter...*” Letter from Piotr Porębski to Severin Doner [correctly: Boner], Gyulafehérvár, October 11, 1542 in Lipót Óváry (ed.), *III. Pál pápa és Farnese Sándor bíbornok*

Aside from the pro-Szapolyai magnates, Queen Isabella initially sought advice and assistance primarily from her parents, a procedure in which Piotr Porębski played a significant role. The king and queen of Poland spent the winter of 1541–1542 in Vilnius, thus Isabella's emissaries frequently managed to make contact with court officials in Kraków sooner than they did with the royal couple. Among such officials was Piotr Kmita Sobieński, the recipient of many letters from Queen Isabella.²⁶ In March 1542, Queen Bona herself wrote a letter to Friar George in which she asked him that upon his honor and everything that was sacred to him he do everything he could to ensure that Isabella lived under conditions befitting a person of her rank, particularly since he had been responsible for arranging her daughter's marriage to John I and having her thus taken to Hungary.²⁷ During the spring of 1542, Isabella and the members of her entourage faced such difficulty obtaining sufficient provisions that Péter Petrovics and Ferenc Patóchy used revenue from their own estates to purchase food for them, which the queen ashamedly accepted. At this time Isabella wanted to leave Transylvania, therefore she agreed to sign the Friar George–brokered Treaty of Gyalu (December 1541) in which she ceded the territory under her control to Ferdinand. However, this treaty was annulled before it could be implemented.²⁸

The Transylvanian estates attempted to adapt to the new configuration of power through the relatively rapid adoption of new legislation. The fact that the estates were able to base this legislation on the constitutional foundations of the Kingdom of Hungary greatly facilitated this process. The diets at which the estates undertook the tasks of reorganizing legislative procedure and public administration and reviving customary judicial practice were convened in 1542. Friar George was the most prominent and influential figure at these constituent-type deliberative assemblies. At the diet held in Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș, Romania) in January 1542, Friar George attempted in his opening speech to gain the goodwill of the assembled Transylvanian estates: "Lords of Transylvania, I know that word is circulating among you that my arrival spells ruin for you rather than edification or protection. But do not give place to such things, because I will uphold everything that you resolve to do."²⁹ Then, reading aloud a letter from Süleyman that nobody had seen or ever would see, Friar George informed the estates that the sultan had given Transylvania and Hungary (that

Magyarországra vonatkozó diplomáciai levelezése (1535–1549) (Monumenta Hungariae Historica I; Diplomataria 16). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1879, 149.

²⁶ Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 198.

²⁷ "*Majestatemque illius, in modernis rerum et temporum angustiis constituta humaniter et benigne consoletur, et quae honori, dignitati et statui Majestatis suae et eius filioli conducibilia utilia ac necessaria fore intelligit ea pro spectata sui virtute cum aliis dominis agat, consulat et suggerat, quod Vestra Paternitas quae author matrimonii et tradendae in Hungariam Serenissimae filiae nostrae est...*" Letter from Queen Bona to Friar George, Vilnius, March 10, 1542. Biblioteka Jagiellónska (Kraków), Manuscript Archives, Acta Tomiciana, Rkp. 6560, 630–631.

²⁸ See Teréz Oborni, 'A gyalui szerződés', in Márta Font and István Kajtár (eds.), *A magyar államiság első ezer éve*. Pécs: Pécsi Tudományegyetem, 2000, 133–146; Teréz Oborni, 'Tratatul de la Gilau', *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie* 20 (2002) 189–200.

²⁹ Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 77.

is, the part of the Kingdom of Hungary lying to the east of the Tisza River) to the son of King John with the provision that he would maintain possession of these territories until the crown prince reached adulthood.³⁰ Friar George added that Süleyman had ordered that the Transylvanian estates send an annual tribute of 10,000 gold florins to the Sublime Porte and that Kassa, Fogaras (Făgăraș, Romania) and Várad (Oradea, Romania) be placed under his control, while Péter Petrovics would receive Temesvár and the surrounding area as a sanjak.³¹

At the following diet, which was held in Torda (Turda, Romania) in March 1542, the Transylvanian estates – honoring long-established common law – recognized Friar George as lord-lieutenant (*locumtenens*) simply by pledging their submission to him as the holder of this office.³² There are no known documents pertaining to Friar George's appointment as lord-lieutenant – the estates simply acknowledged the fact that in this position he would exercise power in the name of Queen Isabella and elected King John II. Those assembled at this diet also established a body composed of seven delegates from each of the three estates in Transylvania – the Hungarian nobility, the Saxon *Universitas* (Saxon Community) and the Székelys – and one delegate from the Gyulafehérvár Cathedral Chapter. This new body, which the estates called the Secret Council, never truly functioned. Friar George generally made decisions unilaterally, rarely took the opinions of others into account and refrained from engaging the services of advisors. He conducted foreign affairs on his own and prohibited magnates from maintaining foreign contacts without his knowledge and from sending emissaries or letters to foreign sovereigns.³³ The authority of the lord-lieutenant furthermore extended to command of the army and control over all branches of internal administration, and the estates even granted Friar George the authority to bestow estates of any size as gifts with or without the approval of the queen.³⁴

The diets held in the eastern parts of Hungary that had come under the authority of Queen Isabella and her son were forced to initiate the process of organizing a new country. The Transylvanian estates insisted as a condition for recognizing Queen Isabella's rule that they be permitted to choose the location of the royal capital in Transylvania – which eventually became Gyulafehérvár.³⁵ Friar George moved the royal family into the bishop's palace in Gyulafehérvár following

30 “*Regio et Pars Regni Hungariae, ultra Thyciam et Regnum Transylvanicum collata sunt filio Regis Johannis, exceptis istis quatuor locis Waradino, Themeswar, Fogaras et Cassovia, sed ea tamen lege et conditione ut quoadusque filius Regius adoleverit, Frater Georgius possideat has duas Regiones videlicet: Hungariam et Transylvaniam.*” *Ibid.*

31 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 77–78. See also Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire. The Ottomans in Central Europe a Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy*. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities–HAS, 2015.

32 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 84–85.

33 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 217.

34 *Ibid.*, 218–220.

35 Károly Vekov, ‘Gyulafehérvár központi szerepköre a középkorban és koraiútkorban’, in Judit Pál and János Fleisz (eds.), *Erdélyi várostörténeti tanulmányok*. Csíkszereda: Pro-Print Könyvkiadó, 2001, 69–97; Emőke Gálfi, ‘Gyulafehérvár a középkor végén’, *Erdélyi Múzeum* 77:1 (2015) 27–41.

the death of Bishop of Transylvania János Statileo in April 1542. Friar George also needed to find the financial resources necessary to cover the cost of organizing the new state and establishing the royal court. He therefore had the Transylvanian diet pass a law stipulating that the estates and monetary revenue of the Diocese of Transylvania would be used to support the royal family and court.³⁶

In 1543, the tension that had been developing between Friar George and Queen Isabella erupted into open conflict. This discord prompted Isabella to incite rebellion against Friar George among the magnates as the latter was in the city of Gyula attending the diet of the estates from the region lying to the east of the Tisza River. Isabella was furious that Friar George had excluded her from the affairs of state and was carrying out royal duties entirely by himself. This conflict reached a boiling point at the diet convened in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) in February 1543. The resolutions adopted at this diet in the absence of Friar George indicate that in addition to the queen, some of the Transylvanian magnates believed that Friar George had managed in an astonishingly short period of time to concentrate too much power in his own hands. The estates therefore attempted to reduce his authority, declaring that only Isabella and her son could exercise sovereign power in the territories under their rule and that “every office and official, the Most Reverend lord-lieutenant just as all the others, shall be dependent on Her Royal Majesty and her son in such a way that, in accordance with the prerogatives of the Hungarian kings, the freedom of the land should be preserved and Her Majesty should govern all the affairs of state with the advice of her counselors.”³⁷ The estates also resolved that all privileges and freedoms that the Hungarian kings had accorded should be preserved in unimpaired form. Finally, they decided that a representative from each of the recognized nations of Transylvania should take the offered tribute to the Sublime Porte and use this opportunity to express their gratitude to Süleyman for having designated the son of King John to lead the country and, moreover, to request that the sultan confirm in writing the right of the Transylvanians to freely choose their own sovereign (*principem*) from among those who belonged to the Hungarian nation in the event of the death of John II.

The composition of the Transylvanian diets and the structure of the estates in Transylvania assumed complete form at the diet that opened in Torda on August 1, 1544, when the nobility from the counties that lay outside Transylvania and to the east of the Tisza River (Arad, Békés, Bihar, Csanád, Csongrád, Külső-Szolnok, Temes and Zaránd) first declared that they wanted to affiliate themselves with the Szapolyai-controlled part of the country and would from then on participate in the legislative assemblies convened there.³⁸ Thus in terms of public law, the unification of Transylvania and the trans-Tisza territories took place at this time.

36 Resolutions of the 1544 Torda diet. Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 189.

37 *Ibid.*, 109, 175–176.

38 *Ibid.*, 190; Imre Lukinich, *Erdély területi változásai a török hódoltság korában (1540–1711)*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1918, 53–54.

During the middle of the 1540s, Friar George further increased the number of offices he held. He had already served as treasurer (*thesaurarius*) continually since 1534. John I had selected Friar George to serve in this position, while in a letter that Ferdinand I wrote in Linz on November 21, 1541, he reconfirmed this and all of his other previous appointments.³⁹ At the Torda diet of August 1544, the Transylvanian estates endorsed Friar George's continued control over the treasury and authorized him to manage state revenue as he saw fit under the condition that he use all proceeds to the benefit of the country. The estates also decided at the express wish of Isabella to permit Friar George to oversee the revenue of the Diocese of Várad (i.e., Nagyvárad) and the queen's domains and to use this income to cover the personal expenses of the queen and her son as well as the cost of maintaining the royal household. In practice, this meant that he could handle the revenue of the royal treasury.

Among the causes of the regular clashes that took place between Friar George and Queen Isabella, one that should not be underestimated was the treasurer's failure to allocate enough money for the establishment and maintenance of suitable conditions within the royal household and court. Both the queen and the estates attempted on several occasions to force Friar George to account for how he had spent the revenue of the treasury. In 1546, for example, the estates convened at the diet in Szászsebes (Sebeș, Romania) instructed Friar George to present a report on state financial affairs, suggesting that if he failed to do so he could be dismissed from his post as treasurer. In 1547, Isabella again ordered him to render an account of the situation at the royal treasury (*aerarium*). In response, Friar George declared impertinently that he would provide such an account when the crown prince became an adult. According to Farkas Bethlen, Isabella found Friar George's arrogance to be so intolerable on this occasion that the queen wrote an acrimonious letter to the sultan stating that all that remained of her and the crown prince in the country were their names and that both they and the magnates were exposed to the rigid and unjust tyranny of a single man. Isabella added that not only did she not hold the county in her possession, but she served a certain "Dalmatian George," a person who had risen from servitude, so that he would treat her well.⁴⁰ Isabella's letter of complaint produced its desired result: the sultan commanded Friar George to obey the orders of the queen and account for the money that had been placed under his stewardship. Friar George, bowing to this demand, asked that he be given time to put the relevant documents in order. These financial accounts, if they ever existed, unfortunately have not survived, thus making it difficult to even estimate how much money Friar George handled as treasurer, how much revenue was derived from the Transylvanian and trans-Tisza territories and how he paid for the operations of the military, the state apparatus and the royal court. However, it is certain that there was no lack of financial resources and that Friar George skillfully managed the money that flowed into the treasury. Various sources suggest that he also

39 Árpád Károlyi (ed.), *Fráter György levelezése 1535–1551*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1881, 60.

40 Bethlen, *Historia*, 426–427.

generated significant income through the sale of wine, wheat, cattle, sheep, wool and rawhide from his fiscal domains.⁴¹

At the previously mentioned Torda diet of 1544, Friar George acquired the title of chief justice (*judex supremus, judex generalis*) and thus became the most powerful official in the high-level judiciary.⁴² Recent research has verified that the traditions of the medieval Hungarian kingdom were followed in Transylvania with regard to holding the seats of chief justice. With the personal presence of the lord-lieutenant, his court generally convened at Friar George's episcopal see in Várad.⁴³ Thus by 1545 Friar George had obtained every important state office in the eastern Hungarian Kingdom and he virtually ruled the land himself in the name of Queen Isabella and her son. He was able to further increase his power in the latter year, when the estates convened at the Transylvanian diet adopted a law that expanded the authority of the lord-lieutenant enabling those who held this position – in addition to the queen – to make decisions with regard to the new donation (*nova donatio*) of estates devolving upon the royal majesty in the case of discontinuity or as a consequence of royal prerogative (*Jus Regium*). This legislation essentially authorized Friar George to exercise royal powers.⁴⁴

Even amid the continuous discord between Queen Isabella and Friar George, there were some lighter episodes in their relationship. Among these were court balls and wedding ceremonies, which Isabella enthusiastically organized after arranging marriages for her ladies-in-waiting. A report that an alleged Habsburg spy wrote after infiltrating the Transylvanian court contained the following sardonic account of a celebration that was held at the royal palace in Gyulafehérvár around the year 1546 to commemorate the Feast of Saint George. On this day, Friar George invited Queen Isabella and an entire bevy of her ladies-in-waiting to an episcopal luncheon, after which the sound of music began to fill the courtyard: Lest the hospitality remain incomplete, Friar George steps forward with the queen herself and one and all admire the most elegant dancing (*elegantissimas saltationes*) of the queen and Friar George. Few believed that Friar George's virtues would make themselves so apparent in this way as well, though the grace of God is unbounded.⁴⁵

The humanist Zsigmond Thorda wrote a letter in which he portrayed Isabella's court and lifestyle in a rather unfavorable light: "the queen carouses day and night with her Polish household and she consecrates all the time that this revelry leaves free to her well-wishers. She is presently with child, though

41 Georgius Pray, *Epistolae Procerum Regni Hungariae*, vol. 2 [1539–1554]. Posonii: Ex Typographeo G. A. Belnay, 1806, 48.

42 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 188–189.

43 Vilmos Fraknói (ed.), *Magyar Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (1537–1545) (*Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Hungariae 2*). Budapest: Ráth Mór, 1875, 492. Quoted in Zsolt Bogdándi, 'Fráter György bírói működésének emlékei Bácsi János formuláskönyvében', *Történelmi Szemle* 56:4 (2014) 626.

44 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 220.

45 This undated report appears in Horváth, 'Utyeszenich Fráter György', 378.

she carefully covers and conceals this.”⁴⁶ Among the Polish courtiers with whom Queen Isabella was associated was Stanisław Nieżowski, who later, in the 1550s and 1560s, received significant diplomatic assignments as well.⁴⁷ The behavior of the young and fun-loving queen may have served as the factor that induced Friar George to occasionally castigate her harshly and disparage her ability to rule. By 1548, relations between Queen Isabella and Friar George again became so acrimonious that it seemed like they could never be rectified. The Friar, perhaps intentionally, continually exasperated Queen Isabella, who in Kraków and Buda had become used to living amid suitable material circumstances, by leaving her short of money and treating her almost like a child. Although as treasurer Friar George had relatively stable revenue at his disposal, he himself lived quite austere and thus considered Isabella’s opulent court to be superfluous.

At the end of the 1540s, the conflicts between Isabella and Friar George regarding power and everyday affairs induced the queen to repeatedly decide to leave Transylvania and return to Poland. In 1548, Isabella’s beloved father, King Sigismund I, died and the queen’s brother succeeded him on the Polish throne as Sigismund II Augustus. The Polish royal court, which had since the beginning of the 1540s closely followed the changes in Transylvania, again prepared to take action. In late January of 1549, Bishop of Kraków Andrzej Zebrzydowski traveled to Transylvania in order to attempt to settle the differences between Isabella, Friar George and Péter Petrovics and, if necessary, to take the queen home to Poland.⁴⁸ In April, Bishop Zebrzydowski reached Váradi, where he conducted lengthy negotiations with Friar George before resuming his journey and arriving to Gyulafehérvár to meet with Isabella the following month. Zebrzydowski sent a member of the Polish delegation, Kraków canon and royal secretary Jakub Paczyński, to the diet that had been convened in Marosvásárhely in order to meet with representatives from the Transylvanian estates and obtain information from them regarding the situation. The Bishop Zebrzydowski-led delegation, which must have been fairly large in light of the fact that its military escort numbered around 200 soldiers, failed to achieve success.⁴⁹ Queen Isabella had in the meantime changed her mind, deciding to remain in Transylvania, particularly after learning about the Agreement of Nyírbátor that Friar George had signed in her name with Ferdinand.

46 “*Regina cum suo comitatu Polonico dies et noctes helluatur et tempus omne, quod ab epulis superest, salutationibus dat. Nunc ex puerperio laborat, etsi id ipsa sedulo tegit ac dissimulat.*” Letter from Zsigmond Thorda to Philip Melanchthon, Eperjes (Prešov, Slovakia), December 25, 1545. *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 1:1 (1885), 527.

47 See Ildikó Horn, ‘János Zsigmond lengyel tanácsosa, Stanisław Nieżowski (1520 k.–1573)’ in József Jankovics (ed.), “*Nem súlyed az emberiség!...*” *Album amicorum Szörényi László LX. születésnapjára*. Budapest: reciti, 2007, 1387–1392. www.iti.mta.hu/szorenyi60.html.

48 Veress, *Izabella királyné*, 287.

49 *Ibid.*, 290–291.

FRIAR GEORGE FORCES ISABELLA TO ABDICATE: THE AGREEMENT OF NYÍRBÁTOR

The 1547 peace treaty between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires determined hegemony over the Mediterranean region and parts of Europe, including Hungary.⁵⁰ According to this treaty, Süleyman, who by right of conquest regarded all of Hungary to belong to him, permitted Ferdinand to retain control over the western part of the country in exchange for an annual “gift” (*munus*) of 30,000 forints, while – likewise as a result of the benevolent will of the sultan – Transylvania, the affiliated counties lying to the east of the Tisza River and Kassa-based Upper Hungary remained under the dominion of the Szapolyai crown prince. Thus both Ferdinand and John Sigismund ruled over their portions of Hungary with the approval of Sultan Süleyman. However, Ferdinand and John Sigismund did not reign under the same status: while the former was a crowned king, the latter was an elected king (*electus rex*) who paid an annual tribute of 10,000 florins to the Sublime Porte.⁵¹

This division aroused great antipathy in both parts of Hungary, though Friar George was the only political official in either portion of the country who possessed enough power and prestige to do anything about this circumstance. During the 1540s, Friar George gradually became convinced that the ‘Ottomans could be repelled only with the help of the most powerful dynasty in Europe, the Habsburgs, and that this would be possible only if the two parts of Hungary were united under the rule of Ferdinand. Friar George therefore did everything under his power in order to transfer control over the part of Hungary that belonged to Isabella and her son to the Habsburg monarch. Friar George held secret talks and conducted correspondence with both Ferdinand and Charles V until he finally attained his objective.

With unanimous support from Friar George and the estates of both Transylvania and the trans-Tisza region, Ferdinand agreed in 1549 to seize the opportunity to unite Hungary under his rule. Negotiating in the name of Queen Isabella and her son, Friar George reached an agreement in less than one month of talks held in the town of Nyírbátor. According to the historiographer Miklós Istvánffy (1538–1615), Friar George stated during these talks that his determination to place Transylvania and eastern Hungary under Habsburg rule was based on his belief that Queen Isabella and her son were incapable of waging war and therefore powerless against the Turks. Istvánffy maintains that Friar George was aware that war would certainly break out between the

50 See Ernst Dieter Petritsch, ‘Der habsburgisch-osmanische Friedensvertrag des Jahres 1547’, *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 38 (1985) 49–80, and María José Rodríguez-Salgado, ‘Eating Bread Together: Hapsburg Diplomacy and Intelligence-Gathering in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Istanbul’, in Emilio Sola Castaño and Gennaro Varriale (eds.), *Detrás de las apariencias. Información y espionaje (siglos XVI-XVII)* (Monografías Humanidades 54). Universidad de Alcalá, Servicio de Publicaciones, 2015, 73–100.

51 Ágnes R. Várkonyi, ‘V. Károly Magyarországon’, in Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *Europica varietas – Hungarica varietas. Tanulmányok*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1994, 31–34.

Habsburgs and the Ottomans as soon as the reunification of Hungary and Transylvania took place.⁵²

The negotiations held in Nyírbátor and the drafting of the text of the agreement took place without the knowledge of Isabella. When Isabella and her counselors learned about the agreement, the queen became enraged and would have been willing to do anything to neutralize Friar George, who had again begun to take independent action and make decisions in her name. Isabella announced that she would not abdicate and did not wish to leave Transylvania. Moreover, she considered the promised amount of compensation to be inadequate and again denounced Friar George to the Sublime Porte in an attempt to settle the score with him. Isabella sent her envoy, János Szalánczy, to Constantinople with the message that the lord-lieutenant had betrayed Süleyman and was preparing to turn over to Ferdinand the country that the sultan had entrusted to her. Queen Isabella asked Süleyman to help her immediately get rid of Friar George.⁵³ Süleyman, furious with the Friar as a result of his disloyalty, sent the influential interpreter Mahmud *Chavush* – a native of Vienna who was an expert on Hungarian affairs – to Transylvania in order to deliver the sultan's command that Transylvanians should no longer obey Friar George and should take up arms against him and bring him dead or alive to the Sublime Porte.⁵⁴ Süleyman also informed Isabella that he would continue to support her son and send the pasha of Buda and the voivode of Moldavia to Transylvania in order to help defend the province against Ferdinand.⁵⁵ Contemporaries realized that under the prevailing circumstances the Agreement of Nyírbátor signified a momentous agreement. Miklós Istvánffy observed that at this time everything depended on Friar George, that he exercised control over the cities, the army and state revenue, which he had placed in his own repository rather than reserving it to finance the future rule of the young King John II.⁵⁶

The stipulations of the Agreement of Nyírbátor concluded between Queen Isabella and Ferdinand in 1549 were based on those in the unimplemented Treaty of Gyálu that had been signed in 1541. According to the treaty, Isabella would transfer the territories under her control to Ferdinand, while in return the queen would receive the Duchy of Opole and Racibórz and 100,000 gold forints in cash in exchange for her engagement gift; moreover, Isabella's son would be married to Ferdinand's daughter Johanna and Friar George would be

52 Nicolai Isthvanfi [Istvánffy] Pannoni, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis Libri XXXIV*. Coloniae Agrippinae: Antonii Hierati, [1622], 292.

53 Bethlen, *Historia*, 442–445.

54 The renegade interpreter Mahmud Tercüman (1510–1575) was born to a Jewish commercial family in Vienna with the name Sebold von Pibrach. His name can be connected to the famous Turkish-language chronicle of Hungarian history entitled *Tarih-i Üngürüs*. See Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad – Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Pál Ács, *Reformations in Hungary in the Age of the Ottoman Conquest* (Refo500 Academic Studies, edited by Herman J. Selderhuis, vol. 52). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2019, 157–168.

55 Bethlen, *Historia*, 446–447.

56 Isthvanfi, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis*, 293.

permitted to retain his offices as treasurer and lord-lieutenant of Transylvania. Ferdinand promised the title of Archbishop of Esztergom to Friar George as well and pledged to persuade the Pope to make him a cardinal. At the insistence of Friar George, the Agreement of Nyírbátor also specified that the conditions of the agreement would be enforced only after the arrival of a strong royal army to Transylvania.⁵⁷

At the time of the negotiations regarding the transfer of Transylvania to the Habsburgs, intense talks were also taking place at the Ottoman court about the future of both Transylvania and the eastern parts of Hungary. Ferdinand's first resident minister in Constantinople, Giovanni/Johann Maria Malvezzi, initiated a new action at the Sublime Porte aimed at gaining control over all of Hungary.⁵⁸ Already in 1548, not long after the conclusion of the 1547 agreement, Ferdinand ordered Malvezzi to do everything under his power to ensure that he would gain control over Isabella's dominions as soon as possible, instructing him to offer as much money (in the form of an annual tribute) as was needed for all of Hungary to come under Habsburg rule.⁵⁹ Malvezzi initially advised Ferdinand to delay this effort until after Süleyman returned from Persia because the sultan was old and sick and the struggle for the throne that would develop among his sons in the event of his death would make it much easier to acquire all of Hungary, perhaps even without paying a tribute.⁶⁰ The resident minister conducted negotiations regarding this issue at the Sublime Porte through Chief Interpreter Yunus Bey. During these talks, Malvezzi stated in the name of Ferdinand that he would guarantee the protection of Hungary's borders, though he could not identify the potential invaders since the Turks themselves posed the primary threat to the territorial integrity of the country. Yunus Bey was similarly inclined to make such spurious claims: in January 1549 the Ottoman chief interpreter told Malvezzi that Ferdinand's request might be satisfied if he offered enough money.⁶¹ In late August 1549, as the talks that produced the Agreement of Nyírbátor neared their conclusion, Ferdinand told Malvezzi in even more resolute terms to maintain his effort to secure control over Transylvania and to promise the sultan more gifts and money. The Habsburg monarch informed his resident minister that if the Ottomans broached the subject of the

57 Roderich Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge. Fürstentum Siebenbürgen (1526–1690)*. Wien: Adolf Holzhausen–Wilhelm Engelmann, 1911, 110–114.

58 See Pál Török, 'A Habsburgok első sztatbuli rezidense (Malvezzi János Mária)', *Budapesti Szemle* 214:622 (1929) 413–436 and 215:622 (1929) 87–105.

59 Letter from Ferdinand to Malvezzi, Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia), October 26 and November 8, 1548. Karl Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica 1541–1552. Diplomatische Akten des habsburgischen Gesandtschaftsverkehrs mit der Hohen Pforte im Zeitalter Süleymans des Prächtigen* (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 95). München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1995, 303, 304–305.

60 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, November 22, 1548. *Ibid.*, 312.

61 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, January 19, 1549. *Ibid.*, 335–336. Yunus Bey, originally a Venetian subject of Greek decent, served as the Sublime Porte's chief interpreter from 1525 to 1551. See Maria Pia Pedani, *In nome del Gran Signore: Inviati ottomani a Venezia dalla caduta di Costantinopoli alla Guerra di Candia* (Deputazione di storia patria per le Venezie, Miscellanea di studi e memorie XXX). Venezia: Deputazione editrice, 1994, 144–153.

negotiations that were taking place with Friar George, he should tell them that they were not at all secret and that only issues regarding frontier areas remained to be settled.⁶² Malvezzi assert in several reports he wrote in 1549 that Süleyman had encountered significant difficulties during his trip to Persia, thus providing Ferdinand with the opportunity to gain possession of Transylvania. Meanwhile, he also issued continual assurances to Turkish dignitaries that the Habsburgs would comply strictly with the stipulations of the 1547 agreement and punish those who failed to do so.

The government circles surrounding Ferdinand were certainly aware that the Agreement of Nyírbátor itself did not guarantee the acquisition of the eastern portion of Hungary, because this would require the sultan's approval. Ferdinand therefore resumed his actions at the Sublime Porte in 1550. In the spring of this year, Ferdinand instructed Malvezzi to undertake negotiations with the help of Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha and Chief Interpreter Yunus Bey and to offer an annual tribute of between 50,000 and 100,000 ducats, promising that if these talks were successful he would put the resident minister in charge of a diocese in Hungary.⁶³ During the summer of 1550, sentiment at the Sublime Porte turned against both Ferdinand and Friar George. Envoys from Transylvania arrived to Constantinople carrying the yearly gifts and letters from Friar George in which he complained about Ferdinand's seizures of territory. Rüstem Pasha immediately summoned Malvezzi, who was unable to furnish a suitable explanation of what was taking place in Hungary.⁶⁴ Malvezzi incidentally once remarked that the "old fox" Friar George had outsmarted him by sending Turkish-language letters to the Sublime Porte, thus making their content inaccessible to him.⁶⁵

In May 1550, the combative Grand Vizier Rüstem Pasha began to demand Eger Castle from Ferdinand, who naturally rejected this claim. Unsurprisingly, Rüstem Pasha then angrily asked Malvezzi to state the grounds upon which Ferdinand had asked the Turks for control over all of Hungary and to disclose the Habsburg monarch's future plans for the country. Without even waiting for a response to these questions, Rüstem had Malvezzi taken away.⁶⁶ During his next meeting with Malvezzi, Rüstem Pasha furiously denounced Ferdinand, threatening to launch a military campaign against Transylvania the following year – that is, in 1551.⁶⁷ Interpreter Mahmud *Chavush* had, indeed, already announced at the Sublime Porte during the summer of 1550 that all of Transylvania had submitted to Ferdinand. Moreover, Péter Petrovics had sent a

62 Letter from Ferdinand to Malvezzi, Prague, August 26, 1549. Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica 1541–1552*, 364–365; Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, January 9, 1550. *Ibid.*, 394.

63 Letter from Ferdinand Malvezzi, Vienna, March 17, 1550. *Ibid.*, 412–414.

64 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, April 13, 1550. *Ibid.*, 423–424.

65 Pál Török, *I. Ferdinánd konstantinápolyi béketárgyalásai, 1527–1547*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1930, 89.

66 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, May 9, 1550. Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica 1541–1552*, 440–441.

67 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, May 28, 1550. *Ibid.*, 454–455.

letter to Süleyman in which he informed the sultan that Friar George had turned against Isabella and John Sigismund and was inciting rebellion against Ottoman authority. Resident Minister Malvezzi reported to Ferdinand that these tidings had infuriated Rüstem Pasha, who was undoubtedly therefore contemplating merciless retaliatory action.⁶⁸

Relations between Isabella and Friar George became extremely antagonistic as a result of the Agreement of Nyírbátor that had been imposed upon the queen in 1549 and the declaration of abdication in favor of Ferdinand that she had been compelled to sign in Szászsebes during the summer of 1551. This hostility led in the autumn of 1550 to armed conflict between the queen, the nominal holder of royal authority, and the lord-lieutenant and treasurer, who exercised true sovereign power. Following these clashes, Isabella received Friar George at the royal palace in Gyulafehérvár in the hope that she might be able to reconcile their dispute and thus remain the ruler of Transylvania. Farkas Bethlen commented that even after this meeting Friar George continued to distrust the queen because "having become familiar with her fortitude and manly courage, he suspected that she would do anything, though would not tolerate being deprived of her kingdom."⁶⁹ Isabella did, in fact, do everything possible rid herself of the detested monk who ruled in her place. As Friar George held talks with Ferdinand's envoys in Diószeg in 1551 regarding the actual transfer of authority, Isabella convened the diet in an attempt to somehow remove Friar George from power. At this diet, the queen enumerated the Friar's transgressions, notably his attempt to transfer rule of the country to Ferdinand despite the fact that he had pledged his loyalty to King John I at the monarch's deathbed. Isabella, although the stipulations of the Agreement of Nyírbátor had been in effect for more than a year, again announced before the assembled representatives of the estates that she intended to retain control over the eastern part of the county for herself and her son and did not wish to leave Transylvania.

At the diet that convened in Torda in early May 1551, Friar George ordered a general insurrection and soon had placed the royal capital city of Gyulafehérvár under siege. After Isabella and her chief allies, including Mihály Csáky, Antal Kendy, Menyhárt Balassa and Pál Bánk, managed to escape from Gyulafehérvár and take refuge in the nearby town of Szászsebes, the castellan defending the besieged royal capital, Ferenc Horváth, carried out the queen's order to surrender the city to Friar George's forces.⁷⁰ Neither Isabella nor her associates accepted the subsequent invitation to hold conciliatory talks at the Friar's camp in Gyulafehérvár and instead remained in Szászsebes. In the meantime, Friar George's troops occupied the castles and estates of the vanquished queen's supporters one after another.

As this conflict was taking place, Habsburg military forces were gathering around the periphery of Transylvania to implement the transfer of power over the

68 Letter from Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, July 21, 1550. *Ibid.*, 495.

69 Bethlen, *Historia*, 474.

70 Bethlen, *Historia*, 482.

region to Ferdinand. Troops under the command of András Báthory and István Losonczy awaited further orders in the vicinity of Debrecen and Nyírbátor, while an Erasmus Teuffel-led mercenary army composed of 5,400 infantry and 1,800 cavalry was encamped in Eger. The latter army included Bernardo Aldana's force of around 3,000 mercenaries that Charles V had sent from Spain as well as German and Czech infantry, 500 Moravian–Silesian cavalry and 300 German cuirassiers under the command of Colonel Andreas Brandeis, Colonel Karl Žierotin and Captain Johann von Oppersdorf, respectively. Tamás Nádasdy recruited an additional 500 soldiers in western Hungary and stationed them along the frontier of Bihar County in preparation for Friar George's expected order to enter Transylvania. Ferdinand chose General Giovanni Battista Castaldo (1493–1563) to serve as commander-in-chief of the assembled troops as well as his royal military lieutenant (*locumtenens bellicus, vicesgerens in rebus bellicis*).⁷¹ Sforza Pallavicino (1519–1585) was appointed to the post of deputy commander-in-chief and Bernardo Aldana to that of field marshal (*magister campi, mareschallus, maestre de campo*).⁷²

TRANSYLVANIA CAPTA: THE HABSBURG TAKEOVER

With Ferdinand's armies stationed along the border of Transylvania, Queen Isabella was forced to face the fact that she had no chance of preserving her rule over the region. The emotionally devastated queen therefore decided to surrender the castles that remained under her control to Friar George. According to Farkas Bethlen, Friar George responded by returning control of the royal treasury in Gyulafehérvár to Isabella and “imploring and weeping, hardly able to speak amid heavy sobs, asked the queen for forgiveness.”⁷³ Isabella finally agreed to receive the Friar George's envoys along with General Castaldo in Szászsebes and after a prolonged period of agonizing signed a declaration of abdication on July 19, 1551.⁷⁴ However, when the conditions of this declaration were read aloud to Isabella, she flew into a rage, screaming that she had been forced to sign the document and that she would pray day and night that God would avenge this terrible misdeed through exemplary punishment of its instigator.⁷⁵ The queen was obviously referring to Friar George. Isabella persuaded her adversaries to permit a symbolic marriage engagement to take place in Kolozsvár between her son and Princess Joanna, thus providing the queen with some hope of one day regaining control over the Kingdom of Hungary. In exchange for this concession, Isabella agreed to hand the Holy Crown and coronation jewels over to General

71 Imre Szántó, *Küzdelem a török terjeszkedés ellen Magyarországon, Az 1551–1552. évi várháborúk*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1985, 50–52.

72 Ferenc Szakály, ‘Egy zsoldosvezér emlékiratai a XVI. század közepén vívott magyarországi háborúkról’, in Ferenc Szakály (ed.), *Bernardo de Aldana magyarországi hadjárata (1548–1552)*, translated by László Scholz. Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1986, 9–19.

73 Bethlen, *Historia*, 484–485.

74 Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge*, 119–136.

75 Bethlen, *Historia*, 488–489.

Castaldo. At the diet convened in Kolozsvár in July 1551, the Transylvanian estates approved the transfer of rule over Transylvania from Isabella to Ferdinand.⁷⁶ Parallel to these events, the eastern and western parts of the Kingdom of Hungary were reunited under the Habsburg king.

Queen Isabella left Szászsebes for Kolozsvár in a carriage, while 11-year-old John Sigismund traveled on horseback with a military escort. According to Deputy Commander-in-Chief Bernardo Aldana, Friar George stopped the convoy as it reached Nagyenyed (Aiud, Romania) in order to talk to Isabella. The Friar then removed the boy from his horse and took him in his arms to his mother, who became alarmed and burst into tears, causing her son to do the same as the magnates in the procession lamented the scene that was unfolding before them. With General Castaldo, András Báthory, Tamás Nádasdy and István Losonczy looking on, Friar George himself fought back tears as he informed Isabella why he had delivered her part of the country to Ferdinand and then promised that he would continue to serve the queen and her son, perhaps even more faithfully than before. Finally, he asked Isabella to cheer up, since she had entered into an alliance with one of the most benevolent sovereigns, one in whom she would surely find a supporter and father for her son. Isabella answered with kind, though nevertheless accusatory words, asking Friar George to preserve fond memories of her and her son, who although born in this land, had been deprived of his father's legacy and kingdom.⁷⁷

Queen Isabella surrendered the crown to Castaldo during a ceremony held in Felvinc (Unirea, Romania) in July 1551. Queen Isabella and the Friar spoke for perhaps the final time at this ceremony. Bernardo Aldana, who was present at this ceremony, described what Isabella said to Friar George on this occasion: "...and the queen then turned toward the friar with the mentioned regalia in her hand and said that she had kept them so that once her child became an adult they would crown him king of the land with them, though since the boy is still a child and she a woman, neither one of them would be capable of keeping the regalia intact, which would entail exceptionally serious consequences not only for the country, but for the entire Christian world as well, since the Turks are close and really have their sights set on Transylvania; and since she does not wish to heap that much trouble upon anybody, she would hand the regalia over to the envoy... since thereafter the county will belong to the king and all the land together with its benefices will be his... Following this ceremony (during which the queen could not conceal the pain in her heart: her tears just flowed) they all departed for Kolozsvár..."⁷⁸ Isabella finally left Transylvania in the middle of August, stopping first in Kassa before continuing on to the duchy that had been assigned to her in Silesia.

76 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 342–344; Gooss (ed.), *Österreichische Staatsverträge*, 114–137.

77 Szakály (ed.), *Bernardo de Aldana magyarországi hadjárata*, 137–138.

78 *Ibid.*, 138–139.

SUMMARY

Following the death of King John I and the Ottoman occupation of Buda, the dowager Queen Isabella and her son were forced to transfer their royal capital to Transylvania in accordance with the wishes of Sultan Süleyman. The new state entity – the eastern Hungarian Kingdom – took shape in the ten-year period from 1541 to 1551. During this decade, the estates from Transylvania and the counties lying to the east of the Tisza River built this new state based on the previous constitutional order of the Kingdom of Hungary on territories over which the Szapolyai family maintained authority. During these years, the extremely talented and ambitious Pauline monk and statesman Friar George acquired the most powerful political positions in the newly formed state and exercised true authority rather than Queen Isabella. The Friar's primary objective as *de facto* ruler was to unify the Habsburg-controlled western part of Hungary and Szapolyai-controlled eastern part of the country under the rule of Ferdinand I. Friar George's diplomatic maneuvers finally led to success with the forced departure of Queen Isabella from Transylvania in the summer of 1551. This resulted in a severe crisis and an Ottoman punitive campaign. After spending five years in Poland, the Szapolyai family returned to Transylvania thanks to significant Ottoman pressure and resumed the process of forming the new country.

Zsolt Bogdándi*

ESTABLISHING NEW INSTITUTIONS DURING THE REIGN OF QUEEN ISABELLA (1556–1559): THE ROYAL TABLE AND THE PLACES OF AUTHENTICATION

The principal aim of this study is to present two important institutions established or rather reestablished after the return of Queen Isabella and her son from Poland in the second half of 1556: the Royal Table (*tabula or sedes judiciaria*) and the Places of Authentication (*loca credibilia*). Alongside the Chancellery – which was also reorganized during this period – these specific institutions composed the basic elements of the administration of justice in the newly born state that was later called the Principality of Transylvania. I will focus mostly on the presentation of the new elements of this organization, but I will also try to describe their medieval characteristics. I discuss the institutions of the so-called Royal Table and Places of Authentication together because there were strong institutional connections between them. Besides the fact that the places of authentication issued charters that could be used during litigation at the Royal Table, the appointed lay personnel, the so-called *requisitores*, also played the important role of executors of the judicial mandates issued by the Court of Justice – in our case by the Smaller Chancellery – as the charters formulated in Latin “*judiciariarum deliberationum, legitimorumque mandatorum illustrissimi principis Transsylvaniae executores*”.

The judicial reorganization of the so-called eastern Hungarian Kingdom (consisting of medieval Transylvania and the counties lying to the east up to the river Tisza) took place starting in late 1556, when the Royal Table was established in a *decretum* issued in the name of Queen Isabella. This does not mean that the principal Court of Justice started its activity right away – that was

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surely a longer and more complicated process. In the following section of this article I shall present the principal steps in this process.¹

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROYAL TABLE

From the perspective of its foundations, the political entity that gradually came into existence in the eastern part of the Kingdom of Hungary following the fall of Buda (1541) could only build on the judicial system inherited from the Middle Ages. After the period between 1541 and 1556, which can be considered more as the time of orientation, the formation of the independent state of Transylvania – the establishment of new institutions – took place after the end of 1556, during the reign of Queen Isabella (1541–1559) and after the return of Hungary's King Elect, John II Szapolyai. The decisions made in Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) at this time reflected the preparations for independent statehood. The estates ordered the election of judges, protonotaries, assessors and a legal director (*director causarum*) on the condition that they could not claim a share of the income of the court of law, but would be paid by the queen and her son based on individual agreement.² Despite the dispositions of these early statutes, the central judicial system did not come into existence immediately – this was a longer process.

The judicial disorder from the first year is reflected in archival sources, being indicated by the lack of charters issued by the Central Court. We consider it to be revealing that there are no surviving documents from the first two court sessions mentioned in the dispositions that decided on the *de iure* foundation of the high court in late 1556, even if theoretically they should have been exceptionally long. One year later, Queen Isabella, in a charter she issued in the market town of Torda (Turda, Romania) on July 2, 1557, mentioned a court session to which the diet, which was also held in Torda beginning on June 1, postponed every lawsuit lodged by the three Transylvanian nations.³ The document, in reference to the

1 For more on this issue, see the previous version of this text: Zsolt Bogdándi, 'The Organization of the Central Court of Justice in Transylvania in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century', *The Hungarian Historical Review* 7:4 (2018) 718–738. On the establishment of the new state during the reign of Queen Isabella, see Teréz Oborni, *Erdélyi országgyűlések a 16–17. században*. Budapest: Országház Könyvkiadó, 2018, 123–129.

2 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica, III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia 1876, 58.

3 The case in question was heard on June 25, 1557: "...*instante scilicet termino brevium et continuorum judiciorum, ad quem videlicet terminum universae causae fidelium nostrorum regnicolarum trium nationum partium regni nostri Transilvanensi, juxta publicam constitutionem eorundem hic Thordae ad primum diem Junii ex edicto maiestatis nostrae congregatorum, videlicet factum honoris, novorumque actum potentiariarum, transmissionumque tangentem et concernentem et aliae in articulis in ipso conventu editis denotatae adiudicari debentis, per maiestatem nostram generaliter fuerant prorogatae...*" The members of the court were nobles, sworn assessors and the protonotary (here they refer to only one and the document was indeed endorsed solely by László Mekcsei). Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereafter: MNL OL), Erdélyi Országos Kormányhatósági Levéltárak,

decrees of the 1556 Diet of Kolozsvár, approved almost verbatim the previous judgment of the voivodes of Ferdinand – István Dobó, and Ferenc Kendy (1553–1556).⁴ It is clear from a later source that the court session began on June 24 (*pro festo Nativitatis beati Joannis baptistae*), and here, unlike later, following the example of the medieval voivodal court of law, the cases of the three nations of Transylvania (the Hungarian nobility of the counties and the Székelys and the Saxons) were heard together.⁵ The decree of the diet held in June 1557 probably referred to the same court session at which the lawsuits related to the acts of might (*actus potentiarum*) committed since the incursion of Péter Petrovics⁶ were postponed to the *octava* of the feast of the Holy Trinity.⁷ Then the *octava* of St. Michael's Day (29th of September) was also mentioned, to which the “bigger” lawsuits were postponed, but there is no surviving evidence relating to that court session, nor is there any similar source on the session of March 1557 to which a letter of sentence (*litterae adiudicatoriae*) refers.⁸ The decree of the diet of June 1557 relating to the judicial system was limited to a stipulation according to which eight assessors should participate in the work of the court of law. This stipulation probably goes back to medieval origins.⁹ In a mandate issued in 1561, nine assessors were listed. Thus, when each seat of the assessors was filled, the Princely Table consisted of twelve legists, including the two protonotaries and

Gyulafehérvári Konvent Országos Levéltára (hereafter: GyKOLt), F4 Cista comitatum, Comitatus Albensis, Cista 2, Fasc. 3, no. 5.

4 According to the text of the document: “...cum autem juxta publicam constitutionem fidelium nostrorum ordinum et statuum regni pro festo beatae Catherinae virginis et martiris proxime preterito in civitate Koloswar ex edicto maiestatis nostrae congregatorum factam et per nos confirmatam, universae causae tempore imperii prefati regis Romanorum in hoc regno... suis processibus in suis vigoribus relictas sint.” Cf. Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 64.

5 MNL OL, GyKOLt, F4 Cista comitatum, Comitatus Albensis, Cista 2, Fasc. 3, no. 5.

6 Péter Petrovics was a pro-Ottoman magnate, ban of Lugos (Lugoj, Romania) and Karánsebes (Caransebeș, Romania) and a fervent supporter of King John I Szapolyai and his son. See the article by Szabolcs Varga in this volume.

7 “Maiores causae differantur in octavum diem festi sancti Michaelis discutiendae, alie vero causae videlicet factum honoris decimarumque uniuersae concernentes, noui actus potenciarum ab ingressu domini Petrowyth comitis spectabilis et magnifici patrati vel patrandj, transmissiones item comitatum Saxonum et Siculicalium sedium ac literae transmissionis quae in curiam regis Romanorum per appellacionem deducendae erant, causae eciam dotum, rerum parafernaliu, iurium impignoraticiorum et diuisionum inter fratres carnales patrueles, matruales fientium sine intermissione discutiuntur; discussionis autem dies sit die octauo post festum sancte trinitatis.” Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 80.

8 “...litteras nostras adiudicatorias sententionales Albe Julie decimo sexto die diei sabbati proximi post dominicam Oculi in anno 1557, in termino celebrationis iudiciorum profesti beati Gregorii papae...” Archivele Naționale ale României. Servul Județean Cluj al Arhivelor Naționale (hereafter: SJAN-CJ), Arch. of Dés (Dej, Romania) (Fond 24), no. 172. In February 1557 the court period was set as St. George's Day, but it was postponed, probably due to the harvest and other problems. See Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 80.

9 György Bónis, *A jogtudó értelmiség a Mohács előtti Magyarországon*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971, 342–354; András Kubinyi, ‘A királyi tanács köznemesi ülnökei a Jagelló-korban’, in Éva H. Balázs, Erik Fügedi and Ferenc Maksay (eds.), *Társadalom- és művelődéstörténeti tanulmányok. Mályusz Elemér emlékkönyv*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984, 257–276.

the legal director.¹⁰ It is worth noting that only the Transylvanian legal director took part in the work of the Table, because there is no information indicating the involvement of the *director causarum* of the Partium area in the work of the high court. As a consequence of the lack of sources we cannot really define his duties, it is only a supposition that the jurisdiction accessible to him was strongly connected to the fortress of Várad (Oradea, Romania) and limited to the counties in the Partium.¹¹

It is clear from the above that the activity of the Princely Table was not permanent or continuous, but rather was connected to different sessions, so-called *termini* for all the nations of the estates (Transylvanian nobles, nobles from the Partium and Székelys) as well as to the Transylvanian diets. After the reorganization of the high court, the aim was to have two court sessions a year for each nation, but the dates varied frequently and sometimes sessions were cancelled – due to war or for various other reasons. The Princely Table also had jurisdiction in the cases appealed from the court of the Saxons, the *Universitas*,¹² the seat of which was in Szeben (Sibiu, Romania, Hermannstadt in German), but without a separate court session for them, their cases usually were discussed during the diets.¹³ There was no need for a separate Saxon court session, as the cases of Saxons were rarely appealed to the princely high court and they only could have been summoned at their own court.¹⁴

The diet held in March 1557 decided with regard to the question of the location of the courts (both in the case of the lawsuits of the Hungarian nobles of the Partium and the Transylvanians) that they were to be held where the royal majesties were actually residing, but for the periods to follow separate sessions were to be convened for the Transylvanian nobility, the Székelys, and the nobles of the Partium.¹⁵ In the Middle Ages, if the king was presiding at the high court, the court held its meetings in one of the council chambers of his palace. In other cases, however, it met in the house of the primate of Hungary in Buda, probably at the same place at which the “official room and archive” of the smaller chancery was kept.¹⁶ It seems likely that, based on the medieval model, when the ruler was in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania, Weissenburg

10 Zsolt Bogdándi, ‘Az erdélyi és a partiumi jogügyigazgatók a 16. század második felében’, in Zsolt Bogdándi and Tamás Fejér (eds.), *Hivatalnok értelmiség a kora újkori Erdélyben* (Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 287). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2017, 14.

11 *Ibid.*, 11.

12 The *Universitas Saxonum* (Saxon Community) was an administrative and legal entity of the Transylvanian Saxons headed by the *comes Saxonum*, who resided in Szeben (Sibiu, Romania).

13 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 530. On the separate courts of law of the Saxons, see Béla Szabó, ‘Az erdélyi szászok bíraskodási szervezete a korai újkorig’, *Jogtörténeti Szemle* [19]:1–2 (2017) 31–40; Zsolt Bogdándi, ‘A szászok és a fejedelmi tábla a 16. században’, *Erdélyi Múzeum* 81:1 (2019) 21–33.

14 Elek Dósa, *Erdélyhoni jogtudomány: Első könyv: erdélyhoni közjogtan*. Kolozsvár: Ref. Főtanoda, 1861, 104–105.

15 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 89.

16 Imre Hajnik, *A Magyar bírósági szervezet és perjog az Árpád- és a vegyes-házi királyok alatt*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1899, 232. See also András Kubinyi, ‘A királyi udvar

in German) and took part in the work of the princely high court, the location of the sessions was one of the rooms of the princely palace (the former residence of the Catholic bishop), while on other occasions the previously mentioned *domus iudiciaria*, i.e., the lodge of the protonotary (and in the meantime certainly of the smaller chancery), could have served as the site of the trials. This was true, of course, only when the court session was held in Gyulafehérvár. Because of the features of the new state, in order to meet the needs of the nations that formed the state, the princely court of law was itinerant. Thus one cannot speak of a permanent seat for the Princely Table. In Kolozsvár, Vásárhely (Târgu Mureș, Romania) or Torda the *domus iudicaria* was a rented lodge that suited the needs of the court.¹⁷

At the above-mentioned 1557 diet, a decree was issued that according to Zsolt Trócsányi “disposes a separate high court for the Partium region... (let Bálint Földváry be the protonotary, let the separate Hungarian high court be established).”¹⁸ However, in my assessment, in light of the legal evidence, this decision did not undo the unity of the princely high court. In the text of the decree there is no reference to a high court of the Partium. The decree mentions only an expert *protonotarius* designated to judge on the cases brought by Hungarian nobles from the Partium region, similarly to his counterpart who was working in Transylvania. This was also when the question of the number of assessors was raised (*assessoribus pluribus iuris peritis sedem iudicariam ornare dignentur*), with members who were probably more familiar with the customary law of the Hungarian nobility from the Partium.

Accordingly, in 1559, the Table adjudicated during the St. Luke’s Day court session of the Hungarian nobility from the Partium held in Gyulafehérvár as a unified body, and as had become customary in Hungarian documentary practice by the mid-fifteenth century, the protonotaries indicated on a letter of sentence the identity of the person who would revise and issue the document (*Lecta et extradata per me magistrum Valentinum de Fewldwar serenissimae regiae majestatis prothonotarium*). In addition, the document was also endorsed by László Mekcsei

a késő középkori Magyarországon’, in Nóra G. Etényi and Ildikó Horn (eds.), *Idővel paloták... Magyar udvari kultúra a 16–17. században*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2005, 16–17.

17 There is concrete data on this from the court session of St. Luke’s Day in 1590. Dániel Pápai and Mihály Kolozsvári, who were notaries at the court, reported that they disembarked on November 3 “*hic in praedicto civitate Coloswar, apud domum circumspecti Joannis Hozzu, domum videlicet iudicariam celsitudinis vestrae*.” There, they summoned János Gyerőfi to appear at the *curia* on the sixth day. See SJAN-CJ, Arch. Kornis (Fond 378), no. 231. Closer to the period of Queen Isabella is data from 1561, when the notary of the smaller chancellery, Lukács Pistaki, reported on orders from the king that he summoned Gáspár Almády “*hic Albae Juliae, in hospicio egregii domini magistri Valentini Fewldwary prothonotarii domini mei, in domo scribarum eiusdem*.” MNL OL, Erdélyi Országos Kormányhatósági Levéltárak, Kolozsmonostori Konvent Országos Levéltára, F17 Cista comitatum, Comitatus Doboka, K, no. 48.

18 Zsolt Trócsányi, *Törvényalkotás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2005, 238. At the diet of June 1557, the possibility of sending one special judge to Várad for the nobility of the Partium arose (Szilágyi [ed.], *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 81), but probably due to the perpetual state of war this could not be accomplished.

(*Coram me Ladislao de Mekche eiusdem serenissime regie majestatis prothonotarium*).¹⁹ The jurisdiction of the two protonotaries had not yet been clearly defined, so there was no person who was assigned exclusively to the cases of the Hungarian nobles of the Partium, the Székelys, or the Transylvanian nobles. This is probably why, during the court session held for the Hungarian nobility from the Partium after St. Luke's Day, the order of their signatures on a letter of sentence that was issued in a case concerning a major act of might was just the opposite.²⁰ The joint jurisdiction of the two protonotaries was also expressed in a decree issued in June 1558, according to which justice was to be served in the presence of both persons who would agree on the incomes and the usage of the seal.²¹ This was probably done in order to avoid the related controversies which would have arisen if an expert on Hungarian law were to be chosen to act as president of the high court, to be present at the hearings, to handle the income of the court, and to pay the assessors from this income and turn over the rest to the treasury.²² This position, however, referred to as *superintendens*, most probably remained vacant, as there are no references to the activities of this figure in the legal evidence or the later decrees. A person with the similar task of presiding over the high court was invested only in 1589.²³ It is more important that at the same time, on the basis of a medieval model,²⁴ a court of appeal to the high court was founded. This made it clear that the cases judged by the protonotaries could be brought to the personal presence (*personalis presentia*) of the queen and her son, who judged with their councilors.²⁵

19 SJAN-CJ, Arch. Bethlen of Iktár, (Fond 329), (The documents are chronologically organized.) Cf. MNL OL, Családok, testületek és intézmények levéltárai, P 702 Wesselényi család levéltára, 1. item.

20 May 16, 1560: "*Proclamata, publicata presentata lecta et extradata per me Ladislaum de Mekche serenissime electe regie majestatis Hungariae protonotarium. Coram me magistro Valentino de Fewldwar serenissimae regie majestatis prothonotario.*" MNL OL, GyKOLt, F4 Cista comitatum, Comitatus Bihar, Cista Bihar, Fasc. 1, no. 21.

21 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 99. According to Trócsányi, this is when Mekcsei was designated as protonotary of Transylvania, but he had been appointed to this office earlier, in 1554. See Trócsányi, *Törvényalkotás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben*, 238. Cf. Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei (1289–1556)*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, no. 5316.

22 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 97.

23 József Benkő identified this *superintendens* with the *director causarum* of whom we know that he received a portion of the fines handed out by the court so he was paid just like the other assessors from the income of the Table. See József Benkő, *Erdély*, translated and edited by György Szabó. Sepsiszentgyörgy–Barót: Székely Nemzeti Múzeum–Tortoma, 2014, 233. This identification seems plausible, but we still need more data to reach this conclusion. On the directors from the second half of the sixteenth century, see Bogdándi, 'Az erdélyi és a partiumi jogügyigazgatók', 9–24.

24 Imre Hajnik, *A király bírósági személyes jelenléte és ennek helytartója a vegyesházakbeli királyok korszakában*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1892, 24–25; Hajnik, 'A magyar bírósági szervezet és perjog', 57–58.

25 On the activity of the personal presence, see Zsolt Bogdándi, 'Az Erdélyi Fejedelemség személyes jelenléti bírósága és a táblai elnökök a 16. század második felében', *Erdélyi Múzeum* 78:1 (2016) 47–51.

THE PLACES OF AUTHENTICATION UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF QUEEN ISABELLA

During the establishment of the Transylvanian state, the *loca credibilia* that entered under its jurisdiction underwent a peculiar transformation that started in 1556 and ended in 1575 with the complete reorganization of the places of authentication from Gyulafehérvár and Kolozsmonostor (Cluj-Mănăstur, Abtsdorf.)²⁶ Based on the same foundations as similar institutions from Hungary, a specific Transylvanian institution – the office of the *requisitores* – gradually came to life to satisfy the needs of society for authentic charters and to ensure the conservation of the archives. Until the end of the reign of Queen Isabella only the first steps of this institutional reorganization took place. Next I will present these first steps separately for each institution that fell under the jurisdiction of Queen Isabella.

Gyulafehérvár

Until the secularization that occurred in late 1556, the charter-issuing activity of the Transylvanian places of authentication had remained mainly unchanged in accordance with the medieval Hungarian practice. The disparate evolution of the Transylvanian Chapter as place of authentication started after the 1557 Diet of Torda, when the guardianship of the archives was bestowed on “eminent noble men,” the *requisitores*, or in Hungarian *levélkeresők* (letter-searchers).²⁷ The same diet also passed decrees that authorized the bailiffs (*homo regius*) to execute court judgments and issue letters until the places of authentication would be reorganized. It thus seems that even the rulers of the country and the estates were uncertain of the viability of the newly-created institution, and initially the field of activity of the *requisitores* – as shown by the Hungarian name *levélkereső* – was restricted to the finding of charters preserved at the Chapter’s archives and issuing copies of them. The nobility was particularly interested in maintaining the intactness and proper preservation of the archive material that served as a legal basis for their rights, privileges and properties. The clerks appointed to the guardianship of the chapter archives were, without exception, former beneficiaries of chapter stalls or worked previously in the chancellery of the place of authentication.²⁸

These clerks, the *requisitores*, first appear in issued charters in 1559, but at that time, and in the following years until late 1575, they only transcribed

26 Regarding this transformation, see Zsigmond Jakó, ‘Az erdélyi levéltárügy története’, in Zsigmond Jakó, *Írás, levéltár, társadalom. Tanulmányok és források Erdély történelméhez*. Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2016, 69–94; Zsolt Bogdándi, *A kolozsmonostori konvent a fejedelemség korában* (Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 274). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2012; Emőke Gálfi, *A gyulafehérvári hiteleshely levélkeresői (1556–1690)* (Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 283). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2015.

27 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 81.

28 Gálfi, *A gyulafehérvári hiteleshely*, 47–55.

letters from the chapter archives at the request of the ruler or of private individuals. Until 1571, the transcripts were issued in the name of the queen or elected king and under the royal seal of the chancellery.²⁹ If we take a look at the first appointed *requisitores* of the Gyulafehérvár Chapter, we must notice that they were one way or another connected to the earlier existing ecclesiastical institution, so they had the qualifications that were necessary for them to work in the archives of the Chapter. Ambrus Mosdósi was the dean of the Chapter already in 1555, whereas in 1560 he is recorded as *requisitor* and the tenant of the tithe (*arendator decimarum*),³⁰ while Benedek Dombai is mentioned in the years 1559–1569 as *subcustos* of the Chapter, proof that he was also a former canon of the Church.³¹ The third person appointed to serve as *requisitor*, János Radicsics, appeared in the sources as Chapter notary already in 1549, and beginning with 1559 he was also one of the noble assessors of the Royal Table.³² The latter example shows that from the beginning of their establishment there were close links – even personal ties – between these two institutions, but it also shows the fact that the emerging state could rely only on a thin layer of experienced clerks, trusted with various tasks. We can also conclude that in the beginning the *requisitores* appointed in Gyulafehérvár served as the ruler's men-servants (*familiares*) their services at the archives of the Chapter being remunerated with the grant of estates rather than with a regular, established stipend.

Kolozsmonostor

As a result of the secularization, the Benedictine canonry of Kolozsmonostor abandoned the monastery, and the convent perished as an ecclesiastical institution. The new institution, which was created after twenty years of experimentation to replace the *loca credibilia* of the Convent, had essentially a secular nature. The activity of the place of authentication performed by the same convent scribe János Óvári passed under the jurisdiction of the town of Kolozsvár, and until 1575 it was restricted – in the same way as in Gyulafehérvár – to the finding of letters and issuing transcribed documents in the name and under the seal of the town.³³ The rulers addressed their letter-searcher mandates to the appointed *requisitores*, namely the magistrate of Kolozsvár, in response to which two citizens and the above-mentioned scribe János went to the Convent to search for the requested charter.

29 For example, MNL OL, Diplomatikai Levéltár no. 1688 and no. 36590.

30 Gálfi, *A gyulafehérvári hiteleshely*, 48–52.

31 *Ibid.*, 52–54.

32 Bogdándi, 'A fejedelmi tábla 16. századi ülnökeiről' (forthcoming).

33 Bogdándi, *A kolozsmonostori konvent*, 29–33.



Várad

The places of authentication from Várad that fall within the jurisdiction of Queen Isabella did not suffer such a radical transformation as the previously mentioned institutions. Although the secularization did apply to the counties of the Partium and church estates had been granted to lay persons, the *loca credibilia* of the cathedral Chapter of Várad and of the Chapter of St. Stephen in Váradelőhegy functioned continuously until 1566, when the Canonry remaining in the town was forced to leave Várad according to the decree formulated by the Diet in Torda.³⁴ Throughout this time, although the number of the canons decreased, they continued to perform the same tasks as all throughout the Middle Ages: converting undertakings (*fassiones*) into written instruments with legal authority, recording transactions, seizing new owners of lands (*statutiones*), confirming the appointment of attorneys and transcribing letters.

If we attempt to explain the different evolution of the places of authentication from Várad, we can rely only on suppositions. In addition to the fact that the city entered under Isabella's jurisdiction relatively late, just in the middle of 1557,³⁵ it is also a fact that the nobles of the Partium were largely interested in the conservation of the Chapter Archives and in the undisturbed functioning of the places of authentication. We must also take into consideration the fact that in the town lived a strong and numerous Catholic community that could also constitute a base of support for these institutions, supposedly backed also by the newly appointed Catholic captain of the fortress, the later Prince Stephen Báthory. We must also remark the fact that in Várad one could not find any other charter-issuing institution to compile his written instruments beside the two places of authentication. The Chancellery was far away from the Partium area so in this case it could not be a substitute for the *loca credibilia*, as occurred in Transylvania.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen above, after the secularization there were attempts to settle the matter of the places of authentication in different ways. In Gyulafehérvár, the archives were entrusted to the remaining members of the Chapter and the activity relied on the Chancellery, while the former convent archives entered under the supervision of the town of Kolozsvár and both institutions only transcribed and issued letters from their archives. In Várad, two Chapters were instead left to function mainly undisturbed. During the Middle Ages, the *loca credibilia* were more than charter-issuing institutions as they played an important

34 On this issue, see Zsolt Bogdándi, 'A várad hiteleshelyek a 16. század második felében', in Teréz Oborni (ed.), "Várad, Erdély kapuja..." Nagyvárad történelmi szerepe a fejedelemség korában. Nagyvárad: Varadinum Kulturális Alapítvány, 2015, 35–49.

35 Emőke Gálfi, 'Isabella királyné várospolitikája: Gyulafehérvár és Várad', in Oborni (ed.), "Várad, Erdély kapuja..." 28.

role in the administration of justice, in summoning, gathering evidence and executing court judgements.³⁶ Among the above-listed places of authentication, only the *loca credibilia* from Várad had an important role in the country's judicial administration until the end of Queen Isabella's reign, the *requisitores* from Gyulafehérvár and Kolozsmonostor regained this role just after the reorganization that took place late in 1575.³⁷

³⁶ Martyn Rady, *Customary Law in Hungary: Courts, Texts and the Tripartitum*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, 37–43.

³⁷ On the reorganization, see Bogdándi, *A kolozsmonostori konvent*, 45–50.

QUEEN ISABELLA'S URBAN POLICY DURING THE SECOND PERIOD OF HER REIGN

Queen Isabella's urban policy is inevitably divided into two periods because the queen herself reigned twice over the emerging new country of Transylvania along with the parts of Hungary that had broken away. The measures taken during the first of these periods, between 1542 and 1551, are less known,¹ partly because they were not large in number. However, these measures can be linked not only to the queen, but also to Friar George. As far as we know they had two-fold tasks. Firstly they were aimed at protecting public order (e.g., the *provisor* in Gyálu [Gilău, Romania] was not permitted to persecute those living in Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca, Romania])² and they also covered treasury matters (renting the toll called *vigesima* in Brassó [Braşov] Romania)³ or administrative instructions (the people of Beszterce [Bistriţa, Romania] should provide lodging to the Friar and his escort).⁴

However, the second period of Queen Isabella's reign, an interval that lasted merely three years (from 1556 to 1559), produced a broad range of comprehensive measures. Far from claiming to present an exhaustive list, I will identify a few of these measures: as regards the Székely market towns, she granted privileges and rights to Székelykeresztúr (Cristuru Secuiesc, Romania),⁵ Marosvásárhely (Târgu-Mureş, Romania), Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc, Romania),

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1 Endre Veress, *Izabella királyné*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 242; Elek Jakab (ed.), *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár története második és harmadik kötetéhez*, vol. 2. Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1888, 8–9.

2 Jakab, *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár*, 8–9.

3 Arhivele Naţionale ale României. Serviciul Judeţean Braşov al Arhivelor Naţionale. Colecţia de Documente Privilegiale, no. 446.

4 Arhivele Naţionale ale României. Serviciul Judeţean Sibiu al Arhivelor Naţionale (hereafter: SJAN-SB), Colecţia de Documente Medievale, U. V, no. 432.

5 Tamás Fejér, Etelka Rácz and Anikó Szász (eds.), *Az erdélyi fejedelmek Királyi Könyvei*, vol. 1, *Báthory Zsigmond Királyi Könyvei 1582–1602* (Erdélyi Történelmi Adatok VII/3). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2005, no. 52.

Kézdivásárhely (Târgu Secuiesc, Romania) and Csíkszereda (Miercurea Ciuc, Romania); the latter one was mentioned in historical records for the first time in 1558.⁶ Isabella regulated the order of the market town of Lugos (Lugoj, Romania)⁷ and ordered new statutes for the mining town Abrudbánya (Abrud, Romania),⁸ Várad (Oradea, Romania) and Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania). This paper will not provide a detailed review of all these measures; instead it will present the situation that existed in the two Episcopal seats in the emerging country – Gyulafehérvár and Várad – as well as the flourishing development that occurred in Kolozsvár.

The history of Gyulafehérvár as the residence of the prince of Transylvania began in 1556,⁹ although some parts of the city had already been in the hands of the queen before the secularization of Church estates (1556). The rise of the city as the residence of the prince is tied to the person and the second rule of Queen Isabella, because her overall reforms to urban policy also included comprehensive measures that determined the development of Gyulafehérvár. The most important change was that, as part of the process of secularization, from that time on the entire settlement became the estate of the queen and, later, of the ruling prince of Transylvania. Because the entire settlement was brought under the rule of one landlord, the separate quarters of the city were unified under the same chief judge of the town (*iudex primarius*). The bishop's market town, which previously had been under its own judge, and the chapter town (*Major* in Hungarian),¹⁰ which before 1556 was probably led by a so-called *kenéz*,¹¹ came under the authority of the town judge, although at a lower level of administration the *Major* still remained under the authority of the *kenéz*.¹²

The change in the town's leadership and in the number of people who served as members of the inner and outer councils can also be dated to this period. In the Middle Ages the town magistracy was led by a judge, four jurors (*iurati*) and an unknown number of external councilors.¹³ After 1556, the membership of the magistracy rose to 6 jurors and 20 councilors (*consules*)¹⁴ who operated under

6 Elek Benkő, István Demeter and Attila Székely (eds.), *Középkori mezőváros a Székelyföldön* (Erdélyi Tudományos Füzetek 223). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 1997, 13, 16–20, 24.

7 Fejér, Rác and Szász (eds.), *Az erdélyi fejedelmek Királyi Könyvei*, vol. 1, no. 50.

8 Emőke Gálfi, 'A gyulafehérvári uradalom néhány mezővárosáról a 16. század második felében', in Mária Lupescu Makó (ed.), *Várostörténeti tanulmányok. Studii de istorie urbană*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2018, 331–332.

9 Emőke Gálfi, 'The Society of the Residence of the Transylvanian Princes in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century', *The Hungarian Historical Review* 4:7 (2018) 762–765.

10 On the identity of the *kenéz* the first data comes only from later, from 1585. Emőke Gálfi (ed.), *Az erdélyi káptalan jegyzőkönyvei 1600–1613*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2016, no. 426.

11 In this case the name *kenéz* refers to the leader and the judge of the Romanian quarter.

12 Zsolt Bogdándi and Emőke Gálfi (eds.), *Az erdélyi káptalan jegyzőkönyvei 1222–1599*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2006, no. 875.

13 Bálint Lakatos, *Mezővárosi oklevelek. Települési önkormányzat és írásbeliség a késő középkori Magyarországon, 1301–1526* (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek; Adattárak). Budapest: Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2019, 65.

14 Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereafter: MNL OL), Erdélyi Országos Kormányhatósági Levéltárak, A Gyulafehérvári Káptalan Országos Levéltára (hereafter: GyKOLt), F4 Cista Comitatum, Comit. Alb., Cista 4. Fasc. 5, no. 61.

the authority of a judge.¹⁵ Although the surviving sources contain data only concerning the full composition of the magistrate beginning in 1571,¹⁶ they do at the very least indicate that before 1571 the magistrate consisted of one judge and six jurors.¹⁷ In all likelihood, the judges were elected in January¹⁸ and could not be reelected immediately after fulfilling their mandates. However, there were cases in which members of the magistracy who had dealt successfully with problems which had arisen in the administration of the town were reelected after several years.¹⁹ The sources also indicate that judges in many cases were elected from among the jurors²⁰ and after having served for one year they became members of the external town council together with the so-called *consules*.²¹ On the model of the former bishop's market town, the Gyulafehérvár court judge (*provisor*) became the court of appeal for the townspeople of the market town.²²

A change took place that was a decisive event in the life of the town in the mid-sixteenth century, the first sign of which is evident from the composition of the town's government: alongside the chief judge, a judge of the townspeople of Lippa (Lipova, Romania) and of Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania) appears among the members. The judge of the townspeople of Lippa, just as the chief judge and two jurors of the town, also became one of the nine assessors of the court of law of the court judge that became the court of appeal for the townspeople.²³ The two judges were the heads of the quarter called *Lippa*, a name which appears in the sources in the second half of the sixteenth century. The name of the quarter can only be explained by the fall of the towns of Lippa and Temesvár to the Ottomans in the summer of 1552. Following this event, many refugees fled to Transylvania and many of them settled in Gyulafehérvár and its surroundings.²⁴ The fact that the townspeople of Lippa and Temesvár had a separate street and quarter in Gyulafehérvár suggests an organized settling process that can

15 András Kovács (ed.), *Gyulafehérvár város jegyzőkönyvei. Gyulafehérvár városkönyve 1588–1674. Gyulafehérvár város törvénykezési jegyzőkönyvei 1603–1616* (Erdélyi Történelmi Adatok VI/2). Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 1998, 250.

16 MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 4 Cista Comitatum, Comit. Alb., Cista 4. Fasc. 5, no. 61.

17 For 1568: Arhivele Naționale ale României. Serviciul Județean Cluj al Arhivelor Naționale (hereafter: SJAN-CJ), Arch. Beldi (Fond 324), no. 89–128, no. 101; SJAN-CJ, Colecția generală de documente (Fond 546), no. 57. For 1569: MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 3 Centuria, D. 29; Fejér, Rácz and Szász (eds.), *Az erdélyi fejedelmek Királyi Könyvei*, vol. 1, no. 96, 222.

18 The town judge, Gergely Igeni, appears as the leader of the town on January 14, 1571. MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 3 Centuria, D. 26.

19 April 5, 1575. MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 3 Centuria, H. 79; November 27, 1568. SJAN-CJ, Colecția generală de documente (Fond 546), no. 57.

20 August 24, 1568. SJAN-CJ, Arch. Beldi (Fond 324), no. 101; April 3, 1570. SJAN-CJ, Arhiva fam. Gyulay-Kuun. (Fond 351), no. 216; MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 3 Centuria, D. 9. There is not enough data to suggest that judges were only elected from the jurors.

21 MNL OL, GyKOLt, F 4 Cista Comitatum, Comit. Alb., Cista 4. Fasc. 5, no. 61.

22 Kovács (ed.), *Gyulafehérvár város jegyzőkönyvei*, 7.

23 SJAN-CJ, Colecția generală de documente (Fond 546), no. 57.

24 Emőke Gálfi, 'A gyulafehérvári Lippa-fertály és a lippai menekültek a 16. század közepén', in Veronka Dáné, Mária Lupescuné Makó and Gábor Sipos (eds.), *Testimonio litterarum. Tanulmányok Jakó Zsigmond tiszteletére*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2016, 143–149.

probably be associated with the Rascian magnate Miklós Cserepovith²⁵ and perhaps with Giambattista Castaldo, the lieutenant of Transylvania.²⁶

The sources do not indicate clearly when the inhabitants of the Lippa quarter acquired the right to elect their own representatives and when they were included in the government of the town. However, based on the reorganization of the magistracy after 1556 and the relationship of Queen Isabella and King John I to the town of Lippa, it is reasonable to suppose that the leaders of the Lippa quarter became members of the town's government after 1556. According to the diploma of the leaders of the quarter from 1567, the townspeople of Lippa and Temesvár functioned under the leadership of two judges and six jurors as a common municipal council.²⁷ It is probable that the judges and jurors were elected equally (three each) from among the former townspeople of the two towns. The council confirmed their diplomas with its seal.²⁸ In light of the above, the reorganization of Gyulafehérvár's leadership was due not only to the identity of the landowners and the merger of the city districts, but also to an increase in the urban population.

The return of Queen Isabella in 1556 entailed the legal unification of the quarters, the reorganization of the urban government and the bestowal of economic privileges. One of the economic privileges of Gyulafehérvár was the right to have an annual fair. The "letter on the annual fair" was mentioned in the Town Book of Gyulafehérvár in 1597 and 1598 as a treasure that the judge in office took over from his predecessor along with the town's archives.²⁹ The letter and the archives were destroyed in 1600.³⁰ Like the urban statutes, this privilege could have originated from Queen Isabella and it must have specified the dates of the annual fairs. As far as we know, the town had two annual fairs in the Middle Ages.³¹ The annual fairs held in the second half of the sixteenth century are known from a calendar produced in the printing workshop of Gáspár Heltai. Since the calendar was printed in 1572, it seems likely that it reflects the situation during the period of the reign of King Elect John II or probably an earlier

25 Miklós Cserepovith Councilor (1556–1558), ban of Karánsebes (Caransebeș, Romania) (1559) and Lugos (Lugoj, Romania) (1558). Zsolt Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540–1690*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980, 26; Fejér, Rácz and Szász (eds.), *Az erdélyi fejedelmek Királyi Könyvei*, vol. 1, no. 50.

26 July 8, 1552. Castaldo's letter to Archduke Maximilian: "*Nicolaus Cheprevith mihi scribat circa duo Rascianorum millia cum uxoribus et familiis servasse et versus Lippam duxisse, ubi munitionem arcis non parum adiuvant, pro quibus petit aliquem locum in regno isto ubi habitare possunt.*" Haus-, Hof und Staatsarchiv, Wien, Ungarische Akten Fasc. 66. Konvolut A. fol. 5r. I would like to thank Klára P. Kovács for sharing this data with me.

27 Pál Szabó, János Zilay, Demeter Nyerges, Ádám Mészáros, Ferenc Pontyos, Pál Tollkötő, Gál Somogy and Bálint Harany. SJAN-SB, *Colectia de Documente Medievale*, U IV. no. 1123.

28 "...kegyelmednek hitünk szerint pecsét alatt küldettük..." (according to our oath, we have it sent to you under our seal). SJAN-SB, *Colectia de Documente Medievale*, U IV. no. 1123.

29 Kovács (ed.), *Gyulafehérvár város jegyzőkönyvei*, 26–27.

30 *Ibid.*, 38–39.

31 Boglárka Weisz, *Vásárok és lerakatok a középkori Magyar Királyságban*. Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont Történettudományi Intézet, 2012, 143.

period. In Gyulafehérvár, three annual fairs were held during this period: the first on the day of the appearance of Saint Michael or Saint Stanislaus (May 8), the second on Michael (September 29) and the third on Maundy Thursday.³²

The question then arises as to why did Queen Isabella, who gave the town the first early modern statutes, failed to elevate this settlement from its market town status and grant the rank of free town? The answer is not clear, but a number of arguments can be raised in support of maintaining the status of market town. A royal free city enjoyed autonomy, which to a certain extent tied the monarch's hands and limited the full implementation of his will. On the other hand, if a city was owned by the prince, the ruler could enjoy his seigniorage unhindered. Being the landlord of the town meant that the right of escheat of the real estate properties (*devolutio bonorum*), an essential right for donations, was not held by the town, but by the sovereign. Another relevant aspect was that the ruler also had the right of billeting over the town and thus was able to provide lodging for the soldiers in the houses of residents at his or her discretion.³³ These were perhaps the main reasons why the town of Gyulafehérvár was able to serve as the home of princes and their courts as a market town throughout the age of the Principality of Transylvania.

The other Episcopal seat of the emerging country, which subsequently fell into the hands of Queen Isabella and her son during the secularization, was Várad. Based on its centrality score (41), András Kubinyi included Várad among the major cities of Hungary.³⁴ It probably had a significant population with a total number of 545 households (*porta*) in 1552.³⁵ In comparison, according to a survey conducted by the Werner and Bornemissza Commission, Dés (Dej, Romania) had 100 households in 1552 (it should be mentioned that the number of households in Dés was 332 during the reign of King John), while Torda (Turda, Romania) had over 750 households.³⁶ During the first reign of Queen Isabella, this market town was not controlled by the queen, but was in the possession of Friar George as the Bishop of Várad. This town was a very important trading center, as indicated by the 12 annual fairs that made it the leader in the number of such fairs at national level as well.³⁷ András Kubinyi attributed this to the geographical locations of the fairs in Várad: the town was

32 Pál Binder, 'Régi kalendáriumok az erdélyi és partiumi vásárokról, vagy sokadalmakról (1572–1676)', *Néprajzi Látóhatár* 2:1–2 (1993) 113–114.

33 It must be mentioned that Beszterce did not let the soldiers of Friar George enter the town in 1542. SJAN-SB, Colecția de Documente Medievale, U. V, no. 432.

34 András Kubinyi, 'Városhálózat a késő középkori Kárpát-medencében', *Történelmi Szemle* 46:1–2 (2004) 23.

35 Ferenc Maksay (ed.), *Magyarország birtokviszonyai a 16. század közepén*, vol. 1. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, 194.

36 Teréz Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei I. Ferdinánd uralma alatt 1552–1556* (FONS Könyvek 1). Budapest: Szentpétery Imre Történettudományi Alapítvány, 2002, 78 and 82.

37 Lakatos, *Mezővárosi oklevelek*, 639–640; Katalin Szende, '"Civitas opulentissima Varadiensis." Püspöki székhely és városfejlődés a középkori Váradon', in Attila Zsoldos (ed.), *Nagyvárad és Bihar a korai középkorban* (Tanulmányok Biharország történetéről 1). Nagyvárad: Varadinum Kulturális Alapítvány, 2014, 122.

located at the points of contact of Hungary's market districts, so it was a natural center for trading goods.³⁸

The layout of Várad suggests that the town is the result of a merger of several town centers.³⁹ Of these, the most important – the town of Várad itself – was largely in the possession of the Chapter of Várad, while the fortress and the other town centers such as Vadkert, Olaszi and Velence were controlled by the bishop.⁴⁰ Some of these town districts (Olaszi and Vadkert) issued separate charters during the late Middle Ages on behalf of their respective judges, while the charters issued on behalf of the entire town included two judges.⁴¹ The highest authority was the Episcopal court judge and the dean of the chapter.⁴² Surrounding settlements could also lodge appeals with the town judges; for example, if the residents of Pálújlak (Uileacu de Munte, Romania), a nearby chapter settlement, were dissatisfied with the judgment from their judge, they could refer their cases to the magistrate of Várad.⁴³

After the departure of Queen Isabella and the death of Friar George, the Habsburg government tried to strengthen the position of this town famous for its fairs and to protect it against the abuses of the bellicose Bishop Mátyás Zaberminus⁴⁴ following the recall of Tamás Varkocs. In return for the support provided by the Habsburgs, the residents of Várad remained faithful to Ferdinand I and did not pledge their allegiance to Queen Isabella in 1556. Since there were no walls around Várad, Tamás Varkocs, who joined the queen, occupied the town in the autumn of 1556, but captured the fortress only in the spring of the next year.⁴⁵ Based on the information provided by Antal Verancsics and other contemporary sources, the Church historian Vince Bunyitay concluded that Tamás Varkocs deliberately had Várad burnt down and destroyed its churches because the residents were of Catholic faith.⁴⁶ Queen Isabella herself also referred to Várad in 1558 as a town that had been burnt down when she ordered the residents to take in people who wanted to move there in order to populate the town.⁴⁷ However, the letter of adjudication⁴⁸ in a lawsuit related to a house in Várad provided answers to a

38 András Kubinyi, 'A városi rend kialakulásának előfeltételei és a főváros kereskedelme a 15. század végén' in András Kubinyi, *Tanulmányok Budapest középkori történetéről*, vol. 1. Budapest: Budapest Főváros Levéltára, 2009, 312.

39 Szende, "Civitas opulentissima Varadiensis.", 119–120.

40 Vince Bunyitay, *A várad püspökség története*, vol. 2. Nagyvárad, 1883, 247–248, 273.

41 Lakatos, *Mezővárosi oklevelek*, 59; Zsigmond Jakó, *Bihar megye a török pusztítás előtt*. Budapest: Sylvester Nyomda Rt., 1940, 380.

42 Jakó, *Bihar megye*, 380.

43 MNL OL, F 4. Cista Bihar, Fasc. 1, no. 34.

44 Bunyitay, *A várad püspökség története*, vol. 1, 411–418.

45 Jolán Balogh, *Varadinum. Várad vára* (Művészettörténeti Füzetek 13/1). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982, 39.

46 Bunyitay, *A várad püspökség története*, vol. 1, 429.

47 "...volentes illam vastitatem, in quam anno proxime elapso ista civitas nostra Varadiensis per conflagrationem et combustionem eiusdem devenerit restaurare." MNL OL, Magyar Kancellária Levéltára, A 57 Libri Regii vol. 5. 446.

48 SJAN-CJ, Arhiva fam. Bálinttitt, no. 25.

number of very important questions. The town was set on fire during the siege by the protectors of the fortress, the followers of Bishop Zaberminus, although it is true that it was not spared by the besiegers either and that Varkocs was involved in the destruction of the religious institutions as well. Though the fortress was captured by troops loyal to the queen, the keys to the fortress were still in the hands of Zaberminus's followers and the protectors made the handover subject to an agreement negotiated with the followers of the queen when the fortress was captured. An essential point in this agreement was that the queen agree to recognize the donations made by the deceased bishop.

A passage in the letter of adjudication shows that the legal merger of the town districts in 1557 also entailed the amendment of the town's statutes, just as happened in Gyulafehérvár. For in none of these towns was it exactly clear what laws were included in these statutes, but it seems that the citizens of Várad tried to use this changed situation to obtain the status of free town. It is well-known in the relevant literature that the town districts merged in 1557 and elected a common judge.⁴⁹ However, the town, destroyed during the siege, despite medieval customs elected a single judge, not just because its population decreased,⁵⁰ but also because this time the landlord of the town centers (Várad, Vadkert, Olaszi and Velençe) was the same person, just as was the case in Gyulafehérvár. It is highly probable that the organization of the town magistrate changed when new statutes were implemented. In 1558, in slight contrast with Gyulafehérvár, the town was ruled by a governing body through a Senate comprised of one Chief Judge, probably 12 jurors and the *centumviri* (that is, the Council of the One Hundred Men).⁵¹ On this basis, it can be established that, on the one hand, the queen altered the administration of Várad using the model established for the town administrations of Buda and Kolozsvár, and, on the other hand, that this unified town still had a significant number of inhabitants.

Finally, I will present the comprehensive urban policy of the queen through the example of Kolozsvár. This town started to rise during the reign of King John I primarily due to the political events in the country as well as to the fact that Transylvania was spared the destruction caused by wars until the end of the sixteenth century. After the Battle of Mohács, Kolozsvár – unlike the Saxon towns who supported Ferdinand I – adhered to King John I. This is why the latter transferred the gold exchange and mintage chamber from Szeben (Sibiu, Romania), the capital of the *Universitas Saxonum*, to Kolozsvár in 1527. In 1529, after King John I returned from Poland, Kolozsvár was one of the first

49 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 81; Bunyitay, *A várad püspökség története*, vol. 1, 430; Jakó, *Bihar megye*, 380; Szende, "Civitas opulentissima Varadiensis.", 127.

50 Bunyitay, *A várad püspökség története*, vol. 1, 430.

51 Arhivele Naționale ale României. Serviciul Județean Bihor al Arhivelor Naționale, Colecția de fonduri familiale. Seria 1. Familia Ugray Bölöny no. 1., fol. 35.

towns to come back to the side of the king.⁵² The importance of this town is demonstrated by the fact that in 1539, at the order of King John I, construction of Újbálványosvár (known today as Szamosújvár [Gherla, Romania]) began, the continuation of which was subsequently ensured by Friar George. The strategic goal of this project was to ensure that the road to Kolozsvár could be easily controlled from the fortress.⁵³

The most important measures taken by Queen Isabella concerning Kolozsvár were of economic nature and included measures aimed at stimulating the commercial activity and increasing the revenue of the town. On December 21, 1556, right after the queen had returned, she confirmed the diploma on gold exchange and mintage issued by King John I in 1527.⁵⁴ She adopted the most important provisions two years later when she established a thirtieth-tax customs place, granted a depository right and permitted the organization of four fairs.⁵⁵ This donation letter cannot be dissociated from the fact that in 1556 the queen obtained from the town a significant loan of 1,100 forints, which she failed to pay back in 1557 and most probably in 1558 as well.⁵⁶

Queen Isabella provided support for the town not only by granting economic privileges, but also by giving an important legal privilege so that it no longer had to refer the lawsuits to the *Universitas Saxonum*, but could bring them directly to the sovereign.⁵⁷ Not so long ago this initiative was attributed to King John II, but it can be stated that this was an integral part of the queen's urban policy measures.

CONCLUSION

In contrast with the first period of her reign, Queen Isabella adopted a series of comprehensive measures concerning towns in Transylvania between 1556 and 1559. In conclusion, the Queen clearly regarded the towns in her country to be major economic and social factors, which took in a large number of refugees dislocated by the wars that affected the Kingdom of Hungary in the

52 Emőke Gálfi, 'King John I Szapolyai and the Transylvanian Towns (forthcoming); Ágnes Flóra, 'Kolozsvár és a központi hatalom kapcsolata a Mohács utáni évtizedekben', *URBS Magyar várostörténeti évkönyv*, vol. 8. Budapest: Budapest Főváros Levéltára, 2013, 25–46; Ágnes Flóra, *The Matter of Honour. The Leading Urban Elite in Sixteenth Century Transylvania*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2019, 56–57.

53 Teréz Oborni, *Az ördögös Barát. Fráter György (1482–1551)*. Pécs–Budapest: Kronosz Kiadó–Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 2017, 265.

54 Flóra, 'Kolozsvár és a központi hatalom kapcsolata', 39.

55 March 15, 1558. *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*, 33.

57 This measure was adopted between March 19, 1555, and January 1, 1559. Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, no. 2351; MNL OL, Mohács utáni Gyűjtemény, R 374 Kolozsvár városára vonatkozó iratok III. sequence, 11th box, fol. 8r.

second half of the sixteenth century. It is for this reason that the queen deemed it useful to issue new statutes for a number of towns and found it necessary to change the composition of their leadership and to extend the town councils. The queen then granted economic privileges to these enlarged settlements because she recognized their inherent financial potential. Furthermore, it is obvious that during the second period of her reign, when she did not depend on the financial decisions made by her former treasurer, Friar George, she was able to manage her urban policy and, in general, her newly obtained country all by herself. In light of this case study, it would be worth exploring other aspects of her policy as well.

Liviu Cîmpeanu*

THE ROYAL HABSBURG ARSENAL IN SIBIU (HERMANNSTADT, NAGYSZEBEN) UNDER THE RULE OF QUEEN ISABELLA

The branch of the National Archives of Romania in Sibiu (Hermannstadt in German, Nagyszeben in Hungarian) holds around 150 documents regarding the arsenal established in the city by the Habsburg army in the summer and autumn of 1551. The main part of this series of documents is represented by the correspondence between Conrad Haas (commander of the arsenal), his superior officers in the Habsburg army and the personnel under his command. There are also some pieces of correspondence between Conrad Haas and Habsburg civilian authorities and even between Haas and civilians of Sibiu. All of these documents are located in three different collections: *Colecția de acte fasciculate* (98 pieces), *Colecția Brukenthal* (34 pieces) and *Colecția Magistratul orașului și a scaunului Sibiu* (18 pieces).¹ They reveal a vivid image of the arsenal during Habsburg rule in Transylvania (1552–1556) and a few of them contain details on how the arsenal was taken over by Queen Isabella's deputies at the beginning of her second reign (1556–1559). More information is provided by the Protocols of the Saxon Universitas in Transylvania (1544–1563), the Accounts of the Saxon Universitas (1557, 1558 and 1559) and the Town Accounts of *Cibinium* (1556–1559) – unpublished documents preserved at the same archives in Sibiu. The aim of our paper is to offer a survey of the two matters and to reveal the variety and importance of the mentioned sources.

In the summer of 1551 Queen Isabella was forced due to the subversive maneuvers of Friar George to resign her reign to Ferdinand I. Afterwards she gave the Holy Crown of Hungary to General Giovanni Battista Castaldo, military lieutenant and commander-in-chief of the superior Habsburg forces.

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¹ These documents are available in digital form on the website *arhivamedievala.ro* under the keyword “arsenal”. They can also be searched by date (year, month, day) as follows: “February 1, 1552,” as “1552.02.01.”

Immediately afterwards, Transylvania was taken over by the Habsburg army, which occupied the main fortresses and fortified cities of the province and set up a military régime.² By the end of August 1551, 14 companies of *landsknecht* were garrisoned in the Saxon city of Sibiu, the largest and best-fortified city in the province, which thus became the headquarters of Castaldo's army. Subsequently an arsenal was established for keeping the weapons and war materials brought by Castaldo's troops. There are no documents regarding the founding of the arsenal and the first months of its existence. The earliest documents are dated February 1, 1552, when Conrad Haas became "*Kwniglicher Zeugwart*". From this date on, he kept the accounts of the arsenal and issued hundreds of receipts and reports regarding construction work and building upgrades, personnel, weapons, ammunition and war materials kept by him, as well as his responsibilities and actions toward the other Habsburg arsenals and garrisons in Transylvania.

The main source for the construction work on the arsenal is the account register that Conrad Haas maintained in the years 1552–1555. It mentions the cleaning of the courtyard, a new gate, iron bars at the windows, several transports of construction materials, etc.³ Further work was done, for example, at the ammunition depot, where the windows were covered with canvas (December 24, 1552),⁴ or at the commanders' quarters, where seven glass windows were mounted by Zierfuess Piltschnitzer, a glazier from Sibiu (July 26, 1554).⁵ Another craftsman from Sibiu, Stephan Maurer, was hired to build a cooktop stove and to do other masonry work for which he received one forint (October 26, 1554).⁶ Several wooden benches for three rooms of the arsenal were made by Pancratius Wagrumber and Gregor Rossenberger, carpenters in the service of the royal (Habsburg) arsenal in Sibiu (January 12, 1553).⁷

In the early winter of 1552, a wooden storehouse was built by Peter Ziegler, carpenter of the arsenal, for the various types of artillery pieces (December 31, 1552).⁸ Two years after the arsenal was established, the stable roof was fixed (June 18, 1554)⁹ and, in October 1554, the courtyard was leveled by Thomas

2 Béla Köpeczi (ed.), *History of Transylvania*, vol. 1, *From the Beginnings to 1606*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, 622–626; Gerald Volkmer, *Siebenbürgen zwischen Habsburgermonarchie und Osmanischem Reich. Völkerrechtliche Stellung und Völkerrechtspraxis eines ostmitteleuropäischen Fürstentum 1541–1699* (Schriften des Bundesinstituts für Kultur und Geschichte der Deutschen im östlichen Europa 56). Oldenburg: DeGruyter, 2015, 61–68; Cristina Feneșan, *Constituirea principatului autonom al Transilvaniei*. București: Editura Enciclopedică, 1997, 139–147.

3 Serviciul Județean al Arhivelor Naționale Sibiu, Magistratul orașului și scaunului Sibiu (hereafter: SJAN-SB), U V, no. 1345 passim (hereafter: U V).

4 SJAN SB, Colecția de acte fasciculate, Seria O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 25 (hereafter: Acte fasciculate, O. Armata).

5 *Ibid.*, fol. 83.

6 *Ibid.*, fol. 94.

7 SJAN-SB, Seria Brukenthal R-S 1.10, no. 154 (hereafter: Brukenthal R-S 1–10).

8 *Ibid.*, no. 161.

9 *Ibid.*, no. 172.

Hartmann, former Habsburg army sapper in Transylvania (October 27, 1554).¹⁰ These few and random examples illustrate the various details contained in preserved documents regarding the building complex of the arsenal.

Another group of documents offers information concerning the personnel of the arsenal in Sibiu. In the first place, they reveal the position of the arsenal in the hierarchical order of the Habsburg army in Transylvania. The commander-in-chief of the army was Giovanni Battista Castaldo. Under his direct command stood Baltazar von Walderstain, master gunner (*vellzeugwart*) of the royal artillery. He, in turn, served the direct superior of Conrad Haas, commander of the Sibiu arsenal, beginning on February 1, 1552. His staff consisted of craftsmen, gunners and gatekeepers.¹¹

Craftsmen of the arsenal were the cooper Casper Hennegevl,¹² the carpenters Peter Ziegler,¹³ Pancratius Wagrumber and Gregor Rossenberger,¹⁴ the locksmiths Adam Ringlerr and Casper Wurzer,¹⁵ the blacksmiths Leonard Kneisch and Paul Neydauer¹⁶ and the wheelwrights Johann von Crannach,¹⁷ Bartholomeus Aichelmann and Asbolt Zwickhstaath.¹⁸

All these craftsmen had their own workshops within the arsenal. Thus we know about the workshop of the locksmiths and, separately, the workshop of the blacksmiths, both built by Peter Ziegler, carpenter of the arsenal, out of wood received from Conrad Haas for this purpose (December 31, 1552).¹⁹ The wheelwrights had their workshop as well, for which they received rope from Conrad Haas on June 18, 1554.²⁰

Four gunners were in the service of the arsenal: Johannes (Hans) Schmidt from Nuremberg, Victor de Venetia, Francisco de Muran and Phillip Prannz.²¹ They fulfilled several missions either together or separately: for example, on September 7, 1553, Johannes Schmidt, Phillip Prannz, Francisco de Muran and a certain Johannes Mullner joined the Habsburg camp at Târgu Mureş (Neumarkt, Marosvásárhely), where they saluted the peace with the Székelys with cannon fire.²² Johannes Schmidt was solely responsible for the transport of weapons

10 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, f. 95.

11 *Ibid.*, fol. 109–110.

12 *Ibid.*, fol. 11 (April 21, 1552).

13 *Ibid.*, fol. 19 (December 7, 1553).

14 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 154 (January 12, 1553); Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 109–110 (November 11, 1555: Pancratius Wagrumber and Jorg Cainz).

15 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 23 (December 20, 1552: Adam Ringlerr), fol. 96–97, 109–110 (November 12, 1554, and November 11, 1555: Caspar Wurzer).

16 U V, no. 3 (October 28, 1553); Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 109–110 (November 11, 1555: Paul Neydauer).

17 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 160 (December 25, 1552).

18 *Ibid.*, no. 169 (April 12, 1554).

19 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 161.

20 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 79.

21 *Ibid.*, fol. 109–110 (November 11, 1556).

22 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 164.

from Sibiu to Turda (Thorenburg, Torda)²³ and from Alba Iulia (Weissenburg, Gyulafehérvár) to Sibiu.²⁴ The gunner Victor de Venetia carried out similar tasks²⁵ and was notorious for the large debts he incurred toward several citizens of Sibiu: Christofor Offner/Buday,²⁶ the merchant Johann Osterwallt,²⁷ the pharmacist Gallus Vischer,²⁸ and David Golltschmidt.²⁹ Victor de Venetia died poor and indebted on a mission to Gherla (Neuschloss, Szamosújvár) before September 26, 1556.³⁰ His superior, Conrad Haas, pledged his remained debts. His fellow gunners from the arsenal, Johannes (Hans) Schmidt, Francisco de Muran and Phillip Prannz, although unpaid, remained in service at least until the end of the year.³¹

As mentioned above, besides the craftsmen and the gunners, two gatekeepers stood in the service of the arsenal: Bartholomaeus Paungartner and Gergely (Girgel) Vhlyckg (?).³² Occasionally craftsmen from Sibiu and sappers from Castaldo's army were hired, as discussed above.

All the personnel received payment from the royal Habsburg authorities. A document regarding the payments to be received by the staff of the Habsburg arsenals in Alba Iulia and Sibiu from September 1, 1553, has been preserved.³³ By January 1, 1555, Balthazar von Walderstain, master gunner of the Habsburg artillery in Transylvania, wrote to Conrad Haas, his deputy in Sibiu, to urge his craftsmen to be patient about their payment, for László Vas, King Ferdinand's administrator of the incomes (*supremus administrator proventuum*) of Transylvania, promised to pay them as soon as possible.³⁴ Because the artillery commander was at the time in Alba Iulia, Conrad Haas had to take the money from the administrator himself in order to distribute it properly.³⁵ On November 6, 1555, gunners, craftsmen and gatekeepers all received their payments from Conrad Haas.³⁶ The arsenal in Sibiu kept its personnel as long as it was paid by the Habsburg authorities. After payment ceased, craftsmen and gunners simply disbanded under circumstances discussed below in our text.

The arsenal was primarily a storage place for weapons, ammunition and other war materials. It is known that after 1551 Castaldo imported several

23 *Ibid.*, no. 166 (September 21, 1553).

24 *Ibid.*, no. 179 (December 17, 1554).

25 For example: Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 52 (September 5, 1553).

26 *Ibid.*, fol. 113.

27 *Ibid.*, fol. 119.

28 *Ibid.*, fol. 120.

29 *Ibid.*, fol. 121.

30 *Ibid.*, fol. 120.

31 *Ibid.*, fol. 122: Conrad Haas struggled to receive money for their payments on October 23, 1556.

32 *Ibid.*, fol. 109–110.

33 *Ibid.*, fol. 58.

34 For László Vas, see: Teréz Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei I. Ferdinánd uralma alatt, 1552–1556*, (FONS Könyvek 1.). Budapest: Szentpétery Imre Történettudományi Alapítvány, 2002, passim, mainly: 119–133, 244–245, 250–254.

35 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 180.

36 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 109–110.

transports of weapons and military supplies, especially from Upper Hungary, to Transylvania.³⁷ At least some of these were stored at the arsenal in Sibiu. We know for sure that harquebuses were kept and maintained there: this is confirmed by several receipts and written mandates such as the one issued by General Castaldo on April 21, 1552.³⁸ Another example of such a receipt is the one issued by Johannes Haas, treasurer of the artillery of Transylvania, for 30 harquebuses purchased from Conrad Haas, commander of the Sibiu arsenal, for three forints each in order to be distributed among the gunners under the command of Melchior Fueger in exchange for their overdue payment.³⁹ Then, on the June 4, 1553, Conrad Haas granted 468 harquebuses to the *landsknecht* of Andreas von Brandeis, commander of the infantry.⁴⁰ One month later, on the August 12, 1553, another 500 harquebuses were cleaned and greased by the sappers Jakob Weissenpurger and Thomas Hagckh.⁴¹

Another category of weapons that sources show were stored at the arsenal in Sibiu were long pikes for infantry. By August 12, 1553, 5,330 pikes kept at the arsenal were cleaned and greased by the previously mentioned Jakob Weissenpurger and Thomas Hagckh.⁴² There is only sporadic evidence of the presence of armor: on September 20, 1552, Georg Khunig, a Habsburg army officer, requested that Conrad Haas furnish him with white-striped armor manufactured in Cluj (Klausenburg, Kolozsvár) for his artillery commander.⁴³

Paradoxically, the artillery itself is the least documented. All in all, an inventory from 1555, written by Conrad Haas, records 45 cannons and 2 mortars, besides 186 double harquebuses, 1,327 regular-sized harquebuses and handguns and 5,191 pikes.⁴⁴

All these weapons had to be maintained, thus sources show several instances in which they were repaired and greased. Here are a few examples: on December 20, 1552, Adam Ringlerr, the arsenal locksmith, repaired and greased several hundred harquebuses and pikes and, on April 21, 1554, Casper Henngel, arsenal cooper, repaired several harquebuses.⁴⁵ Even craftsmen from the city were hired to repair and maintain the war materials kept at the arsenal: for example, Peter Weisnner, cooper from Sibiu, repaired several gunpowder barrels. For his work he received 10 forints and 40 denars from Conrad Haas (August 9, 1553).⁴⁶

37 Florin-Nicolae Ardelean, 'Foreign Mercenaries and Early Modern Military Innovations in East Central Europe. The Army of Castaldo in Transylvania and the Banat 1551–1553', *Studia Agriensia* 35 (2017) 122–123; for an incomplete survey, based on later sources, see Ludwig Reissenberger, 'Über die ehemaligen Befestigungen von Hermannstadt', *Archiv des Vereins für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 29:2 (1900) 344–347.

38 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, f. 9–10.

39 *Ibid.*, fol. 28–29.

40 *Ibid.*, fol. 44–45.

41 *Ibid.*, fol. 49.

42 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*, fol. 16.

44 Ardelean, 'Foreign Mercenaries', 124.

45 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, f. 11 and 23.

46 *Ibid.*, fol. 48.

Apart from weapons, various types of ammunition, like cannonballs, bullets for harquebuses, lead and gunpowder, were kept at the arsenal, as attested by several documents. Just one example: on April 2, 1552, on orders from General Castaldo, Conrad Haas provided Georg Grabatt/Crabat, gunner in Transylvania, with various types of ammunition.⁴⁷

As stated above, the weapons, ammunition and war materials were brought by Castaldo's army from Upper Hungary, which was under Habsburg rule. Yet there was an attempt to cast a cannon in Sibiu at the end of 1552 by *meister* Wennzel Khraus. He succeeded in this effort⁴⁸ and, on April 12, 1553, he received gunpowder and cannonballs from Conrad Haas to test the new cannon.⁴⁹ There are no other known attempts to produce weapons and/or ammunition at the arsenal in Sibiu. An interesting document, issued most likely by Conrad Haas himself, lists the necessary tools to produce ammunition at the Sibiu arsenal. The issuer of the document points out that those tools could not be found in Transylvania and that one could buy them "neither for gold nor for money" (November 20, 1554).⁵⁰ With regard to the harquebuses, it was specified that they were manufactured either in Nuremberg or in *Behmen*.

Conrad Haas kept several other materials for the Habsburg army in Transylvania at the Sibiu arsenal. Thus, on April 5, 1552, he granted 60 horse harnesses to Billig Schmol, commander of the wagon drivers,⁵¹ and on December 12, 1552, he sent a fully-equipped war wagon to the gunner Melchior Fueger at the latter's demand.⁵² Under General Castaldo's command, the Sibiu arsenal also supplied tools (such as spades, shovels and pickaxes) to the architects Antonio de Buffelo (April 12, 1552) and Francisco Chiaramello de Gandino (April 12, 1553), who built the fortifications in Alba Iulia at this time.⁵³

Conrad Haas provided several tools and raw materials to his own craftsmen. For example, wheelwright tools to Johann von Crannach (December 25, 1552),⁵⁴ iron to his blacksmiths Leonard Kneisch and Paul Neydauer (October 28, 1553),⁵⁵ charcoal for the latter's blacksmith workshop and for the workshop of the locksmith Casper Wurzer (December 31, 1554 and December 31, 1555),⁵⁶ rope to the wheelwrights Bartholomeus Aichlman and Asbolt Zwickstatt (June 18, 1554),⁵⁷ etc. Hay was kept in the arsenal's barns.⁵⁸ Conrad Haas was

47 Brukenthal R-S 1-10, no. 156 (written order of General Castaldo) and Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, Nr. 76, fol. 3 (receipt issued by Georg Crabat).

48 *Ibid.*, fol. 17.

49 *Ibid.*, fol. 35-36.

50 U V, no. 4.

51 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, f. 2.

52 *Ibid.*, fol. 20-21 and 22.

53 *Ibid.*, fol. 37 and 38.

54 Brukenthal R-S 1-10, Nr. 160.

55 U V, no. 3.

56 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 65; U V, no. 6.

57 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 79.

58 Evidence of the arsenal's barns emerged only 30 years later, in the years 1588-1589, in an inventory of the millstones of the city of Hermannstadt issued by the town administrator (*villicus*).

urged several times by his superior, Balthazar von Walderstain, to be a good householder and to mow the hay.⁵⁹

The main role of the arsenal in Sibiu was to supply Castaldo's field army and the Habsburg garrisons in the fortresses of Transylvania with weapons, ammunition and war materials. Since most of the preserved documents regarding the Sibiu arsenal refer to the provision of supplies to the army and garrisons, we offer here just a few illustrative examples. On April 21, 1552, General Castaldo ordered Conrad Haas to grant 469 Nuremberg harquebuses to the 10 *landsknecht* companies under the command of Andreas von Brandeis.⁶⁰ For unknown reasons, Haas fulfilled the order only on June 4, 1553, when he provided 468 harquebuses and 202 pikes to Brandeis's regiments. The weapons were taken from the arsenal by Johann Vest, treasurer of the imperial army in Transylvania.⁶¹ And there are many other such examples, referring to weapons and ammunition alike. Very interesting are the documents referring to the supply of other arsenals and fortresses garrisoned by the Habsburg army in Transylvania and even beyond its borders. We know for sure about Alba Iulia, Gurghiu (Görgen, Görgényszentimre), Gherla, Turda, Orăștie (Broos, Szászváros), *Branisko* (Brănișca, Branyicska, Hunedoara/Hunyad County) and even Timișoara (Temeschwar, Temesvár).

We already mentioned the tools sent to the architects who were building the fortifications of Alba Iulia. Castaldo's army established an arsenal there as well, which was supplied by the main arsenal in Sibiu. Thus, Jacob Weiss, commander of the arsenal in Alba Iulia, received war materials, such as fuses and iron hardware, from Conrad Haas on April 5, 1553.⁶² For his part, Jacob Weiss provided several artillery pieces, gunpowder, bullets, lead, tools (for sappers and carpenters), etc., to Johann Schmidt, gunner from Sibiu, on December 17, 1554.⁶³

In the summer of 1554, the Habsburg garrison at the fortress in Gurghiu was supplied by Conrad Haas with several types of harquebuses and gunpowder at the written order of the master gunner, Balthazar von Walderstain.⁶⁴ The next spring, Conrad Haas went to inspect the weapons at Gurghiu fortress. On April 21, 1555, he made an inventory of all weapons and ammunition at the fortress, counting 77 harquebuses and some gunpowder, bullets and lead.⁶⁵

Similar inspections were made by Conrad Haas and his gunners in Gherla on May 24, 1555,⁶⁶ and January 22, 1556.⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the inventories made

Some of the millstones were kept "*auff dem czyg hoff in den scheynen*", SJAN Sibiu, Colecția de acte fasciculate, A. Industrie-Bresle, no. 38, fol. 1.

59 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 171 (July 6, 1554), 172 (June 18, 1554).

60 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 9–10.

61 *Ibid.*, fol. 44–45: on fol. [45] r. There is a note from 1553 specifying that this receipt refers to the order of April 21, 1552.

62 *Ibid.*, fol. 30.

63 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 179.

64 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 84–85 (receipt for the weapons and gunpowder from July 26, 1554); *ibid.*, fol. 86 (order from Balthazar von Walderstains on July 25, 1554).

65 *Ibid.*, 73–74.

66 *Ibid.*, fol. 103–104.

67 *Ibid.*, fol. 76.

by Conrad Haas have not survived, only his travel reports offer some data regarding this matter. It seems that such inspections of the Habsburg garrisons in Transylvania were part of Conrad Haas's duties. His superior, Balthazar von Waldestain, also inspected the weapons and ammunition in Gherla and Oradea (Grosswardein, Várad/Nagyvárad) two years earlier.⁶⁸

Smaller fortifications, garrisoned by Castaldo's troops or otherwise loyal to the Habsburg cause, were also supplied with weapons and ammunition by the Sibiu arsenal. Thus, on September 21, 1553, 2 double harquebuses, 12 regular-sized harquebuses, bullets, fuses and sapper tools were sent to Turda in agreement with orders from master gunner Balthazar von Walderstain.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the town magistrate of Orăștie received 10 harquebuses, gunpowder, lead and other ammunition from Conrad Haas on July 19, 1555, at the behest of the Habsburg Voivode István Dobó.⁷⁰ The garrison of Cetatea de Baltă (Kokelburg, Küküllővár) received two falconets, six double harquebuses, six Nuremberg harquebuses and several quantities of lead, bullets, gunpowder and fuses from the arsenal in Sibiu pursuant to orders from the same István Dobó. The weapons and ammunition were transported to Cetatea de Baltă by Americus Khlain, servant of Johannes Glesy (Glésán), commander of the garrison (February 5, 1556).⁷¹ According to the conclusions of the Transylvanian Diet, presided over by General Castaldo on January 20, 1553,⁷² the fortress Branisko,⁷³ located at the southwestern border of Transylvania, was supplied with four harquebuses, a cannon, gunpowder and lead. Johann Prybeck/Brybeckh, the Habsburg army commander of the garrison, received the weapons and ammunition on June 2, 1553, in agreement with orders from Peter Haller, Ferdinand's treasurer in Transylvania.⁷⁴

Beyond the borders of Transylvania, the Sibiu arsenal supplied the fortresses in Timișoara and Lipova (Lippa in both German and Hungarian) with weapons and ammunition. On April 6, 1552, Prix Schunnbatt, gunner from Timișoara, received lead, iron cannonballs and fuses pursuant to orders from General Castaldo. The ammunition was taken to the garrisons of Timișoara and Lipova.⁷⁵ A day later, on April 7, 1552, Conrad Haas granted 20 Nuremberg harquebuses to István Losonczy, commander of the Habsburg garrison in Timișoara. The

68 Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 172 (July 6, 1554).

69 *Ibid.*, no. 166 (Walderstain's order and receipt for the weapons and ammunition, both issued on September 21, 1553, on the same piece of paper).

70 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, Nr. 76, fol. 107–108.

71 U V, no. 1.

72 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 1). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1875, 437–438.

73 We hereby thank Prof. Adrian Andrei Rusu for his identification of the fortress Branisko/Branyicska.

74 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 47 (written command issued by Peter Haller); Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 163 (two separate receipts on the same piece of paper issued by Johann Prybeck and Peter Haller).

75 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 31 (Castaldo's written order issued on April 6, 1552); Brukenthal R-S 1–10, no. 157.

weapons were transported by Johann Neupot, a servant of István Losonczy,⁷⁶ and they reached the fortress on the eve of the Ottoman siege, which began on 22 April. With the help of this ammunition and these weapons, Timișoara held out until July 30, 1552.

Based on the examples listed above, one can conclude that no weapons, ammunition or war materials of any kind left the arsenal without the written command of General Castaldo and/or master gunner Balthazar von Walderstain. Either the recipients or their deputies had to issue receipts with seals and signatures for the war materials received from Conrad Haas. This is how the Sibiu arsenal functioned in the years 1552–1556, during the period of Habsburg rule in Transylvania. By the spring of 1556 all was about to change with regard to the political régime of the realm.

The Habsburg military régime in Transylvania was very unpopular from the very beginning. Besides this, the Ottoman Empire never agreed on the status quo of Transylvania after 1551. The Ottoman military response in 1552 ended with the conquest of Timișoara, but further operations were stopped until 1555 because of the Ottoman–Safavid war.⁷⁷ After peace was concluded between the two Islamic superpowers (the Peace of Amasya was signed on May 29, 1555), the Ottoman sultan focused once again on Transylvania. The new Ottoman threat and the unpopularity of the Habsburg military régime prompted the Transylvanian Estates to yield to Queen Isabella's agents, especially to Péter Petrovics, her lord-lieutenant (*locumtenens*) in Transylvania. During a series of Diets and gatherings held between December 1555 and March 1556, nobles, Székelys and Transylvanian Saxons alike negotiated the return of Queen Isabella to Transylvania and finally pledged allegiance to her.⁷⁸

On February 16, 1556, the Saxon *Universitas* of Transylvania announced its conditions for the acceptance of Queen Isabella as ruling monarch to Péter Petrovics and, separately, Menyhárt Balassa and the members of the Transylvanian nobility gathered in Cluj: no royal garrisons in the Saxon cities; confirmation of all Saxon privileges and liberties; amnesty for all former pro-Ferdinand Saxon loyalists; and, especially, the retention of Ferdinand's artillery from Sibiu as a guarantee for the debts of Castaldo's army toward the Saxon community of Transylvania.⁷⁹ Péter Petrovics, the queen's deputy, agreed to these terms and issued a sealed letter of assurance to the Transylvanian Saxons.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 4.

⁷⁷ Pál Fodor, *The Unbearable Weight of Empire. The Ottomans in Central Europe – A Failed Attempt at Universal Monarchy (1390–1566)*. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities–HAS, 2016, 103–121, 129; Feneșan, *Contituirea*, 146–158.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 158–159; Volkmer, *Siebenbürgen*, 80–82; Köpeczi (ed.), *History of Transylvania*, 630–631.

⁷⁹ Artikel Buch so von der Universitaet der Deutschen sind beschlossen 1544–1563 at SJAN SB, Fond Universitatea Săsească, Registre, no. 206, fol. 49, fol. 51v.; Matthias Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel oder Chronicalischer Anhabg des 15. [sic!] Seculi nach Christ Geburth*. Herman-Stadt: In Verlegung H. Andreae Fleischero, 1670, 58.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

The Transylvanian Saxons were forced by circumstances to transfer their allegiance to Queen Isabella, but the arsenal in their main city of Sibiu still remained loyal to Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I. The latter's Voivode, István Dobó, sent his envoy Conrad Haas to Sibiu on January 31, 1556.⁸¹ Five days later, on February 5, 1556, Conrad Haas provided weapons and ammunition to the Habsburg garrison in Cetatea de Baltă in accordance with orders from the voivode,⁸² as mentioned above. In the meantime, the master gunner Balthazar von Walderstain went to Vienna, where he received promises from the Holy Roman Emperor that the personnel of the arsenal in Sibiu would receive their overdue payment. He sent his letter from Vienna on March 7, 1556, and Conrad Haas received it on the March 30.⁸³ Conrad Haas and his men were in reality at will of the Saxon magistrate of Sibiu.

Although the Estates of Transylvania pledged allegiance to Queen Isabella, the main fortresses of the province remained loyal to Ferdinand von Habsburg. Thus Péter Petrovics and the Transylvanian army laid siege to Alba Iulia and, contrary to his written assurance, the queen's deputy demanded Ferdinand's artillery from the Saxons of Sibiu, kept in the former Habsburg arsenal within their city walls.⁸⁴ On March 14, 1556, Péter Petrovics sent György Macskási from his military camp at Sebeş (Mühlbach, Szászsebes) to meet with Johannes Roth, *judex regius*, and to Peter Haller, mayor of Sibiu, in order to discuss "certain issues of this realm" (*de nonnullis regni huius negociis*). The envoy was furnished with letters of recommendation issued the same day by Péter Petrovics, the queen's lieutenant, and Menyhárt Balassa, the queen's captain general in Transylvania.⁸⁵ Neither of the two letters mentions the real purpose of György Macskási's visit to Sibiu. We know about this from the town accounts of the very same day, March 14, 1556: Péter Petrovics demanded the artillery of the Holy Roman Emperor. The magistrate of Sibiu refused to let the cannons (*machinas bellicas*) out of the city and informed the royal deputy about this by way of an official letter sent the same day to Sebeş via Peter Heges, servant of the city.⁸⁶ The negative attitude of the Saxons of Sibiu can be explained by the fact that one of the conditions for their allegiance to Queen Isabella, approved by Petrovics, was that Ferdinand's artillery from Sibiu should remain in the city until the pacification of Transylvania. The common citizens of Sibiu saw in the Habsburg artillery a guarantee for the enormous debts that Castaldo's army had accrued toward the city and the Saxon *Universitas* during the Habsburg occupation of

81 U V, no. 637: István Dobó's letter of recommendation for Ferenc Chakor, his envoy.

82 *Ibid.*, no. 1.

83 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 116–117.

84 Hieronymus Ostermayer, 'Historien', in *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 4. *Chroniken und Tagebücher*, Bd. 1, 1143–1867. Kronstadt: In Kommission bei Heinrich Zeidner, 1903, 517; Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel*, 59–60.

85 U V, no. 635 (letter of recommendation issued by Petrovics) and U V, no. 630 (letter of recommendation, issued by Menyhárt Balassa).

86 S|AN-SB, Fond: Primăria oraşului şi scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556], fol. 47 (hereafter: Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556]).

Transylvania.⁸⁷ Despite the opposition of the citizens, the magistrate of Sibiu yielded partially to the demand of Péter Petrovics⁸⁸ and sent him 2 cannons (a *Kartaune* and a *Singerinn*), 113 iron cannonballs, gunpowder, sapper tools, a tent, ropes, etc., on March 19, 1556.⁸⁹ The cannons and ammunition were then used by Petrovics for the bombardment of Alba Iulia,⁹⁰ which had remained loyal to King Ferdinand. This caused outrage among the commoners (*der Pöffel*) of Sibiu: royal envoy György Macskási was cursed and stoned, thus forcing him to flee from the city on March 21, 1556. The arsenal was now heavily guarded by armed citizens.⁹¹ To repair the wrongdoing of his citizens, Johannes Roth, *judex regius* of Sibiu, sent a certain Demetrius as his envoy to Péter Petrovics at his camp in Sebeş (March 25, 1556).⁹² He also sent food to the royal camp at Alba Iulia⁹³ and, on behalf of the city and the Transylvanian Saxon *Universitas*, 300 foot-soldier to Menyhárt Balassa's camp.⁹⁴

Back in Sibiu, the situation got out of hand: criminal bands, seemingly urged on by the humiliated György Macskási, set the city on fire on March 30, 1556. This was the first great city fire and was followed immediately by a popular uprising during which Johannes Roth was killed by the angry masses.⁹⁵ Roth was suspected of having offered the Habsburg artillery to Petrovics.⁹⁶ The unrest came to an end in April 1556.

In the meantime, on April 1, 1556, the fortresses in Alba Iulia and Gilău (Gela, Gyalu) surrendered to Petrovics's troops. Habsburg Voivode István Dobó retreated to Gherla, where he was besieged by the queen's followers under the leadership of Péter Petrovics and their allies from Moldavia and Wallachia.⁹⁷ The decision to besiege Voivode Dobó at Gherla was taken at the Estates assembly in Cluj on April 26–27, 1556: the noble conscripts of the Cluj (Kolozs), Dăbâca (Doboka) and Solnocul Interior (Belső-Szolnok) counties were ordered to lay siege to the fortress as soon as possible.⁹⁸ With regard to the Transylvanian Saxons, only a general decision was taken: they should remain ready with 2,000

87 Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel*, 58, 60.

88 Ostermayer, 'Historien', 517.

89 U V, no. 1.

90 *Ibid.*, Matthias Miles wrongly believed that Petrovics had demanded these cannons for the siege of Gherla, which took place later that year.

91 Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel*, 60.

92 *Ibid.*, cf. Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556], fol. 47 v.

93 *Ibid.*

94 Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel*, 60; allusions to the mobilization of the footmen in Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556], fol. 47 v.

95 Gustav Gündisch, 'Der Hermannstädter Aufstand des Jahres 1556', *Forschungen zur Volks- und Landeskunde* 1 (1959) 75–110; Harald Roth, *Hermannstadt. Kleine Geschichte einer Stadt in Siebenbürgen*. Cologne–Weimar–Vienna: Böhlau, 2006, 72–74; Mária Pakucs-Willcocks, *Sibiul veacului al XVI-lea*. Bukureşti: Humanitas, 2018, 107–121 (chapter entitled "Foc şi vărsare de sânge").

96 Miles, *Siebenbürgischer Würg-Engel*, 62.

97 Ostermayer, 'Historien', 518.

98 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 578–579.

men and artillery, *juxta veterem consuetudinem*.⁹⁹ On May 1, Péter Petrovics, still in Cluj, sent his envoy, András Toldalagi, to the magistrate of Sibiu to attend to some unnamed issues and matters (*in rebus et negociis quibusdam*).¹⁰⁰ These were very likely demands for artillery and ammunition. On May 15, the magistrate of Sibiu sent his envoy, the same Demetrius, to Péter Petrovics in Cluj, *ratione bombardarum*.¹⁰¹ It is not known what was discussed, but it is sure that the Saxons of Sibiu distributed some artillery pieces, which on May 23 were sent to Sebeș.¹⁰² However, these guns did not reach the royal camp at the fortress of Gherla.

As decided in Cluj, the noble conscripts of the northern counties¹⁰³ and the Székelys began the siege of the Gherla in early June. The besiegers issued a petition to Péter Petrovics in which they demanded, among other things, 1,000 Saxon gunners and, especially, *uniuerse machina et ingenia regis ex Cibinio cum suis pulueribus ac globulis, aliisque intrumentis et bombardarum ad expugnacionem dicte arcis Wywar*.¹⁰⁴ Apparently Petrovics thought that, at least for the moment, no artillery was needed for the siege, since there are no further allusions to this matter in the sources. The Saxon *Universitas* of Transylvania sent 500 gunners on foot to Gherla for two months (before June 23, 1556) as well as food supplies (June 25, 1556).¹⁰⁵ Finally, the artillery from Sibiu reached the royal camp at the fortress of Gherla at the beginning of August. On August 10, the Transylvanian Saxons, supported by the nobles and Székelys, complained about the cost of the ammunition for the cannons at the royal camp at Gherla and petitioned Péter Petrovics to exempt them from the burden of sending the regular 2,000 footmen.¹⁰⁶ In any case, the siege was prolonged until December 3, 1556, as Voivode Dobó surrendered to Queen Isabella.¹⁰⁷

One might question if the artillery and ammunition sent by the magistrate of Sibiu to Petrovics in May and August came from the former Habsburg arsenal, since there are no explicit references to this in the sources. But it is certain that the artillery and ammunition sent to Alba Iulia in March was taken out of the arsenal, as well as a fully equipped war wagon sent by the magistrate of Sibiu to Petrovics on June 11, 1556.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, on January 6, 1557, the magistrate of Sibiu received from Conrad Haas, commander of the arsenal in their city, a significant quantity of gunpowder in accordance with an order from Queen Isabella.¹⁰⁹ On the same date, a considerable quantity of gunpowder was also sent

99 *Ibid.*, 575.

100 U V, no. 613.

101 Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556], fol. 51.

102 *Ibid.*, fol. 51 v.

103 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 578–579.

104 *Ibid.*, 581–582.

105 Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 69 [1556], fol. 53v–54 and 92v–93; 54v: Saxon deserters from the siege of Gherla.

106 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 584.

107 Ostermayer, 'Historien', 519.

108 U V, no. 1342.

109 Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 123.

to Alba Iulia.¹¹⁰ The presence of great amounts of gunpowder and weapons in the arsenal after the great city fire of March 31, 1556, clearly demonstrates that the arsenal was not affected by the flames, as Transylvanian Saxon historiography has assumed since the middle of the nineteenth century.¹¹¹ This theory is also undermined by the fact that authentic documents show that in 1562 Conrad Haas relinquished to Peter and Johannes Thobiassy *das Zeughaus in der Hermanschtat, bei Zeitten vnnd inhabung des Großmachtigen Römischen Khunig Ferdinandus verpauet*. There is no evidence of damage on this occasion.¹¹²

One might conclude that the arsenal surrendered to Queen Isabella after the régime change in Transylvania, thus after March 1556. Firstly, the Saxons of Sibiu tried to keep “Ferdinand’s artillery” (i.e., the arsenal), but they had to yield to the repeated demands of Péter Petrovics, Queen Isabella’s lieutenant, and grant him artillery, ammunition and war materials from the arsenal. The authorities of Sibiu issued receipts for all the weapons, ammunition and war materials that were taken.

As shown above, Conrad Haas maintained his loyalty toward the Habsburgs until March 1556. Arsenal personnel were underpaid by Habsburg authorities: the last known payment date was on November 11, 1555, as the personnel shrank to four gunners, four craftsmen and two gatekeepers.¹¹³ While the gunners were poorer and more indebted (see above!), the master gunner Balthazar von Walderstain went to Vienna, where he received promises from the Holy Roman Emperor that the personnel of the arsenal would be paid (February 11, 1556, and March 7, 1556).¹¹⁴ Despite the royal promises, the payment was not made, so in exchange for the outstanding payment Conrad Haas granted weapons from the arsenal to his personnel. For example, on the June 11, 1556, he granted 5 Nuremberg harquebuses, several quantities of lead and tin, as well as 8 forints and 50 denars to his gunner Johann Schmidt.¹¹⁵ The Habsburg authorities simply abandoned their arsenal in Sibiu (and all their other strongholds in Transylvania), though Conrad Haas did his best to maintain the loyalty of his men toward the Habsburgs. On October 23, 1556, the gunners Johannes Schmidt from Nuremberg, Francisco de Muran and Phillip Prannz certified that their superior Conrad Haas went for the 16th time to the voivode, to the bishop and to László Vas in order to receive money for their payments.¹¹⁶ Under these circumstances, the commander of the arsenal had to submit to the will of the magistrate of Sibiu, and thus, to Queen Isabella.

¹¹⁰ U V, no. 5.

¹¹¹ Georg Daniel Teutsch, *Geschichte der Siebenbürger Sachsen für das Sächsische Volk*, vol. 1, *Von den ältesten Zeiten bis 1699*, 3rd edition. Hermannstadt: Druck und Verlag W. Krafft, 1899, 244: arsenal and weapons alike were consumed by the flames; more recently, Roth, *Hermannstadt*, 82: the arsenal was heavily damaged by the city fire.

¹¹² U IV, no. 901 and U IV, no. 902.

¹¹³ Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 109–110.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, fol. 115–117.

¹¹⁵ U V, no. 4.

¹¹⁶ Acte fasciculate, O. Armata, no. 76, fol. 122.

After her return to Transylvania in the autumn of 1556, Queen Isabella ensured the loyalty of Sibiu with the exemption of all tax payments for a period of six months beginning on December 9, 1556,¹¹⁷ and with the guarantee of a loan of 1,000 forints in gold, obtained by Petrovics from the Saxon *Universitas* of Transylvania (December 10, 1556).¹¹⁸ The queen also settled the problem of Ferdinand's artillery in Sibiu at the Diet of Alba Iulia held between February 6 and February 15, 1557. The Estates of Transylvania agreed that the queen could and should take the goods of Ferdinand's subjects living among the Saxons, just as the Holy Roman Emperor had confiscated the goods of Isabella's subjects in Vienna.¹¹⁹ Although ambiguous, this provision of the Diet offered the legal basis for taking over the former Habsburg arsenal in Sibiu, which was still managed by Conrad Haas. The latter is mentioned several times by the sources in the service of the city: in the summer of 1557 Haas was hired to build a house for the deputies of the Seven Saxon Seats in Alba Iulia. He received his payment on August 10.¹²⁰ In 1559, the magistrate of Sibiu bought from Conrad Haas some handguns and a wagon for 100 forints.¹²¹ He is mentioned again as *Conradus Haaz bombardarius* on September 5, 1559, when a coachman from the city, Servatius Schlig, transported him to the neighboring Reussmarkt (Miercurea Sibiului/Szerdahely).¹²² On December 31, 1558, Conrad Haas was rewarded for his multiple services by the magistrate of Sibiu with a chalice and some antiquities.¹²³ On August 28, 1559, the Saxon *Universitas* of Transylvania paid a coachman to transport Conrad Haas to Alba Iulia after the queen had asked him to go to the city.¹²⁴

It is not known if the gunners of the arsenal in Sibiu continued to perform service after October 1556. Likely they did not, for they had been underpaid since 1555. They are not mentioned in the sources after this time. However, there is evidence dated January 3, 1559, of a certain *Laurentius Bombardista* in the service of the city magistrate, who hired for him a servant from Mediaș (Mediasch/Medgyes).¹²⁵ With regard to the cannons and bombards kept at the arsenal, they were considered to be "the queen's artillery" (*tormenta bellica sacra*

117 U IV, no. 749.

118 *Ibid.*, no. 748.

119 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 75–76.

120 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 70 [1557], fol. 43v.

121 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 632 [1536–1655], fol. 183 (hereafter: Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 632 [1536–1655]).

122 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 72 [1558], fol. 51v (hereafter: Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 72 [1558]).

123 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 74 [1559], fol. 38v (hereafter: Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 74 [1559]).

124 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria orașului și scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 75 [1559], fol. 24v.

125 Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 74 [1559], fol. 91.

reginalis Maiestatis). The Saxons were given the duty of guarding, transporting and taking care of the artillery pieces and their ammunition, and were also expected to furnish gunners (*magistri bombardarii*).¹²⁶

In July 1558, Queen Isabella summoned an armed assembly of the Transylvanian Estates near Turda on the field of Oprişani (Kreuzfeld, Keresztesmező).¹²⁷ According to the decrees of the Diet in Alba Iulia (held between June 5 and June 21, 1558), the Transylvanian Saxons had to send 2,000 footmen with banners and drums along with the artillery and ammunition requested by the queen.¹²⁸ The required men were sent by the Saxon *Universitas* of Transylvania to the royal camp at Keresztesmező on July 16, 1558.¹²⁹ On the same date the magistrate of Sibiu also sent two large bombards, each pulled by four horses with two drivers – Michael Hoss and Thomas Segesswary.¹³⁰

Conrad Haas spent 209 Hungarian forints and 84 denars from his own fortune in order to keep the arsenal functional. He administered the arsenal in Sibiu until September 8, 1562, when he resigned in favor of Peter and Johannes Thobiassy of Aţel (Hezeldorf, Ecel) pursuant to orders from King John Sigismund Szapolyai and the magistrate of Sibiu. After the Thobiassy brothers paid compensation to cover the money he had invested in the arsenal, Conrad Haas handed the keys of the facility to them. He remained in the king's service as master gunner and commander of the arsenal in Alba Iulia.¹³¹ As for the arsenal itself, it was owned by Peter and Johannes Thobiassy until June 21, 1568. On that date the magistrate of Sibiu bought the arsenal from the *Tabyassy* brothers for 350 forints. The authorities of Sibiu paid only 154 forints as a result of the outstanding debts (taxes) that the arsenal¹³² had accrued in the five years in which it was owned by the Thobiassy brothers.

Our above text demonstrates the variety and importance of the quoted documents. Besides their relevance for the history of the arsenal during the Habsburg régime and Queen Isabella's second reign, they also offer important information about Castaldo's army in Transylvania: effectives, weapons, organization (including the names of the officers commanding the *landsknecht* companies under Andreas von Brandeis). Instead of making further conclusions, we aim to discuss two brief aspects: the legal status of the arsenal and its exact location in Sibiu. In the years 1551/1552–1556, the arsenal belonged to the Habsburg Holy Roman King and Emperor, Ferdinand I. The situation changed in March 1556: the Estates of Transylvania pledged allegiance to Queen Isabella and all the

126 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 97.

127 Serviciul Judeţean al Arhivelor Naţionale Braşov, Fond Primăria oraşului Braşov, Colecţia de documente Schnell, vol. 2, no. 164.

128 *Ibid.* (the artillery and ammunition is not mentioned here!); especially Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 96.

129 Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 72 [1558], fol. 79–80.

130 *Ibid.*, fol. 49.

131 U IV, no. 901 and U IV, no. 902.

132 SJAN-SB, Fond: Primăria oraşului şi scaunului Sibiu, Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 88 [1568], fol. 84v.

fortified cities of the country, including Sibiu, followed suit. Isolated and unpaid by the Habsburgs, Conrad Haas surrendered to the queen. Although Conrad Haas was at the will of the magistrate of Sibiu, “Ferdinand’s artillery” (i.e., the whole arsenal) now belonged *de jure* to the queen.¹³³ This is why the Saxon authorities of the city literally specified in the receipts issued for the received weapons, ammunition and war materials that these were taken out of the arsenal pursuant to orders from Queen Isabella or her deputy, Péter Petrovics. The magistrate of Sibiu had to buy weapons and ammunition from Conrad Haas, as was the case in 1559.¹³⁴ After Queen Isabella’s death on September 15, 1559, the arsenal in Sibiu was inherited by her son and heir, John Sigismund II Szapolyai. In September 1562, John II ordered Conrad Haas to cede the arsenal to the Thobiassy brothers, who apparently were in his royal favor. As owners of the arsenal, Peter and Johannes Thobiassy, accrued debts toward the city, for they did not pay the regular taxes on the building complex within the city walls. Their private debts toward the city demonstrate that the arsenal was not just managed by the Thobiassy brothers, but was owned by them as well. They continued to own the arsenal until 1568, when they sold it to the magistrate of Sibiu, as revealed above.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, Transylvanian Saxon historiography has assumed that the first location of the arsenal was a former Franciscan friary in the Lower City of Sibiu, which was consumed by flames during the great city fire from 1556. Thus, the magistrate of Sibiu decided to move the arsenal to a new location at the other end of the Lower City in a building bought from the Thobiassy brothers in 1568. This building is known as “The Arsenal” even today.¹³⁵ In order to clarify this problem, one must apply a retroactive method in the light of the above text: the building known today as “The Arsenal” was bought by the magistrate of Sibiu from the Thobiassy brothers in 1568. Johannes and Peter Thobiassy received the arsenal from Conrad Haas in 1562. According to the contracts issued by the two parties, it was the very same arsenal built at the time of Hungarian King Ferdinand,¹³⁶ specifically in 1552. No damage is mentioned by the sources; to the contrary, it is suggested that large amounts of gunpowder were taken out of the arsenal after the great fire. If the arsenal had been affected by the fire, the gunpowder would have exploded and the arsenal would have been destroyed (two towers filled with gunpowder exploded on that occasion!). Furthermore, the existence of the wooden barns of the arsenal

133 MCRT, II, 97.

134 Socoteli consulare, Reg. no. 632 [1536-1655], fol. 183.

135 Roth, *Hermannstadt*, 72. The first location of the arsenal in the former Franciscan friary located in the Lower City at the intersection between 9 Mai Street and the Constituției Street was demolished in the nineteenth century; *ibid.*, 82–83. The new location of the arsenal is at the other end of the Lower City on Armelor Square; Teusch, *Geschichte*, 244 (the arsenal consumed by the flames); Emil Sigerus, *Chronik der Stadt Hermannstadt 1100–1929*. Hermannstadt: Honterus-Buchdruckerei und Verlagsanstalt der evangelischen Landeskirche A. B. in Rumänien, 1930, 17 (the city magistrate bought the arsenal from the Thobiassy brothers).

136 U IV, no. 901 and U IV, no. 902

are substantiated in the years 1588–1589,¹³⁷ though these could have been rebuilt after the fire. However, it is clear that *Zeyghof* became a common place name in Sibiu by 1590. The nearby *Soldisch* Bastion, built in the years 1622–1627, is also known as *die Bastion bei dem Zieghoff*.¹³⁸ In conclusion, the first and only location of the arsenal established in Sibiu by Castaldo's army in 1551/1552 and taken over by Queen Isabella in 1556 is the building known today as "The Arsenal," which is located on "Armelor" Square in the Lower City in Sibiu.

137 SJAN-SB, Colecția de acte fasciculate, A. Industrie-Bresle, Nr. 38, fol. 1.

138 Reissenberger, 'Befestigungen von Hermannstadt', 341.

LORDS OF THE QUEEN'S REIGN

GIORGIO BIANDRATA (1516–1588) – A PHYSICIAN BETWEEN POLITICS AND THEOLOGY IN EARLY MODERN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

Physician, political official and religious reformer Giorgio Biandrata (Saluzzo, 1516 – Gyulafehérvár [Alba Iulia, Romania], 1588) was without question the key figure in the rise of the anti-Trinitarian movement in East Central Europe. Though Biandrata exercised a significant degree of influence during the early modern period, not even works dealing with the anti-Trinitarian movement have adopted the hagiographical tone regarding Biandrata that has inevitably developed around the great religious reformers within their own denominations.¹ This phenomenon is particularly evident in relevant Hungarian-language scholarly literature. Biandrata has unsurprisingly been depicted as the diabolical propagator of the anti-Trinitarian “contagion” within Roman Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran circles, though as a result of the role that he played in the trial of Ferenc Dávid, even literature focusing on the history of Unitarianism in Transylvania has portrayed him as a traitor who acted in the service of political authority.² The present study will present a chronological examination of the

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1 The most important works offering a comprehensive overview of Biandrata’s career: Delio Cantimori, ‘Profilo di Giorgio Biandrata’, *Bolletino storico-bibliografico subalpino* 36 (1936) 352–402; Antonio Rotondò, ‘Biandrata, Giovanni Giorgio’, *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 10 (1968) 257–264; Antonio Rotondò, ‘Giorgio Biandrata (1515–1588)’, *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 5 (1980) 777–781; Konrad Górski, ‘Humanizm i antytrinitarizm’, in Konrad Górski, *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrinitarskiej XVI. wieku*. Kraków: Nakł. Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności, 1949, 1–51; Antal Pirnát, ‘A kelet-közép-európai antitrinitarizmus fejlődésének vázlata az 1570-es évek elejétől’, in Béla Varjas (ed.), *Irodalom és ideológia a 16–17. században* (Memoria Saeculorum Hungariae 5). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987, 9–59.

2 The first extensive summary of Unitarian Church history treats Biandrata this way: János Kénosi Tőzsér and István Uzoni Fosztó, *Unitario-Ecclesiastica historia Transylvanica: Liber I–II*, vol. 4/1, edited by János Káldos, introduced by Mihály Balázs, revised by Miklós Latzkovits. (Bibliotheca Unitariorum 4/1–3). Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2002, passim.

most important aspects of works dealing with Giorgio Biandrata during his long period of residence in Transylvania.

Following his studies in Saluzzo, Biandrata obtained a degree in medicine in Montpellier and then continued his medical studies in Pavia and Bologna. Biandrata gained entry to the royal courts of East Central Europe primarily as a result of the distinction he had attained as a physician. Only a few authors noted in their works that, although the royal court in Kraków represented Biandrata's first theater of activity, a Transylvanian may have played a role in his subsequent relocation to Transylvania. The full title of one of the works in question was "*Ginaeceorum ex Aristotele et Bonaciolo a Georgio Blandrata medico Subalpino noviter excerta de fecundatione, gravitate, partu et puerperio ad Excellentissimas Bonam et Ysabellam Poloniae et Hungariae Reginas oblata per Fridericum Hunnadinum Transylvanum. H. Syboldus impressit Argentinae anno MDXXXIX*".

This work, which was published in Strasbourg with the collaboration of a Transylvanian named Frigyes Hunyadi, was dedicated to the two queens identified in its title, a circumstance that certainly contributed to the fact that Giorgio Biandrata became Bona Sforza's court physician. One may speculate that Frigyes Hunyadi was related to the prominent humanist physician Ferenc Hunyadi,³ who published works in Latin and Hungarian in the final decades of the sixteenth century; however, there is no proof that Frigyes Hunyadi, who collaborated in the publication of Biandrata's outstanding work on gynecology, and Ferenc Hunyadi belonged to the same Hunyadi family.⁴

Italian scholarly literature published over the recent decades has not examined the early phase of Giorgio Biandrata's medical career. The fact that Antonio Rotondò's Italian-language encyclopedia article qualified Vincenzo Malacarne's very early monograph examining this subject as unattainable, thus causing this work to fall into oblivion, may have played a role in this. Malacarne, a devout Roman Catholic author who took an interest in the history of medicine and the town of Saluzzo,⁵ had to set aside his own religious scruples in order to deal with such a notorious heretic. Malacarne eventually published an information-rich book,⁶ the preface of which reveals that the author had received his inspiration to write the work from Giovanni Francesco Scardona (1718–1800), one of the most notable medical historians of the eighteenth century. Scardona

3 For the most recent publication about the life of Ferenc Hunyadi, see Dávid Molnár, 'Hunyadi Ferenc ismeretlen orvosi munkája Oxfordban', in Laura Fábíán, Borbála Lovas, Péter Haraszti Szabó and Dorottya Uhrin (eds.), *A könyv és olvasója: A 14–16. századi könyvkultúra interdiszciplináris megvilágításban*. Budapest: MTA–ELTE–HECE, 2018, 101–111.

4 Only one Hungarian author has dealt with Biandrata's activity as a physician: Ádám Raffy, 'Il medico italiano Giorgio Biandrata e la sanità pubblica nel 500 in Transilvania', in *Atti del congresso di storia ospitaliera, 6–12 giugno 1960*. Reggio Emilia: Centro Italiano di Storia Ospitaliera, 1962, 1042–1054.

5 For the importance of Saluzzo and Biandrata in Hungarian and Polish cultural history, see Ágnes Máté, 'Szent Istvántól Báthory Istvánig: Grizelda története saluzzói, lengyel és magyar mellékalakokkal', *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 120:1 (2017) 3–22.

6 Vincenzo Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere e delle vicende di Giorgio Biandrata*. Padova: Tipografia Bettoni, 1814.

gave Malacarne a composite volume that contained Biandrata's above-cited work as well as two unpublished manuscripts (*Consultatio latina de promovenda foecunditate, et de cura graviditatis, purperii et primae natorum infantiae* and *Cimelia muliebria*). Malacarne determined that the volume, which featured an image of Biandrata on the title page, had been published in 1570 and that a person by the name of Johannes Groscesius had owned it during the sixteenth century. This monograph is useful for the modern researcher because it cites many manuscript sources and published quite a few of them as well, though unfortunately did not identify the location at which most of these manuscripts could be found.

THE YEARS OF SEEKING POSITION (1544–1559)

Although we know very few details regarding doctor Biandrata's activity in Hungary and Transylvania, it is clear that he quickly became more than just Queen Isabella's court physician.⁷ Several letters written by Antal Verancsics can be cited as evidence of this. In the first of these letters, which Verancsics wrote from Kraków in 1546, he conveyed greetings from his friends in Venice and enclosed letters they had written. Verancsics stated in this letter that those who had sent these letters had a very high opinion of Biandrata's knowledge and aptitude and attempted with very noteworthy arguments to convince the Italian physician not to leave Transylvania in order to return home to Italy. In this letter, praise for the queen transmutes into praise for the Hungarian nation, since according to Verancsics in Transylvania Biandrata was able to live in a milieu in which "people of external origin can through their industriousness attain significant wealth and through their virtues rise to the highest stations of national honor and office."⁸ Verancsics's other letter was written to Gáspár Pécsi, who had previously been in the service of Tamás Nádasdy. Verancsics advised Pécsi, who had applied to enter the service of the queen, to seek the support of Biandrata, extolling the humanity of the Italian physician, the sense of commitment he displayed toward his friends and the help he offered to people living both in his midst and far away. The fact that we later find Pécsi in the queen's entourage suggests that he did indeed gain Biandrata's support. From our standpoint, the most important part of the letter is its closing lines in which Verancsics calls upon Gáspár Pécsi not only to hold the writer of the letter in great affection and to cherish his benefactor, but to respect him as well.

We may conclude from these references that Giorgio Biandrata became an exceptionally influential person in Queen Isabella's court and that he had gained the reputation as a man who himself could offer the opportunity

7 Teréz Oborni, 'Izabella királyné erdélyi udvarának kezdetei (1541–1551)', *Történelmi Szemle* 51:1 (2009) 38–40.

8 "*Isabella Regina est et Hungarorum natio, apud quam externis hominibus quum ad opes per industriam, tum ad omnium gentiliciorum dignitatum, officiorumque facultas per virtutem concedatur.*" Verancsics's letter to Giorgio Biandrata, Kraków, September 28, 1546. László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6 (*Vegyes levelek 1538–1549*) (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 9). Pest: Eggenberger, 214.

for advancement. Biandrata had become the queen's advisor and obviously gained a role in the formation of policy as well. However, we know nothing about whether in Biandrata's case deeper political and perhaps theological considerations represented factors in the building of his career at this time. According to the historiographer Ferenc Forgách (1530–1577), Biandrata and a Polish advisor persuaded Queen Isabella, who spent a half year in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) after leaving Transylvania in June 1551, never to return to the principality. Forgách, who portrayed Biandrata in a negative light, asserted that the Piedmontese physician had done this because Ferdinand I had bribed him.⁹ At the same time, Biandrata was undoubtedly among the last people who remained in the service of Queen Isabella and her son. The three letters that Queen Bona addressed from Warsaw to Biandrata in Kassa that Malacarne cited from November 1551 serve to corroborate this.

We soon find Giorgio Biandrata in the city of Mestre, near Venice, where he lived as a Roman Catholic. This is where Biandrata received a message from Queen Bona summoning him to appear on August 17, 1553, before a Papal Nuncio Girolamo Martinengo–led committee in Vienna that was investigating the assassination of Cardinal George Martinuzzi. Gábor Barta's research has shown us that although Biandrata did not sympathize with Friar George, he did not think his assassination to be the proper course of action. Spanish mercenary leader Bernardo de Aldana remarked that Queen Isabella's closest confidant was an Italian physician who quickly developed friendly relations with Giovanni Battista Castaldo, who had entered Transylvania during the summer of 1551 in order to oversee the Habsburg seizure of power in his capacity as military governor.¹⁰ The letter, published by Vincenzo Malacarne, that King Ferdinand wrote to Biandrata on August 11, 1551, supplements this information in an interesting way. In this letter, Ferdinand thanks Biandrata for his service in the warmest-possible terms and notes in conclusion that Castaldo would deliver the missive to him.¹¹

The testimony that Biandrata delivered before the committee examining the death of Cardinal Martinuzzi was undoubtedly not based entirely on malicious motives. Biandrata stated during this testimony that he had heard that Friar George had once declared very vehemently with regard to the Germans that he would rather be a chimneysweep than live among them.¹² Biandrata, flaunting his access to inside information, attempted to defend Castaldo before the committee, emphasizing that he had merely carried out orders from Ferdinand I: "As far as I could see from the letters that His Excellency Castaldo wrote to Queen Isabella, he frequently praised the Friar [Friar George] and was well-disposed towards him and when he wrote to the queen about his death he was

9 *Ghymesí Forgách Ferencz nagyváradí püspök Magyar Históriája 1540–1572* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptorum 16), published by Fidél Majer, introduced by Ferencz Toldy. Pest: Eggenberger, 1866, 80.

10 Gábor Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?* Budapest: Helikon, 1988, 197–198.

11 Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 20.

12 Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 181.

rather aggrieved that he had been forced to take care of the matter in this way because he could not do otherwise as a result of the salvation of Christianity and His Highness had forced him [to do it]”.¹³

Even if we handle the previously cited negative opinion expressed by the historiographer Ferenc Forgách with reservations, we may conclude that Biandrata was exploiting his medical knowledge, though during this period was attempting to build his political-diplomatic career without consideration to theological factors. According to anti-Trinitarian historical tradition, after returning to Italy Biandrata attended heterodox gatherings in Vicenza (the *Collegia Vicentina*) that played a decisive role in the formation of his ideas, although this contention is not at all proven. Antonio Rotondò maintained that the early phase of Biandrata's heterodox activity, just as that of other Italian heretics, was shrouded in obscurity. A document that had already been published by Delio Cantimori and which Rotondò cited could only provide evidence for a single episode involving Biandrata following his return to Italy. Cantimori published a letter that King Ferdinand had written in support of Biandrata to Governor of Milan Ferrante Gonzaga on August 18, 1552. In this letter, Ferdinand referred repeatedly to the great service that Biandrata had provided in the acquisition of Transylvania and asked Gonzaga to help him set his affairs in order at home in Italy.¹⁴ Ferdinand's request for help was obviously successful, since the letters that arrived to Milan reveal that Biandrata resided in this city for a lengthy period of time. Vincenzo Malacarne published excerpts from two letters that Queen Isabella sent to Milan, one on February 17, 1553, and the other on August 7, 1554.¹⁵

As a result of his Roman Catholic bias, Vincenzo Malacarne did not deal with the time that Biandrata spent in Geneva in 1556. However, from other sources we know that Biandrata lived for a short time within the Italian community in this city as a follower of Calvinist doctrine. However, Biandrata soon posed questions of dogma to the leader of this community, Celso Martinengo, that were similar to those with which Lelio Sozzini confronted Jean Calvin. Martinengo, growing weary of Biandrata's contentious questions about the Trinity, the nature of divinity and the technical terms that could be used to describe them, instructed the physician to address these questions directly to Calvin, who after a certain period of time quit responding to him. As a result of such questions regarding dogma, Giorgio Biandrata was ordered to appear, along with Giovanni Paolo Alciati and Silvestro Teglio, before the consistory of the Italian Protestant congregation in Geneva, though Biandrata did not show up. Instead he visited a few important Protestant theologians – Matteo Gribaldi in Farges, Nicolaus Zurkinden in Bern and Peter Martir Vermigli in Zurich –

¹³ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹⁴ This letter is kept at the Biblioteca Estense, Autografoteca Campori, in Modena. The letter can be found in the following book: Delio Cantimori, *Italianische Haeretiker der Spätrenaissance*, translated by Werner Kaegi. Basel: Benno Schwabe & Co., 1949, 451.

¹⁵ Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 40–44.

before leaving Switzerland via Basel. Biandrata originally intended to travel to Transylvania, though according to Antonio Rotondò, Celio Secundo Curione and Sebastian Castelio convinced him while he was still in Basel to go to Poland instead.

Since Biandrata's activity in Poland cannot be the subject of the present study, it must suffice to note that his decision to change his travel destination was based primarily on two factors: first, that anti-Trinitarianism had already begun to spread in Poland; and second, that under the leadership of reformers Jan Łaski and, subsequently, Francesco Lismanini, and with support from politically influential members of the nobility, the effort to establish Protestant unity surfaced in Poland during this period.¹⁶ According to certain historians, Poland stood close at this time to becoming a united Protestant state. Among the authors of scholarly literature, Antal Pirnát¹⁷ asserted the most emphatically that Biandrata's theological program, which was based fundamentally on the ideas of Erasmus, though was built exclusively from biblical text and abstained from making speculative theological combinations, offered simple answers that were acceptable to a broad range of religious believers. This may be the reason that Biandrata's viewpoints gained significant acceptance in spite of warnings from Calvin and other Swiss religious reformers. Biandrata was able to persuade many people that the unity of Protestant denominations could be achieved via the elimination of controversial questions that either could not be answered or for which human cognitive abilities were incapable of finding a response rather than through the elimination of biblical dogma. Several influential Protestant secular leaders explicitly sympathized with this position, which refrained from establishing new dogmas and referred simply to the Apostles' Creed.

However, clergymen who had broken free from the oppressive weight of the theological authorities did not emulate Biandrata's restraint. Quite to the contrary, they espoused with the fervor of those seeking the truth more recent doctrines that had been born in the quest for new religious pathways.¹⁸ This meant that they became receptive not only to critical viewpoints that had emerged with regard to the doctrine of the Trinity in a strict sense, but – for reasons that cannot be detailed here – that other phenomena that accompanied the anti-Trinitarian movement manifested themselves strongly among them. Among these phenomena, the fact that various groups of anti-Trinitarian pastors began to proclaim some form of Anabaptism represented the greatest challenge for Biandrata. We can regard it as symbolic that Piotr of Goniądz (Petrus Gonesius),¹⁹ who first expressed viewpoints denying the Trinity in

16 For more on this, see the studies in the following conference volume: Christoph Strohm (ed.), *Johannes a Lasco (1499–1560) Polnischer Baron, Humanist und europäischer Reformator*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.

17 Pirnát, 'A kelet-közép-európai antitrinitarizmus', 22–25, 36–40.

18 Mihály Balázs, 'Antitrinitarianism', in Howard Louthan and Graeme Murock (eds.), *A Companion to the Reformation in Central Europe*. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2015, 171–194.

19 Konrad Górski, 'Piotr z Goniądza', in Górski, *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrinitarskiej*, 52–100.

January 1556, harshly criticized the baptism of children already in December 1558. Since Catholic and Protestant theologians frequently wrote at this time about the danger of Anabaptist subversion, one cannot determine in the absence of other sources how many followers Anabaptist propaganda was able to gain for the movement. However, a source published by Lech Szczuczki shows that Anabaptism had become very widespread by the years 1563–1564.²⁰ Many of its representatives, referring to the peaceful nature of the program, distanced themselves from variant of Anabaptism proclaimed by Thomas Müntzer and Jan von Leiden.

In spite of this, for many pastors this was about much more than criticism of infant baptism. Some of them firmly declared that members of the early Christian Church had distanced themselves from state institutions, that they could not accept official position and that filling any kind of office that entailed the carrying of weapons was particularly foreign to their followers. Many went so far as to proclaim that early Christian communities had rejected the notion of private property in the name of Christian love for fellow men. Recently it has been shown that Marcin Czechowic, who later became an important Anabaptist leader, believed that it was difficult for those who held state office to be true Christians. Czechowic also stated that a true Christian earned his bread through his own labor and did not depend on others for subsistence. It is easy to see that even moderate variations of these Anabaptist aspirations posed a challenge to the existing social structure. Of course these ambitions were not exceptional during the period of radical Reformation and Biandrata may have encountered them earlier as well. One must recall that the most influential figures associated with the early period of Italian heterodoxy regarded traditional criticism of the Trinity, Anabaptist rejection of infant baptism and spiritualism based on direct divine revelation to be interconnected in the most organic way possible.

Biandrata obviously attempted to consolidate these through his proposals, though did not reach his objective and, according to Pirnát, the Italian émigré realized that he had failed precisely because of the proliferation of endless disputes. Biandrata therefore deemed it better to accept the invitation of King Elect John Sigismund II to leave Poland for Transylvania before the final break occurred between his followers and Reformed Christian leaders who were under the influence of Geneva.

THE TRANSYLVANIAN YEARS: BIANDRATA AT THE HEAD OF DENOMINATIONAL CHANGES (1559–1588)

King Elect John Sigismund II, who was still Roman Catholic, certainly did not invite Biandrata, who had returned to Transylvania for a short time in 1559 to give medical treatment Queen Isabella, to his realm for reasons related to

²⁰ Lech Szczuczki, 'Szymona Budnego relacja a początkach i rozwoju anabaptizmu w zborze mniejszym', in Lech Szczuczki, *Nonkonformiści religijni XVI i XVII wieku. Studia i szkice*. Warszawa: Polska Akademia Nauk, Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii, 1993, 42–64.

religious politics.²¹ The sickly King John may have needed both Biandrata's medical expertise and his political and diplomatic experience. According to Ildikó Horn, the king was seeking support at this time among the longtime supporters of the Szapolyai family, among them Biandrata, whom he had known since childhood.²² The heartfelt lines that John Sigismund wrote to his soon-to-be confidential advisor after learning that he had accepted his invitation corroborate this.²³

Biandrata was not averse to the political and diplomatic duties that had been assigned to him. The most significant of these duties were those involving negotiations between King Elect John II and King Maximilian I of Hungary that took place in Pozsony (Bratislava, Slovakia) in 1563. A revealing document related to this was the letter that John II had Biandrata deliver to his envoy, Stephen Báthory.²⁴ Biandrata not only transmitted supplementary instructions at this time,²⁵ but also passed on the royal order for him to attend Maximilian's coronation ceremony in place of Báthory, the official leader of the Transylvanian delegation. For Biandrata, who had previously been engaged in the interpretation of subtle Protestant theological issues, it must have been a major change to become directly involved in negotiations that were intended, after reaching the compromises that would serve as the basis for agreement between the two Hungarian kings, to persuade Ferdinand to keep his 1551 promise and permit his daughter, Johanna, to marry John Sigismund. According to Ildikó Horn, Biandrata promoted this marriage because he hoped that it would entail diplomatic advantages for the sovereign.

Biandrata could have been aware at this time that the most authoritative circles within the Habsburg court had not ruled out the possibility of implementing religious reform as a means of moderating inter-denominational conflict. It is known that at this time such aspirations were particularly animated in the milieu of Maximilian I, which did not even regard the defeat suffered at the Council of Trent to be permanent.²⁶ According to Antal Pirnát, who

21 Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 46–47. He takes into account the letters that King John Sigismund wrote on May 20 and May 27, 1559. The urgent character of the letter written on the latter date is reflected in the following passage: “*Intensissime desideramus operam et curam vestram ad impartendam confirmandamque valetudinis serenissimae matris nostrae, quam cognoscimus inprimis esse necessariam.*”

22 Ildikó Horn, *Hit és hatalom. Az erdélyi unitárius nemesség 16. századi története*. Budapest: Transylvania Emlékeiért Tudományos Egyesület–Balassi Kiadó, 2009, 44.

23 “*Non ignoramus praecipuas et honestas obstitisse, quo minus ad nos hactenus redire potueris. Rogamus omnes, gratissimam rem facturis, quemadmodum promiseras te venturum. Candidum, benevolum animum invenies, inventurusque es.*” Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 48.

24 Georgius Pray, *Epistolae Procerum Regni Hungariae*, Pars III. Posonii: Ex Typographo G. A. Belnay, 1806, 174.

25 Antal Pirnát commented that the possibility cannot be excluded that supervision of Báthory may have been among the objectives: Antal Pirnát, ‘Per una nuova interpretazione dell’attività di Giorgio Biandrata’ in Tibor Klaniczay (ed.), *Rapporti veneto-ungheresi all’epoca del Rinascimento* (Studia Humanitatis 2). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975, 162.

26 Mihály Balázs, ‘Javaslat a kora újkori vallásfilozófiai útkeresők aktualizáló értelmezésére’, in István Berszán (ed.), *A reformáció aktualitásai* (Egyetemi füzetek 38). Kolozsvár: Bolyai Társaság–Egyetemi Műhely Kiadó, 2018, 246–247.

expressed himself the most resolutely with regard to this matter, “there were likewise many among the German, Hungarian and Czech humanist who stood in the service of the Habsburg court who fundamentally agreed with his [Biandrata’s] thinking. He was also able to maintain his Italian and Swiss contacts the most easily via Vienna.”²⁷ This may partially explain why Biandrata was among those who favored resuming the negotiations that had broken off in the autumn of 1563 and played a role in bringing them to success. A short letter in Italian that John II wrote to Biandrata on September 6, 1563, serves as evidence of their confidential relations and shows how important the king regarded his planned marriage with Johanna to be at this time: “*Noi non semo italiani, per questo perdonate. Ho inteso la vostra lettera della speranza che mi date del matrimonio, per questo mi raccomando che stiate saldo in questo punto. Johannes quondam serenissimi Johannis regis filius nunc potentissimi invictissimique Caesaris Turcarum filius, orphanus.*”²⁸

The king therefore encouraged his followers to remain resolute with regard to this matter and it is extremely revealing that the onetime royal son refers to himself with bitter irony as an orphan and the son of the most powerful and invincible sultan. In Vienna, they still counted on the participation of Biandrata, who supported the objective of reaching Habsburg–Szapolyai accord. However, Biandrata – who by this time regarded the formulation of Transylvanian religious policy to be his main duty – no longer participated in the partially Polish-mediated talks.

Biandrata presumably employed the experiences he had gained in Poland in his effort to devise religious policy in Transylvania, though he himself never made reference to this. The initial manifestation of this was that Biandrata gave up on the idea of achieving Protestant unity over the short term and reconciled himself with the notion that in certain domains such unity might occur only in the distant future. Biandrata believed until the end that his doctrines, namely what he regarded as purer and more rational dogmatic considerations that broke with the traditional concept of the Trinity, would reach the Saxon pastors as well. At the same time, Biandrata recognized that pastors who were active in the politically autonomous Saxon cities and the territories under their administration adhered to Lutheran doctrines and the Melancthonian teachings that were based on them. Thus the first task was to implement on behalf of the sovereign the permanent organizational separation of the Hungarian and German Protestant Churches at the Synod of Nagyenyed (Aiud, Romania) in 1563. This administrative division entailed separation with regard to the disputed issues of tenets and ritual practice connected to Holy Communion. As a result of this, Hungarians living in Transylvania became increasingly receptive to Helvetic solutions to these issues and Ferenc Dávid (c. 1510–1559), who had for a long period of time rejected the Helvetic orientation, and those in his milieu promoted this process. There is a rich corpus of scholarly literature dealing with

27 Pirnát, ‘A kelet-közép-európai antitrinitarizmus’, 35.

28 Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 50.

this separation since, in addition to theological works, several contemporary opinions and other statements from foreign Protestant centers also made it possible to uncover the details. However, the fact that for Biandrata, who had presented remarkable initiatives at the synod in Nagyenyed, turning toward the Helvetic trends represented a first – and not final – step did not receive sufficient emphasis. For Biandrata, the approach that he considered more logical and that was open to the metaphorical rather than literal interpretation of biblical text also meant the introduction of hermeneutical principles and methods that might make those who accepted this more receptive to similar interpretations of biblical passages relevant to the Trinity. It is not known how familiar Ferenc Dávid, the leading pastor in the city of Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), was with the logic of this series of measures. It could have hardly escaped the notice of the increasingly authoritative bishop of the Hungarian Protestants who would soon become the sovereign's court preacher that Biandrata had invited Giovanni Paolo Alciati – one of Biandrata's associates in Geneva who evidence suggests first articulated explicitly anti-Trinitarian viewpoints in a narrower milieu – to Transylvania.

It is absolutely certain that anti-Trinitarianism and its associated doctrines had become a topic of discussion at the royal court and among pastors in Kolozsvár before its public introduction in the latter city in January 1566. There is only indirect proof of this beginning in late 1564, though a letter that Biandrata wrote to Grzegorz Paweł and other Polish anti-Trinitarian leaders in September 1565 serves as direct evidence.²⁹ The authors of scholarly literature do not interpret this letter, the most important early anti-Trinitarian document, in the same way in all respects. The majority of Polish and Italian researchers consider it to represent an expression of support for Lelio Sozzini's Christology, while according to Antal Pirnát, it provides an overview of various schools of thought.³⁰ However, there is agreement that rejection of Anabaptist tenets represented the other theological message contained in Biandrata's letter. From our viewpoint, the most important aspect of this letter is that it encouraged Polish anti-Trinitarian leaders to satisfy the requests of the Transylvanians and several times highlighted the importance of unification and cooperation. The letter also contained a concrete request that Grzegorz Paweł send a certain Latin-language publication to Ferenc Dávid.

Since very few Polish and Transylvanian anti-Trinitarian manuscripts have survived to the present day, we must look to printed works and later books on Church history that were still able to draw upon such unprinted sources to find evidence of contacts between anti-Trinitarians in Poland and Transylvania. Based on these available sources, it is clear that a significant degree of cooperation

29 Maria Sipayllo (ed.), *Akta synodów różnowierczych w Polsce, II (1560–1570)*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1972, 357–358.

30 Mihály Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism (1566–1571): From Servet to Palaeologus* (Bibliotheca Dissidentium scripta et studia 7). Baden-Baden: Éditions Valentin Koerner, 1996, 13–20.

developed between Polish and Transylvanian anti-Trinitarian theological thinkers during the second half of the 1560s. The key figure in this Polish-Transylvanian cooperation was Biandrata, who sometimes engaged in intrigue in order to eliminate what he considered to be undesirable tendencies and to promote his ideas. It is important to emphasize that Biandrata's renewed activity in Transylvania for a time did not entail the intention to imbue the territories of eastern Hungary that were under the rule of John Sigismund II with a unique religious-spiritual cast. The large majority of the population of territories under Ottoman and Habsburg authority likewise became Protestant and, as previously mentioned, there was evidence that the message of moderate religious reform might be heard within the Habsburg court as well.

TRANSYLVANIAN RELIGIOUS LAWS

Between 1566 and 1571, laws adopted in Transylvania that dealt with religion were essentially based on the same principles.³¹ One common feature of these laws was that they attempted to abolish the practice of idolatry. According to a law passed in Nagyszeben (Sibiu, Romania) in 1566, idol worship had to be eliminated among all the nationalities in Transylvania. In two instances, these religious laws stipulate that they also apply to the Eastern Orthodox Romanians, whose priests were required in 1566 to resolve their dispute regarding interpretation of the Bible with the Romanian Reformed Bishop György appointed by the sovereign. The result of this dispute was predetermined, namely that the Eastern Orthodox interpretation of the Bible would qualify as idolatry from the Protestant perspective. This law also proclaimed that those who refused to submit to the truth must be punished.³² It is certain that as the

31 Mihály Balázs, 'Über den europäischen Kontext der siebenbürgischen Religionsgesetze des 16. Jahrhunderts', in Günter Frank (ed.), *Fragmenta Melanchthoniana, Humanismus und europäische Identität*, vol. 4. Basel: Verlag Regionalkultur, 2009, 11–27. For the English-language version of the previous article, see Mihály Balázs, 'Tolerant Country – Misunderstood Laws. Interpreting Sixteenth-Century Transylvanian Legislation Concerning Religion', *The Hungarian Historical Review* 2:1 (2013) 85–108; Gábor Barta, 'L'intolérance dans un pays tolérant: la principauté de Transylvanie au XVI^e siècle', in Robert Sauzet (ed.), *Les frontières religieuses en Europe du XV^e au XVI^e siècle*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1992, 151–158. For the German-language version of this article, see 'Bedingungsfaktoren zur Entstehung religiöser Toleranz in Siebenbürgen', Georg und Renate Weber (eds.), *Luther und Siebenbürgen*. Cologne: Böhlau, 1985, 229–244; Ágnes Várkonyi, 'Pro quiete regni – for the Peace of the Realm. The 1568 Law on Religious Tolerance in the Principality of Transylvania', *The Hungarian Quarterly* 34 (1993) 99–112.

32 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comitalia Regni Transylvaniae 2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 326–327. We must not fail to draw attention to an error that has become part of the historical tradition and has also appeared in modern scholarly literature. It is clear that the Romanian Reformed bishop in question was György Szentgyörgyi, who served in this position until 1569. When the collection of manuscripts containing adopted laws began during the final decades of the eighteenth century, this fact was not clear and those who carried out this task automatically thought that the Christian name György referred to the propagator of the

physician and advisor of the sickly king elect, the secular theologian Giorgio Biandrata, who maintained a continuous working relationship with Ferenc Dávid at this time, played a significant role in the formulation of this religious-policy concept. Contemporary pronouncements substantiate this even if we handle the most detailed description, that of the obviously anti-Biandrata Ferenc Forgách, with reservations. In his presentation of Biandrata's theological viewpoints, Forgách – ignoring the proper chronology – holds the Italian physician responsible for all of the heretical doctrines of radical religious groups, which he qualified as sects. Forgách's assertion is false, or at least misleading. Even Reformed Church historians acknowledge that Ferenc Dávid, who had previously demanded that secular authorities take resolute action, frequently stated and wrote after the year 1567 that religion must not be propagated with sword and fire.³³ Ildikó Horn has demonstrated very proficiently how the Unitarians transformed the gentle and persuasive character of their theology into a propaganda tool that they connected to winning over the sovereign and the magnates and how they utilized this in the course of religious polemics as well.³⁴ Theological debates that were conducted with the participation of the sovereign became novel events, in Transylvania at least. The prince first exercised pressure on behalf of the Unitarians on those affiliated with the Reformed Church at the theological debate held in Várad (Oradea, Romania) in October 1569. The latter, incidentally, routinely demanded that anti-Trinitarians, whom they regarded to be heretics, be punished.

The propagation of faith by force and through the use of violence thus were not part of Biandrata's toolkit. Neither is there any evidence serving to corroborate the anti-Trinitarian conspiracy theory that Ferenc Forgách propounded in his work, namely that Biandrata recruited Italian mercenaries from among his fellow communion members in Venice in order to serve as body guards for the sovereign and to help him occupy the city of Nagyszeben as a first step toward taking all of Transylvania under his control.³⁵ However, Antal Pirnát's study³⁶ based on correspondence found among the items in Endre Veress's estate revealed that in 1565, thus before the beginning of anti-Trinitarian propaganda, Biandrata – with the help of a Venetian agent named Pietro Grisoni – engaged the services of soldiers in Venice and that this action was terminated as a result of Maximilian's intervention in the years 1565–1566. A very important new finding shows that Grisoni recruited another court physician, Dionisio Avolo, who arrived to the court in Gyulafehérvár in 1566 and assisted Biandrata,

Unitarian "contagion," Giorgio Biandrata. This how Biandrata's name came to appear in Roman Catholic polemical works, among them the history of the origin of the Csíksomlyó (Șumuleu Ciuc, Romania) Pilgrimage. Scholarly publications then treated this error as a fact, which they did not attempt to verify.

33 József Pokoly, 'Az unitarizmus Magyarországon', *Protestáns Szemle* 10:4 (1898) 244.

34 Horn, *Hit és hatalom*, 42–57.

35 Ghymesí Forgách Ferenc nagyváradai püspök *Magyar Históriaja*, 461; Péter Kulcsár, *Humanista történetírók*. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1977, 983–984.

36 Pirnát, 'Per una nuova interpretazione', 40.

who was heavily involved in political and religious affairs at this time, with his work. A letter written during the first half of 1567 shows that a group of agents operated in Naples in addition to Venice and that in the hope of concluding a peace agreement with Maximilian they recruited mining specialists rather than soldiers. From our standpoint, however, the most important fact is that one of the letter writers specifically stated that the matter of religion should not be permitted to impede the implementation of the actions, thus demonstrating that Biandrata's network operated even though its members were not affiliated with the same religion as he was. Therefore, according to the letter writer, not all the men that the congenial Italian physician recruited to join the military and mining contingents scheduled to travel to Transylvania were heretics.

In light of the fact that a study was published not long ago that disputes the assertion that Roman Catholics can be placed in this category, it appears to be necessary to reflect upon this.³⁷ I believe that it is not necessary to prove that not only people of Eastern Orthodox faith were qualified as idolaters, but Protestants and Catholics as well. However, despite the advance of Protestant principles, islands of Roman Catholicism undoubtedly remained in the Székely Land and on the estates of Catholic magnates. Therefore, one may ask whether this was merely the product of the existing distribution of power or if the diet passed a relevant resolution. There is no evidence of any general measures adopted in the 1560s. However, it is noteworthy that provisions were enacted in the 1570s and 1580s that were, although of later origin, continuously enforced. For example, in the 1580s, diets declared on several occasions that they had never revoked the right of every member of the nobility to engage the services of a cleric of any kind on his estate. One encounters such reasoning that focused on the nobility at the diet convened in 1588 at which it was decided to expel the Jesuits from Transylvania. The Saxon Albert Huet and the Hungarian István Bodonyi declared here that beginning in 1581 a continuous succession of laws had been adopted that could not be regarded as valid because they contradicted the unanimously adopted 1556 law that banned the Papist religion in Transylvania.³⁸

Antal Molnár wrote in his study that following his failures in Poland, Giorgio Biandrata “wished to realize his utopian dream, the country with an anti-

37 István Bitskey, ‘Der ungarische Jesuit Péter Pázmány über die Religionsfreiheit der Calvinisten und der Lutheraner’, in Marta Fata and Anton Schindling (eds.), *Calvin und Reformiertentum in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen: Helvetisches Bekenntnis, Ethnie und Politik vom 16. Jahrhundert bis 1918*. Münster: Aschendorff, 2010, 460.

38 For both Latin- and Hungarian-language versions of these declarations, see Mihály Balázs, ‘Az új ország és a katolikusok’, in Veronka Dáné, Teréz Oborni and Gábor Sipos (eds.), “...éltünk mi sokáig ‘két hazában’...” *Tanulmányok a 90 éves Kiss András tiszteletére*. Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Könyvkiadó, 2012, 37–53, and Mihály Balázs, *Hitújítás és egyházalapítás között. Tanulmányok az erdélyi unitarizmus 16–17. századi történetéről* (A Magyar Unitárius Egyház Kolozsvári Gyűjtőlevéltárának és Nagykönyvtárának Kiadványai 8). Kolozsvár: Magyar Unitárius Egyház, 2016, 61–73.

Trinitarian state religion.”³⁹ In my opinion, in the first stage the country would have merely become a Protestant state in which the majority of the population refuted the Trinity, since the prospect of converting the entire population, particularly the Lutheran Saxons, to anti-Trinitarianism seemed rather hopeless, while at the same time this idea would have been applied beyond the borders of Transylvania, since John Sigismund had the chance to accede to the Polish throne following the death of his much older uncle, Sigismund II Augustus, as the only living member of the Jagiellonian dynasty. Not only the anti-Trinitarians living in Lesser Poland (Małopolska) counted on this possibility, but the courts in Kraków and Vienna as well. In the dedication of the book “*Refutatio scripti Georgii Maioris*” to Chancellor Mihály Csáky, Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid portray themselves and their movement as vehicles for the consummation of everything that had begun with Luther.⁴⁰ In the final section of the official report regarding the Várad religious debate (1569), the king proposed that an international gathering take place in his realm at which he could proclaim the truth: “Indeed, I wish that the principal men of learning would come from other countries as well, let Beza himself, or Simlerus, take the liberty as well to proclaim the truth from the pure word of God.”⁴¹ A copy of the work entitled *De falsa et vera unius Dei... cognitione* in which following the dedication to John Sigismund II there appears another title page and dedication that were written by hand on attached blank pages in the style of printed text during the eighteenth century is both interesting and mysterious. The title written on the added pages was *Dominæ Elisabethæ, Serenissimæ Reginae Britanniae, Franciæ, Hybernique*. Based on our present knowledge, it cannot be determined whether this was a dedication written before the printing of a small number of copies of the book or if it was a text that was never printed and remained in manuscript form that in the eighteenth century was copied into one of the books that had been published in 1568. It should be noted that the text of this dedication contains not a single anachronism.⁴² The authors of this text defended themselves against slander strewn upon on the Unitarians and then presented themselves as those who had struggled the most consistently against the Roman Antichrist and who, by radically rejecting scholastic pseudoscience, were capable of laying the theological foundations for Protestant unity. They furthermore held out the prospect of dedicating their future works to the queen. Praise for the queen then transformed into that for her brother, Edward VI, who had died at the age of 15 and whom the authors compare to King Elect John Sigismund of Transylvania

39 Antal Molnár, ‘Miért világtörténeti kuriózum a magyar reformáció?’ in Erika Kiss, Márton Zászkaliczky and Zsuzsa Zászkaliczky (eds.), *Ige-idők. A reformáció 500 éve*, vol. 1. Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2019, 21.

40 *Régi Magyarországi Nyomtatványok 1474–1600*, vol. 1, edited by Gedeon Borsa et al. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971, 272. (hereafter: *RMNy*)

41 Lajos Nagy and Domokos Simén (eds.), *A nagyváradi disputatio*. Kolozsvár: Stein, 1870, 168–169.

42 Balázs Mihály, ‘About a Copy of *De falsa et vera unius Dei... cognitione* (Additional Data to the History of the English Connections of the Antitrinitarians of Transylvania)’, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 47 (2003) 62–64.

and the eastern Hungarian Kingdom because both sovereigns had permitted persecuted Protestants to take refuge in their realms. The concluding part of the letter emphasized that in the kingdom of John II the number of congregations that had come to the true knowledge of God was increasing and specifically mentioned those who had remained loyal to the truth in spite of persecution in *Gallia*, *Helvetia* and *Germania* and who were their allies in the fight against the Antichrist.

In this connection it is worthwhile for us to mention that at the time of the change in direction that occurred in the middle of the 1560s significant initiatives were undertaken in the domain of education as well. This also had antecedents in Poland, where with the encouragement and cooperation of Giorgio Biandrata, Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł attempted to establish an academic gymnasium in Vilnius, while in Transylvania Biandrata went so far as to initiate the foundation of a university. This attempt obviously received a biased interpretation at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Calvinist preacher Albert Szenci Molnár (1574–1634) wrote the following about this in the dedication to his work entitled *De summo bono*: “Then around the year 1570 young King János had such an intention. He invited the famous philosopher Petrus Ramus to Fehérvár [Gyulafehérvár], though doctor Biandrata’s grumbling discouraged the wise men from going there.”⁴³ In fact, the first documents connected to the foundation of the university contain no evidence that John II envisioned an expressly Unitarian institute of higher learning. The addressee of the letter that the sovereign wrote in Torda (Turda, Romania) was University of Basel rhetoric professor Celio Secondo Curione, who was a member of Biandrata’s circle of friends, though not an anti-Trinitarian. This letter contains no religious argumentation, since the Hungarian king elect wrote in it that he wanted to establish a university (academy) in order to promote *studia humanitatis*. The king also wrote that he was counting on Curione’s work and counsel (*opera et consilio vestro uti statuimus*) and that his deputy, doctor Biandrata, would provide him with further details about the planned university.⁴⁴ A few decades later, historiographer István Szamosközy wrote that he wanted to further develop the school in Gyulafehérvár and that “for this purpose he intended to invite the very erudite Caelius Secundo Curio from Basel as well as others from Italy and Germany...”⁴⁵ However, further sources have turned up regarding French philosopher and educational reformer Petrus Ramus. Zsigmond Jakó found while doing research in Székelyudvarhely (Odorheiu Secuiesc, Romania) a copy of the book *Aritmeticae libri duo, geometria septem et viginti* that Ramus published in 1569. The date imprinted on the leather binding of this volume indicates that Ramus sent it to John II in 1570 with the

43 Albert Szenci Molnár, *Discursus de summo bono (értekezés a legfőbb jóról)* (Régi Magyar Próza Emlékek 4), edited by Judit Vásárhelyi. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1975, 89; Klára Jakó, ‘Petrus Ramus és az első kísérlet egyetem alapítására Erdélyben’, *Korunk* ser. III. 1:2 (1990) 147–149.

44 István Zsindely, ‘A bázeli egyetem könyvtárából’, *Sárospataki füzetek* 5 (1861) 839.

45 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Szamosközy István történeti maradványai* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 21). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 112.

following dedication: *Johanni secundo, Pannoniae regi optimo dono dedit.*⁴⁶ It also became clear that Albert Szenci Molnár's source may have been Thomas Freigius's work *Petri Rami vita*, who likely drew from Theodor Zwinger's March 23, 1570 letter, in which it is stated that John Sigismund had invited him to Transylvania with the promise of annual pay of 500 thalers and other princely benefits. Moreover, this letter shows that precisely during these months András Dudith also invited the Frenchman to Kraków. Since none of these sources suggest that the person of Giorgio Biandrata prevented Ramus from accepting the invitation to Transylvania, we may legitimately suppose that the idea that emerged in 1567 was aimed at the establishment of a Protestant university that would have been organized in accordance with the methodological renewal advocated by both Ramus and Curione rather than the punctilious later Scholastic Aristotelian methods of scholarship. Not only anti-Trinitarians advocated such renewal.

UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING BIANDRATA'S WRITINGS

In order to make the picture complete, the works that Biandrata wrote during this period must naturally be presented as well. However, this cannot be done without the necessary preparatory work. Since the collection of the corpus of texts that Biandrata wrote has not taken place, one may state with certainty only that neither of the two extreme viewpoints that can be discerned in scholarly literature are accurate. Christophorus Sandius, who attributed all of the anti-Trinitarian literature published in Transylvania to Biandrata, represented one of these extremes.⁴⁷ Antal Pirnát, on the basis of Earl Morse Wilbur,⁴⁸ though in a more well-argued form, represented the other extreme. Pirnát regarded Biandrata to be primarily an organizer who "likely did not write a single work of greater extent." According to Pirnát, Biandrata's distinguished and anonymous colleagues wrote the works attributed to the Italian physician.⁴⁹ Biandrata certainly had many such colleagues and some of those among them who ended up in Transylvania are known by name.⁵⁰ It would thus be worthwhile to bear in mind the fact that Biandrata was simultaneously an important participant in Transylvanian politics who was continuously in the public eye and a proponent of Italian heterodoxy who had been forced into exile.

46 Klára Jakó, *Az első kolozsvári egyetemi könyvtár története és állományának rekonstrukciója 1579–1604* (Adattár XVI–XVIII. századi szellemi mozgalmaink történetéhez 16/1). Szeged: s.n., 1999, 5–9.

47 Christophorus Sandius, *Bibliotheca antitrinitariorum, Feristadii, 1684*. (facsimile reproduction). Warszawa: PWN, 1968.

48 Earl Morse Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and its Antecedents*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1946, 226.

49 Antal Pirnát, 'Giorgio Biandrata működésének új értelmezése', in Pál Ács (ed.), *Pirnát Antal kiadatlan tanulmányok*. Budapest: reciti, 2018, 143.

50 See Antal Pirnát, 'Il martire e l'uomo politico (Ferenc Dávid e Biandrata)', in Robert Dán and Antal Pirnát (eds.), *Antitrinitarianism in the Second Half of the 16th Century* (Studia Humanitatis 5). Budapest–Leiden: Akadémiai Kiadó–Brill, 1982, 166.

It can nevertheless hardly be denied that Biandrata, together with Ferenc Dávid, played a key role in the drafting of two highly significant works published in the 1560s that defined dogmatic and moral-theological frameworks: *De falsa et vera unius Dei... cognitione*;⁵¹ and *De regno Christi*.⁵² There are various opinions regarding the author of certain chapters on the former work, which is composed of two books and many chapters. Since it is clear only that Lelio Sozzini wrote chapter eleven of the second book of this work (*Brevis explicatio primi capituli Johannis*), many different viewpoints can be read with regard to the authors of the remaining chapters. Antonio Rotondò is inclined to believe that Biandrata wrote the entire first book of this work, while – with the exception of the aforesaid chapter – Ferenc Dávid wrote this second book. However, this opinion is not by any means generally accepted. Since parts of certain chapters had appeared previously in either Polish or Hungarian, some researchers of these nationalities are given to believe that Grzegorz Paweł or Ferenc Dávid were the authors. There is perhaps agreement only in the conclusion that *De regno Christi*, which in large part republished Michael Servet's texts, was the work of Biandrata and Dávid and that the writing refuting the work of Wittenberg theologian Georg Maior was their joint undertaking as well.⁵³

Without going into great detail, let these two extreme examples suffice to demonstrate that the authors of scholarly literature have failed to take note of one another's arguments.⁵⁴ For example, the newer explanation of the prologue to the Gospel of John, which international scholarly literature attributes to Fausto Sozzini, reached Gyulafehérvár via Biandrata's network of connections and was published in the city in 1568. However, Antal Pirnát attributes the work to Johann Sommer.⁵⁵ Another example is the short treatise *Antithesis pseudochristi cum vero illo ex Maria nato*, which Delio Cantimori regards as a key text connected to Italian heterodoxy because the rejection of anti-Trinitarian and Anabaptist doctrine are interwoven in this work, expressing itself in the suggestive image of Jesus Christ, born of Mary, finding followers not among princes, but among the oppressed poor. Cantimori naturally attributes the work to Biandrata without hesitation, though Antal Pirnát categorically rejects this notion in a study that appeared first in Italian and in which he introduces much new detail regarding the Italian physician's political role and economic interests. However, the authors of Italian scholarly works have, without considering Pirnát's arguments,

51 RMNy 254.

52 RMNy 270.

53 RMNy 270.

54 Mihály Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*, 27–54. Antal Pirnát's introduction to the facsimile publication of *De falsa et vera unius Dei... cognitione*. Budapest–Nieuwkoop: Akadémiai Kiadó–De Graaf, 1988; for Lech Szczucki's Polish-language review of the same work, see *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 34 (1989) 218–225; for this review in English, see *Acta Poloniae Historica* 65 (1992) 129–139.

55 Antal Pirnát, 'L'Italia e gli antitrinitari transilvani', in Vittore Branca (ed.), *Venezia e Ungheria nel Rinascimento*. Firenze: Olschki, 1973, 428–437.

adhered tenaciously to the viewpoint of Cantimori, a distinguished authority on the Reformation.⁵⁶

The death of John Sigismund (1571) naturally brought a big change to Biandrata's life.⁵⁷ The estates in Transylvania and eastern Hungary did not chose Gáspár Bekes, whom many considered to be the favorite, as prince, but rather the very wealthy Stephen Báthory de Somlyó. Although Biandrata had previously completed diplomatic tasks in the company of Báthory in the middle of the 1560s, he likely feared the new prince. There is evidence that in June 1571 Biandrata considered leaving Transylvania for Graubünden, one of the places to which Italian Protestants who had fled from Geneva, Basel and Zurich had taken refuge.⁵⁸ However, Biandrata likely received indications that the prince, who had enacted restrictive measures against the anti-Trinitarians (censorship, limiting the locations at which synods could be held to Kolozsvár and Torda and prohibition of new religious innovations), was counting him as a physician and a person with diplomatic experience. Biandrata probably was not even dismissed from the princely council, while he received increasingly important assignments in the years 1574–1575. The authors of Italian scholarly literature are inclined to characterize this as an exceptional princely gesture because, as result of the influence of Domenico Caccamo's book⁵⁹ and some of Antonio Rotondò assertions, they maintain the entrenched belief that political groupings were formed based on religious affiliation. However, Antal Pirnát and Ildikó Horn have shown that this was not at all the case: many of Gáspár Bekes's fellow Unitarians deserted him as a result of his many tactical errors and policies based on the expectation of Habsburg support. Kristóf Hagymássy was among the first and most important people to abandon Bekes.⁶⁰

The theological quest that Biandrata had initiated entered a new phase practically in parallel with the end of princely support, thus complicating his situation within his Church. The most important workshop for this was the Kolozsvár college and its key figures were Jacobus Palaeologus, who taught at the college for a shorter time and with interruptions, and Johann Sommer, who taught at the institution of higher learning until his death in 1574. Both Palaeologus and Sommer presumably arrived to Transylvania at the invitation of Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid, who had retained his positions as the leading

56 See, for example, Emanuele Scribano, 'Fausto Sozzini', in Mario Biagioni, Matteo Duni and Lucia Felici (eds.), *Fratelli d'Italia. Riformatori italiani nel Cinquecento*. Torino: Claudiana, 2011, 131.

57 Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 52. He presumes that Biandrata obtained the first reports about the prince's death that were intended to be sent abroad. He dared to think this because the letter that Sigismund II Augustus wrote to him on April 5 and April 11, 1571, appear to refer to this.

58 Antonio Rotondò, 'Verso la crisi dell'antitrinitarismo italiano. Giorgio Biandrata e Johann Sommer', in Antonio Rotondò, *Studi e ricerche di storia ereticale italiana del Cinquecento*. Torino: Giappichelli, 161–223.

59 Domenico Caccamo, *Eretici italiani in Moravia, Polonia e Transilvania (1558–1611)* (Studi e documenti). Firenze: Sansoni, 1970.

60 Pirnát, 'A kelet-közép-európai antitrinitarizmus', 15–19; Horn, *Hit és hatalom*, 171–182.

pastor in Kolozsvár and the superintendent of the Hungarian Churches despite being dismissed from the princely court. Dávid perhaps initiated the invitation of Palaeologus to Transylvania. Contrary to Biandrata, who was more easily able to accept the limits of human cognitive abilities, Ferenc Dávid was preoccupied with the concern that the Christology espoused by Lelio and Fausto Sozzini was not logical enough and was incapable of overcoming opposing arguments. Dávid expressed this opinion the most clearly in a letter that he wrote to Palaeologus in November 1570.⁶¹ Palaeologus, who was providing information to the Habsburg court while in Transylvania, formulated an even more radical theological concept in order to eliminate previously existing contradictions. In strictly Christological terms, the Greek heretic's new concept was based on the idea that the exclusively human nature of Christ was incompatible with the need to pray to him and call upon him for help. For Palaeologus, this consideration was connected most organically to the syncretic vision that highlighted the common elements in the Jewish, Muslim and Christian religions.⁶²

The latter aspect of this sweeping vision found no followers among the Unitarians of Transylvania, who were preoccupied with the moral-theological features of the concept. If we do not consider Jesus to be the creator of new law, then the redefinition of his mission of redemption also arises and in this connection the question of justification and the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament as well. With regard to this topic, Sommer apparently proclaimed viewpoints among his students and preachers that diverged from those contained in *De falsa et vera unius Dei... cognitione*. In the latter work, it was claimed that the Jews who did not know Christ were only aware of their prefigurations, their “shadows,” so that the promises made to them concerned essentially earthly things and eternal life was for them merely a coming hope. At this time, Sommer claimed to the contrary that the conditions for justification and the salvation of man had essentially not changed since the time the laws were given to the Jews. All of this resulted in great controversy in the course of which Ferenc Dávid characterized Sommer, who had married into his family, as a subverter of the Church. In addition, Biandrata's informative questions, which obviously expressed doubt about the viewpoint articulated in 1568, and Sommer's responses have both survived.

It is very important for us to see that Biandrata's questions had been formulated under circumstances that departed radically from those that had existed previously. Whereas in Geneva and Poland the questions that Biandrata had posed had exposed the contradictions of the old theology and demanded that space be provided for new theological concepts, now he maintained doubts, mistrust and worry vis-à-vis the new ideas. Biandrata therefore had to face the fact that he no longer exercised control over the spread of new theological trends. He soon realized that in this respect he and Ferenc Dávid had parted

61 Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*, 95–96.

62 For the best summary of this, see Lech Szczucki, *W kręgu myślicieli heretyckich*. Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1972.

ways. This circumstance can be discerned in Jacobus Palaeologus's extensive work summarizing the new theology, *Catechesis Christiana*.⁶³ The first part of the dedication written to Kristóf Hagymássy in Kolozsvár on August 1, 1574, expresses detailed praise for Biandrata, looking back at events in Geneva and Poland, though focusing on his achievements in Transylvania. This dedication contains a lengthy description of Biandrata's zeal, shrewdness and perseverance, noting that interest in theological solutions that he had initiated had arisen throughout Europe. Naturally this dedication contains praise for John II as well, though passing into the present there are no further words regarding Biandrata and only Kristóf Hagymássy is portrayed as a supporter and defender of the Church. Although Ferenc Dávid is not mentioned in the texts depicting the fictitious situation, in *Pastor*, which articulates Palaeologus's concepts in immense sermons, contemporaries could have easily recognized the leading pastor in Kolozsvár. We can observe a similar procedure in the unfinished work entitled *Disputatio Scolastica*, which was written on the estate of János Gerendi, in Olcona/Alcona (Rom. Altâna/Alțina, Germ. Altzen, Romania). In this work Hagymássy and Bekes are portrayed as "two Theseuses," while in terms of dogma Ferenc Dávid proclaims the most important precepts.⁶⁴ These works therefore conspicuously focus exclusively on Biandrata's past merits.

Leaving the world of fiction, we must ascertain that opinions are divided with regard to how long and the degree to which Biandrata found usable elements in the new theology. Antal Pirnát believed that Biandrata quickly recognized that the interpretation of the new relationship between the law and the Gospel may prove to be useful against Anabaptist teachings, since with reference to the Ten Commandments it was possible to circumscribe the moral perfectionism of the Sermon on the Mount of which the Anabaptists were so fond, those aspirations that prohibited Christians from filling office that required the use of the sword.⁶⁵ It is another question whether he utilized this argumentation in the course of his frequent actions against rebaptism in the 1570s and found the articulation of criticism that had already been voiced in the 1560s to be sufficient. According to Antonio Rotondò,⁶⁶ Sommer's responses to Biandrata were perhaps not so bold as to cause the Italian physician to propose to Stephen Báthory that the work taking place at the Kolozsvár college be stopped. However, the situation changed with the writing of *Catechesis Christiana*, which Rotondò believed they had obtained with the intention of printing it. Rotondò maintained that the previously cited parts of the dedication reflected an obvious political propensity, specifically that the author would have liked to have seen Gáspár Bekes on the Transylvanian throne rather than Stephen Báthory. This, according to Rotondò, also becomes obvious in the text, which in one instance places Stephen and

63 Jacobus Palaeologus, *Catechesis christiana dierum duodecim*, edited by Růžena Dostálová. Warszawa: PWN, 1971, 15–18.

64 Jacobus Palaeologus, *Disputatio scholastica* (Bibliotheca Unitariorum III), edited by Juliusz Domański and Lech Szczucki. Utrecht: Bibliotheca Unitariorum, 1994.

65 Pirnát, 'Il martire e l'uomo', 184–187.

66 Rotondò, 'Verso la crisi', 28–223.

Kristóf Báthory in the same company as oath-breaking monarchs who have emerged from the Pope's lair, namely Sigismund of Luxembourg, Vladislaus, Louis XII, Charles V and Carolus Guisius, and designates the underworld, alongside the Neros and the Caligulas, as the proper place for those who, as they, have persecuted the true religion. In this context, it is of particular importance that Palaeologus was only willing to recognize Biandrata's older merits and exclusively those he had achieved in Transylvania, thus tacitly categorizing him among those who had more recently failed to protect the Church that had been condemned to silence. According to Rotondò, it is no less important that hopes connected to Bekes are at least mentioned in some way. Palaeologus thus wanted to contrast John Sigismund with Stephen Báthory and his advisors. Rotondò furthermore interpreted the failure to print *Catechesis* to be a reflection of Biandrata's tacit desertion. Although it cannot be determined if Biandrata intervened concretely, he certainly was present in the background of the events even if Palaeologus himself came to consider the possibility of not printing the book. At the same time, Rotondò contended that the withdrawal of Palaeologus to János Gerendi's estate was an explicit signal that Biandrata, previously a great supporter of anti-Trinitarianism, had distanced himself from everything that took place in the milieu of Palaeologus and Sommer, who had defined the new orientation.

The deficiencies of Rotondò's suggestive vision can be easily identified. Kristóf Hagymássy very quickly became a supporter of Báthory, while Bekes's star was already falling at the time of the dedication, since he had to flee from Fogaras (Făgăraș, Romania) in the autumn of 1573. Although Palaeologus indeed would have liked to have seen Bekes become prince, in August 1574 the statement he made in his text that God had made life impossible for certain people through *errore et caeco impetus* can be interpreted as a resigned criticism rather than an incitement to action. And perhaps the most important argument: Rotondò appears to have been unaware that Báthory had enacted a censorship degree at the beginning of this reign, thus there was certainly no possibility to print the work in Transylvania. It is not known what kind of ideas the author, Palaeologus, had about this, though Biandrata was undoubtedly in no position to promote the printing of the work. It must not be forgotten that one of the objectives of the censorship resolution was precisely to eliminate this situation, which Palaeologus proudly mentions in the preface, namely that the heretics of Europe yearned for the declarations of the anti-Trinitarians. In spite of this, Rotondò was correct when he wrote about the occasional correlation between political orientation and theological differences of opinion. The fact that Palaeologus performed services for the Habsburg court throughout most of the 1570s obviously played a role in his anathematization of the Báthorys. Palaeologus, who was born on the island of Chios and from his early youth was able to observe the convergence of the great religions, thought on an imperial scale with regard to politics as well and since he believed that sovereigns exercised a decisive influence over the formation of religious conditions in given territories, he did not deal whatsoever with the everyday problems connected to ecclesiastical life.

We were able to see that Biandrata, who worked to establish unity “merely” among the Protestants, did not open such perspectives. In contrast to Palaeologus, he attempted from the beginning to establish an efficient Church organization that would serve to limit the emergence of impartial debate. In the previously mentioned 1565 letter, Biandrata articulated the necessity of excommunication, that is, that all members of Christian congregations must adapt to the established viewpoint based on the word of God and those who did not agree with this had to leave the community. Here he did not mention that only clerics had the right to make declarations with regard to theological questions, though he later did so in a tract placed in the publication entitled *De regno Christi*.⁶⁷

In this, he stated in agreement with Ferenc Dávid that the time of those whom God had called upon in a special way (*peculari vocatione, singulari revelatione*) had ended with the death of Paul the Apostle and that only those who possessed Church authority were able to address theological questions. Thus the accord between Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid did not collapse in this regard, since the first sentence of the famous theses that the latter wrote in February 1579 read as follows: “The Lord committed the spread of celestial science and the zeal for researching the word of God to clerics according to the words of the prophets. Mal. 2.6.”⁶⁸

Very importantly, it was precisely Sommer who expressed the opposite viewpoint in a rewriting of Jacopo Aconcio's *De Satanae Stratagematis*. Here, in contrast to the opinion of Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid, Sommer supplements the original work with ideas urging the renewal of the practice of *communis prophetia* (universal priesthood or the priesthood of all believers). According to Sommer, the bias of erudite priests could only be counterbalanced by providing the laity with the possibility to express their viewpoints. In this work, Sommer argued passionately against the practice of allowing uneducated people, qualified as *schwermerus*, to speak up. It goes without saying that the opinion-forming congregation must pass judgment on theological ideas presented in this way based on scripture. The notion of providing the laity with the opportunity to express opinion was likely the reason for which – as indicated in the preface – Sommer's work was not printed and remained a manuscript. This was presumably the result of intervention from Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid, since the manuscript was completed during the reign of John II.⁶⁹

Thus with regard to the idea of *communis prophetia*, Sommer's proposals did not find a receptive audience. However, those of the congregations regarding autonomy did, and in certain respects were attempting to batter down open gates in light of the fact that the famous Torda law of 1568 had already stipulated that not even the superintendent could tell the congregations which preacher to

67 Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*, 144–145.

68 “*Propagationem doctrinae caelestis et studium inquisitionis veritatis verbi divini ministris commendatam esse Janiis verbis docemur Malach. 2.6.*,” *Unitario-Ecclesiastica historia Transylvanica*, 238.

69 Balázs Mihály, ‘Einflüsse der Baseler Humanisten auf den Siebenbürger Antitrinitarismus’, in Volker Leppin and Ulrich A. (eds.), *Konfessionsbildung und Konfessionskultur in Siebenbürgen in der frühen Neuzeit* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa 66). Wien–Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005, 150–152.

choose. Recent research rightfully emphasizes that this was the most important message of this law evoking the early period of the Reformation. It may be stated with confidence that this law gave rise to the practice that developed within Unitarian communities in Transylvania during the 1570s. It is perhaps worthwhile to recall how the great researcher of anti-Trinitarianism, Antal Pirnát, characterized this situation: “[Transylvanian Unitarianism] was a recognized religious denomination with outwardly determined rights and a hierarchical Church organization. At the same time, until 1579 there were not even *pro forma* obligatory dogmas applying to all members of the denomination, and a significant proportion of the clergy, with support from their secular patrons, struggled tenaciously and not without success to prevent such things from being forced upon them.”⁷⁰ Of course, all of this did not mean that in the years following the death of John Sigismund secular and ecclesiastical Church leaders (such as Biandrata and Ferenc Dávid, respectively) were not able to govern every detail of life of the congregations either. Antal Pirnát believed that Biandrata was able to accept naked nonadorantist Christology that entailed no further consequences, thus he did not turn to secular authorities in 1579 as a result of the widespread acceptance of this doctrine. I am not sure about this, since it is difficult to imagine that the reception of these principles could take place in identical fashion in the majority of autonomous congregations. However, Pirnát may have been correct to conclude that, along with an aggravation of external circumstances (Kristóf Báthory took more vigorous steps to strengthen the position of Catholicism than his brother, Stephen Báthory, who became the king of Poland in 1576), the appearance of the sectarian danger provided the decisive push to Biandrata, who feared for the future of his Church.

Due to a lack of clear knowledge, several ideas have been propounded in scholarly literature regarding what precisely Ferenc Dávid professed during the final months of his life. There are some who assert that he became a Sabbatarian, while others contend that at most he became a staunch believer in nonadorantist Christology. I will not describe this debate, including the complicated situation surrounding sources, because no matter what the great bishop professed, it is certain that the person and texts of Matthias Vehe-Glirius were present in his milieu, since the latter arrived to Kolozsvár in early 1578, long before Fausto Sozzini. In light of Ferenc Dávid’s resolve to find the ultimate truth, Biandrata legitimately may have feared that Dávid and his followers may come to accept sectarian theology that observed the ritual aspects of the Law of Moses.⁷¹

However, it is obvious that Biandrata was compelled to view the occurrences as a religious-policy failure, partially because they obviously had destroyed his credibility within the heterodox world. One of the earliest and most revealing

70 Antal Pirnát, ‘Gerendi János és Eössi András’, *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 74:5–6 (1970) 680.

71 For a summary of the viewpoints, see Mihály Balázs and André Séguenny (ed.), *Bibliotheca Dissidentium: Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux des seizième et dix-septième siècles*, vol. XXVI (Ungarländische Antitrinitarier IV. Dávid Ferenc). Baden-Baden: Editions Valentin Koerner, 2008, 37–41.

documents pertaining to this matter is the letter in which András Dudith, on the one hand, expresses regret about the continuous dogmatic controversies and, on the other hand, unhesitatingly contrasts Biandrata's actions with statements that he had previously made in the defense of religious tolerance.⁷² The prominent humanist Dudith, who remained in contact with Biandrata despite their political differences, essentially condemned him as a second Calvin, just as in the Palaeologus-edited publication defending Ferenc Dávid, *Defensio Francisci Davidis*, that appeared in 1582 and 1583.

Biandrata could have hardly taken solace in the fact that his original plan, as Antal Pirnát showed convincingly, was not the destruction of Ferenc Dávid. When at the synod held in Torda on February 24, 1579, Biandrata remained in the minority within his Church in his opinion rejecting nonadorantism, he decided to compel Ferenc Dávid to back down in the course of a national religious debate of the type that had been held during the reign of John II. In spite of his significant political experience, Biandrata did not discern what kind of trap he had walked into as the pace of events began to accelerate during the spring of 1579. Kristóf Báthory, listening to his Jesuit advisors, offered the possibility during talks on the matter only to decide whether Bishop Dávid's teachings were new and could be regarded as blasphemous. Biandrata naturally could not have reckoned that the proclamation of the crime of religious innovation essentially without a hearing might entail the death of his rival. Elek Jakab contended in an opinion that is still current that in 1580 Kristóf Báthory accorded Biandrata a land grant in exchange for these services.⁷³ Of course, although not impossible, it is unlikely that acquisition of the three villages that had originally belonged to the Kolozsmonostor Abbey (Kajántó, Tiburctelke and Bogártelke [Chinteni, Băgara, Romania]), which were later sold to Sándor Kendy, redeemed from him by the prince and then donated to the Jesuits, guided Biandrata's actions.⁷⁴

It is also obvious that Kristóf Báthory and the Sigismund Báthory, who had not yet reached adulthood, engaged Biandrata as a physician during their reigns – in the new times there was no longer a need for his diplomatic experience.

72 András Dudith to Thomas Jordan, Pskov, August 16, 1569. Published in Andreas Dudithius *Epistolae*, editae curantibus Lecho Szczucki et Tiburtio Szepesi, Pars VI (1577–1580), ed. Nicolaus Szymanski, commentariis instruxerunt Lechus Szczucki et Nicolaus Szymanski. Budapest: Argumentum, 2002, 241–242. It is worthwhile to quote the concluding part of this commentary verbatim: “*Illud sane putidum videtur, ad ea illos quoque arma confugere, quibus pontifices et, si qui in eo pontifices imitantur, impie et contra Dei iussa uti clamitant. Si non sunt conscientiis iniciendi laquei, si arma nostra spiritualia volunt esse, si crescere ad messem usque et, si quae sunt alia, huc pertinentia afferunt, qua fronte illi, cum idem faciunt, pontificiis tyrannidem obiciunt?*”

73 See Costin Feneșan, ‘Blandrata György fejedelmi orvos és tanácsos erdélyi birtokviszonyai’, in Sándor Papp, Zoltán Kordé and Sándor László Tóth (eds.), *Urbs, civitas, universitas. Ünnepi tanulmányok Petrovics István 65. születésnapja tiszteletére* (Fontes et Libri I). Szeged: SZTE Középkori és Kora Újkori Magyar Történeti Tanszék, 2018, 111–120. For the Jesuit reaction to the acquisition of these lands, see Ladislaus Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae: 1550–1579*, vol. 1. Roma: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1969, 221, 903.

74 Elek Jakab, ‘Néhány adat Blandrata György élete és jelleme ismeretéhez’, *Keresztény Magvető* 14 (1879) 18–19, 21.

However, he could claim glorious successes in this regard already during the Báthory era. Biandrata's successful actions, which were based primarily on his connections to the nobility in Lesser Poland, in 1575 to gain the election of Stephen Báthory as king of Poland represented the pinnacle of his diplomatic activity. Lajos Szádeczky's monograph contains a significant amount of detail regarding Biandrata's skillful maneuvering, which even his opponents acknowledged.⁷⁵ Elek Jakab showed in his supplementary study that at Biandrata's suggestion a few very concrete promises with regard to the payment of state debts and the recapture of the territories occupied by the Russians were incorporated into their speech delivered by Márton Berzeviczy at the national assembly in Warsaw.⁷⁶ This text obviously cannot be regarded as a personal accomplishment, though it is by all means worthwhile to note the suggestive expression of appreciation for Poland, which was regarded as the main bastion of defense, in *Respublica Christiana* and furthermore the connection of this motif with emphasis on the common Polish–Hungarian past and the similarity between the customs and laws of the Polish and Hungarian nations.

THE FINAL YEARS

Albeit with varying emphasis, the authors of scholarly literature depict Biandrata as having totally lost touch with his Church during the final years of his life. Fausto Sozzini's words, which call to mind Catholic polemics, certainly contributed to the formation of this image. According to Sozzini, Biandrata's hunger for money during his final years caused him to abandon his previous principles of faith and his murder at the hands of his nephew represented God's just punishment.⁷⁷ Delio Cantimori, based on the works of Endre Veress, cited a report from a Jesuit asserting that Biandrata wanted to return to Bologna and would have been willing to convert back to Roman Catholicism in order to do so under the condition that he be permitted to live in isolation. Thus there was no lack of rumors and among these were that Biandrata had returned to the Catholic faith and that his nephew had murdered him. Antal Pirnát persuasively refuted these rumors and again based on the works of Endre Veress published the promissory note that Biandrata's nephew issued. In this, the younger Giorgio Biandrata declared that he accepted the stipulation connected his uncle's inheritance that he never become Roman Catholic.⁷⁸

However, a truly nuanced image opens up before us if we also take into consideration those Jesuit documents with which Endre Veress and Delio Cantimori could not have been familiar. Such documents originating from

75 Lajos Szádeczky, *Báthory István lengyel királlyá választása (1574–1576)*. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1887.

76 Jakab, 'Néhány adat Blandrata György élete és jelleme ismeretéhez', 13.

77 *Biblioteca fratrum Polonorum qui unitarii appellantur continens opera omnia, Johannis Crelii Francii, Ludovici Wolsogenii, Fausti Socini Senensis et exegetica Jonae Schilchtingii a Bucowiec*. Contenti singulis voluminibus sunt praefecta, vol. 2. Irenopoli: s.n., [1668], 538a.

78 Pirnát, 'Giorgio Biandrata működésének új értelmezése', 143.

the early 1580s contain descriptions of Biandrata's appearance (tall with a distinguished white beard) and repeatedly refer to the benevolence and humanity with which he treated the Jesuits and to his efforts to help the sick. They also state again and again that he spoke with appreciation about them. According to one of these documents, Biandrata described the morals and erudition of the Jesuits in the senate in such a convincing manner that he was able to influence the opinion that many in attendance held about them in a favorable direction.⁷⁹ These documents continuously state that Biandrata did not want to make declarations about religious issues and that others attempted in vain to have him to do so with letters and the creation of opportunities for debate. As I see it, Biandrata broke this silence on only one occasion, when he declared before several others in the room of the prince that Christ is the true God. However, the answer that Biandrata gave to Jesuits who asked for further detail reveals that he thought only the Father could be considered the eternal God. Biandrata told them that Christ may have existed earlier in accordance with God's determination, though the real existence of Christ began with his birth from Mary.⁸⁰ This response is interesting because Biandrata made a similar statement in seeking agreement with those representing the Reformed Church at a religious debate held in Gyulafehérvár in 1568. Thus his response to the Jesuits appears to suggest that he had adhered continuously to Christology of the 1560s.

In depicting Biandrata's character, it is very useful if the information from the Jesuits is compared to that which appeared in the works of Vincenzo Malacarne and Elek Jakab regarding the final years of the Italian physician's life. Malacarne provides data about Biandrata's brothers, Ludovico, Alfonzo and Bernardino, who appear in Hungarian scholarly literature only in property-sales documents. Of course, elaboration of this data could be the subject of a separate study, thus I will focus exclusively on details regarding Biandrata and his infamous nephew. On March 1, 1585, Biandrata wrote a letter from Gyulafehérvár to king of Poland and prince of Transylvania Stephen Báthory. In this letter, Biandrata informed Stephen Báthory that his nephew, Sigismund Báthory, who was the cause of great worry for the sovereign,⁸¹ was making good progress in his education (he was talented, well-rounded and writing poetry) and drew Stephen Báthory's attention to his own nephew, Alfonzo, the son of his brother Bernardo. In extremely interesting fashion, Biandrata mentions that the boy – in accordance with royal counsel that his father had once given in Lvov, had learned Hungarian, thus the 23-year-old could provide service to him as a *Hungaro-Italus*.⁸² This royal wish

79 "Imo Blandrata coram senatu adeo Societatem verbis extulit de scientia et morum integritate, ut non parum eorum animos iam nunc ad nos fovendos videam excitatos." *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae*, vol. 1, 236.

80 Ladislaus Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae: 1580–1586*, vol. 2. Roma: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1976, 667.

81 István Bartók, 'A gyulafehérvári fejedelmi udvar és az ifjú Báthory Zsigmond', in Ágnes R. Várkonyi (ed.), *Magyar reneszánsz udvari kultúra*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 1987, 135–157.

82 "Nepos iste, quem ad Maiestatem Serenissimam Vestram mitto, memor verborum, quae olim Leopoli parenti suo Maiestas Vestra Serenissima dixerat, ut videlicet disceret Hungaricum, et mox ad eandem

might be interesting for researchers of *Mentalitätsgeschichte* particularly in light of the harsh criticism that the court received as a result of its “Italianization” under Sigismund Báthory. However, for us the most important aspect of this letter is the part that augments the biography of Giorgio Biandrata with surprising new information. In this part of the letter, Biandrata stated that he was awaiting the arrival of a new physician because he wanted to retire to Nagyszeben as a result of the significant decline in the state of his health, thus revealing that he no longer wanted to serve as the physician of the princely family.⁸³ We do not know if Biandrata followed through with his plan to move to Nagyszeben. In any event he dictated his will in Gyulafehérvár on April 1, 1588, which is shown in an excerpt that Elek Jakab published regarding his treatment of the leaders of Transylvanian political life.⁸⁴ In this will, Biandrata – omitting the Unitarian Church – mentions the young prince in the first place, bequeathing him his library, with the exception of the medical and Lutheran volumes, and leaving Governor János Ghiczy two spears, a shield, a helmet and a rifle. In addition, Biandrata left Lord Steward János Gálffy a horse harness, Farkas Kovácsóczy his books regarding medicine, surgery, anatomy, theology, the Gospels and Lutheranism (presumably the most exciting and unique part of the library) and a big dictionary. Finally, Biandrata left various silver items to Nagyszeben Royal Magistrate Albert Huet. This surprising decision was certainly not unrelated to Biandrata’s intention to retire to Nagyszeben, nor to the request in his will that students from the evangelical school lead the funeral procession, without singing, that would accompany his corpse to its designated burial place and that his friends bring up the rear amid the customary ringing of bells.

Elek Jakab, who did not reflect upon the site of the Biandrata’s burial, regarded it to be natural that he was speaking here about Unitarian young people, though if the ceremony took place in Gyulafehérvár, then this could have hardly been possible, since according to our present knowledge no Unitarian schools or congregations existed in this city at that time. Biandrata may have been referring in his will to the Protestant college in Gyulafehérvár, which had not yet been appropriated in denominational terms. This could mean that even if Biandrata did not become Roman Catholic at the end of his life, he may have drawn close to the variant of Protestantism that Stephen Báthory found to be the most acceptable.

se reciperet, desiderio respondere voluit, et persuasus de clementia et benignitate Maiestatis Vestrae Serenissimae suam servitutem et omnem fidelem operam offere et dedicare statuit. ... Ut ergo fratruelem hunc meum aetatis annorum 23 Hungaro-Italum voti compotem Maiestatis Serenissimae Vestrae facere et hanc petitionem omnium nostrum boni consulere dignetur, etiam atque etiam obsecramus.” Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 60–61, 117–118.

83 “*Ego vero medicum novum expecto, quo possim Cibini quieti et valetudini consulere. Mea siquidem podagra in chiragram praeter rationem versa est, unde sit, ut doloribus saepius recurrentibus totas noctas plerumque insomnes ducam, ob id cupiam dissolvi et esse cum Christo.*” Malacarne, *Commentario delle opere*, 60.

84 Jakab, ‘Néhány adat Blandrata György élete és jelleme ismeretéhez’, 22–23.

Klára Jakó*

QUEEN ISABELLA'S “MOST TRUSTED MAN”: JÁNOS SZALÁNCZY

According to Queen Isabella's biographer, Endre Veress, four people were present at her deathbed in 1559: court physician Giorgio Biandrata; Chancellor Mihály Csáki de Mihály; *supremus curiae magister* András Báthory de Somlyó; and Counselor János Szalánczy de Szenttamás, to whom historiographer Farkas Bethlen referred as Isabella's "most trusted man."¹ Biandrata, Csáki and Báthory are known figures in the early modern history of Hungary. Isabella had become acquainted with Biandrata, who played a significant role in the spread of anti-Trinitarianism in Transylvania, at the Polish royal court, where he served as the physician for her mother, Queen Bona Sforza. Chancellor Csáki, a Catholic prelate who sympathized with Protestant ideas, studied at the University of Kraków, while Báthory's family was among the most powerful in the eastern Hungarian Kingdom. I dealt with the lesser-known person of János Szalánczy and other members of his family, a diplomatic dynasty in Transylvania during the later principality era, in a previous article, though attempted at that time to provide only a summary depiction of them.² In the present study, I will make use of fresh information to more precisely reconstruct the career of János Szalánczy, who belonged to Queen Isabella's innermost circle and laid the foundations for his family's subsequent ascent in the Principality of Transylvania.

I took notice of János Szalánczy in the course of collecting Hungarian-language letters issued by the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia and by high-ranking officials in these countries. Szalánczy's diplomatic activities and service

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1 Endre Veress, *Isabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 483; Wolfgang de Bethlen, *Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis*, vol. 1. Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782, 442.

2 Klára Jakó, 'A Szalánczyak. (Egy fejezet az erdélyi fejedelemség keleti diplomáciájának történetéből)', in András Kiss, Gyöngy Kovács Kiss and Ferenc Pozsony (eds.), *Emlékkönyv Imreh István születésének nyolcvanadik évfordulójára*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 1999, 199–210.

as voivodal *secretarius* appear to have determined the career path of his family members for a long period of time. Surveying the lives of the most prominent members of the Szalánczy family, one can follow how these sixteenth-century refugees from the southern marches of the Kingdom of Hungary acquired political, social and economic influence in the Principality of Transylvania as a result of their ability, language skills and familiarity with the Islamic and Greek Orthodox world of the Balkans.

THE FOREBEARS OF THE TRANSYLVANIAN SZALÁNCZYS

The Szalánczy family – as the name signifies – originated from Szalánc (Slanec, Slovakia) in Abaúj County. Likely during the early fifteenth century, the Szalánczys moved to the southern part of the region lying between the Danube and Tisza rivers, where the family acquired its *praedicatum* of nobility from Szenttamás (Srbobran, Serbia) in Bács County.³ János Szalánczy de Szenttamás, who in 1445 held the office of *viceban* of Szörény, was one of the delegates who represented Bács County at the diet of 1447.⁴ Another member of the family named János Szalánczy served as the *vicecomes* of Bodrog County in 1495 and the county's deputy (*deputatus*) in 1496.⁵ The inhabitants of this region along the southern border of the Kingdom of Hungary faced significant changes in the course of the fifteenth century. Above all they had to endure increasing incursions from the Turks, who had by this time reached the Danube river. As a result, these people were compelled to become acquainted with the lifestyle, customs and even the language of the Ottoman Turkish enemy.⁶ Moreover, they had to learn to move comfortably within the entirely different world of the Greek Orthodox Serbs who had taken flight to the region in order to escape the advancing Turks.

It is not known precisely when the landed Szalánczy family with their leading social and political role in Bács and Bodrog Counties became destitute and had to move to Transylvania in order to make a fresh start and rebuild its social and economic standing. Although historiographer Lestár Gyulaffy

3 Iván Nagy, *Magyarország családai czimerekkel és nemzedékrendi táblákkal*, vol. 10. Pest: Ráth Mór, 1863, 459–461. Here I would like to note that although the Szalánczy family most often used the *praedicatum* of nobility *de Szenttamás*, as a result of János Szalánczy's acquisitions of estates, both he and his descendants occasionally used *de Jófő*, *de Branyicska* and *de Bükkös* as well. Due to the role that János Szalánczy played in diplomacy at the Sublime Porte, his name began to circulate internationally and appeared in many variations, including Joan Salazo, Jean Solenzi, Salancius, Solosanzo, Salvaz, Giovanni Solozano and Johannes Salaty. This inconsistency frequently makes identification of Szalánczy in non-Hungarian-language sources difficult. Cf. János Hankiss, 'Fráter György francia életirója', *Történelmi Szemle* 13 (1928) 112.

4 Pál Engel, *Magyarország világi archontológiája 1301–1457*, vol. 2. Budapest: História-MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996, 219.

5 Dezső Csánki, *Magyarország történelmi földrajza a Hunyadiak korában*, vol. 2. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1894, 179.

6 István Szabó, *Bács, Bodrog és Csongrád megye dézsmalajstromai 1552-ből*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1954, 5.

(1557–1605) maintained that the Szalánczys arrived to Transylvania in 1457,⁷ general demographic trends during this period suggest that the family likely moved to this region of the Kingdom of Hungary much later, at the beginning of the 1500s.⁸ If we accept Gyulaffy's assertion that Mihály Szalánczy moved to Transylvania in 1457, then he may have been the grandfather of the János Szalánczy, who according to written sources served as the *secretarius* for voivode of Wallachia Radu de la Afumați in 1525.⁹ János Szalánczy himself provided information regarding his ancestry on December 22, 1553, during questioning at the trial in Ecsed of those accused of murdering Friar George. According to Szalánczy's testimony, he was 50 years old at the time of the trial, thus placing his birth on the estate of his father – the former *cubicularius* of King Matthias Corvinus László Szalánczy – in Danóc, near Mohács, around the year 1503.¹⁰ Sources identify László Szalánczy as the victim of arbitrary force in Baranya County at the end of the fifteenth century and show that he also owned an estate in Majsa.¹¹ László Szalánczy had died by around 1512, while János Szalánczy's presumed mother, Márta, had become the wife of Márton Horváth by this year.¹² The Szalánczy coat of arms almost certainly conformed to that described in later sources, depicting a lion with a scimitar in its hand rising from a gold crown on a blue shield.¹³

7 "1457. Michael Zalanchi venit in Transilvaniam." Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), 'Gyulaffi Lestár történeti maradványai' part 1, *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:16 (1893) 115; Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Gyulaffi Lestár főljegyzései* (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 33). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1894, 10.

8 Sources from the year 1506 mention Bács County landowner Benedek Szalánczy de Szenttamás, while documents from around the year 1512 refer to castellan of Bács Castle and landowner in Baranya County Antal Szalánczy and to the widow and son of László Szalánczy. Samu Borovszky (ed.), *Magyarország vármegyéi és városai. Bács-Bodrog vármegye*, vol. 2. Budapest: Országos Monographia Társaság, 1909, 564; Béla Iványi, 'Egy 1526 előtti ismeretlen kéziratok formulás könyv', *Történelmi Tár* ser. IV:5 (1904) 498–499.

9 Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki and Nicolae Iorga (eds.), *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*, vol. 15, part 1: 1358–1600. București: s.n., 1911, 286.

10 Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv Ungarische Akten (hereafter: ÖStA HHStA UA), fasc.72; Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (hereafter: MNL OL), film reel W669. The 21-page record of János Szalánczy's testimony provides one of the best sources of information regarding his life and personality. The information in this source refutes the conjecture that has appeared in Romanian-language academic literature stating that the Szalánczy de Szenttamás family was of "ancient Romanian origin," not to even mention the double surname that appears in the title of the study, since this never existed in this form. See Susana Andea and Avram Andea, 'Familia Buicescu-Szalánczi (sec. al XVII-lea)', *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie Cluj-Napoca* 37 (1998 [2000]) 52.

11 In 1487, István Istvánffy de Kisasszonyfalva engaged in the arbitrary use of force against Miklós and Aladár Várdai and László Szalánczy, thus prompting the Baranya County magistrates of King Matthias to initiate an inquiry. Ernő Kammerer and Ferenc Dóry (eds.), *A zichi és vászonkeői gróf Zichy-család idősb ágának okmánytára*, vol. 11. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1915, 484.

12 Iványi, 'Egy 1526 előtti ismeretlen kéziratok formulás könyv', 498–499.

13 Richárd Gyulai, 'Ósfák', *Genealogiai füzetek* 1 (1903) 135–136; József Pálmay, 'Czímeres sírkövek', *Turul* 31 (1913) 23; Mária-Márta Kovács, 'Egyházi gyűjtemények házassági címerekkel díszített

IN THE SERVICE OF KING JOHN I

It is well-known that János Szalánczy throughout his life remained one of the most faithful followers of King John I and subsequently of Isabella and John Sigismund. Szalánczy's loyalty toward King John, his wife and son may have been based on a deeply rooted emotional connection. Szalánczy, whose father died when he was young, stated during in his previously mentioned 1553 testimony that he had been in the service of John Szapolyai since childhood, thus his public-political career began in the king's entourage.¹⁴ Presumably as a result of this background in royal service, around the years 1522–1523 János Szalánczy was *officialis* of Alvinc (Vințu de Jos, Romania) and Borberek (Vurpăr, Romania) to voivode of Wallachia Radu de la Afumați,¹⁵ who had received these market towns from King Louis II of Hungary. Szalánczy, who was around 20 years old at this time, maintained a residence in Alvinc.¹⁶ Radu de la Afumați had by 1522–1523 established a connection with voivode of Transylvania John Szapolyai (served 1510–1526) the future king of Hungary, who attempted to carry out his duty to defend the southern border of the Kingdom of Hungary with the help of loyal Romanian voivodes. During the years 1522–1524, Radu de la Afumați fled from Wallachia to Transylvania on several occasions, spending an extended period of time living in Brassó (Brașov, Romania) before he was able to reclaim the throne of Wallachia in 1524 with potent support from John Szapolyai.¹⁷

The young János Szalánczy may have first functioned as Szapolyai's *officialis* in Alvinc and Borberek and automatically entered the service of Radu de la Afumați when King Louis II Jagiellon transferred these market towns from the voivode of Transylvania to the voivode of Wallachia. It is also possible that after Radu de la Afumați had taken refuge in Transylvania, John Szapolyai drew his attention to the talented young *familiaris* Szalánczy, who was certainly proficient in Latin, presumably was conversant in Romanian and may have spoken Turkish as well, thus making him very useful in the conduct of relations with both Buda

ötvöstárgyai', *Korunk* ser. III. 26:1 (2015) 41. The living descendants of the Szalánczys consider this to be the family's authentic coat of arms.

14 Szalánczy explained that this is why he had known Friar George for essentially his entire life. ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72.

15 Radu de la Afumați served as the voivode of Wallachia during the following periods: January 1522–April 1522; June 1522–August 1522; October 1522–April 4, 1523; after January 19, 1524–before June 16, 1524; September 1524–before April 19, 1525; and after August 18, 1525–January 2, 1529.

16 Teréz Oborni, *Erdély pénzügyei I. Ferdinánd uralma alatt 1552–1556* (FONS Könyvek 1.). Budapest: Szentpétery Imre Történettudományi Alapítvány, 2002, 84. Radu de la Afumați retained control over Alvinc and Borberek until the end of his reign. Cf. Constantin C. Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, vol. II/1. București: Fundația Regală pentru Literatură și Artă, 1943, 163.

17 For the military campaign that John Szapolyai launched in 1522 in order to help Radu de la Afumați regain the throne of Wallachia, see Norbert C. Tóth, 'Szapolyai János erdélyi vajda 1522. évi havasalföldi hadjáratai. Havasalföld korlátozott függetlenségének biztosítása', *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 125:4 (2012) 987–1014.

and Constantinople.¹⁸ This may explain why the voivode of Wallachia chose the young *officialis* to serve as his *secretarius*. By February or March of 1525, Szalánczy arrived to the court of King Louis II in Buda as Radu de la Afumați's envoy bearing news regarding the Turks.¹⁹

By the time János Szalánczy began working as secretary for voivode of Wallachia Radu de la Afumați, he had already acquired some degree of experience in the domain of politics and, as a result of his previous service for voivode of Transylvania John Szapolyai, had also established suitable contacts in this arena as well. Without such experience and connections, Radu de la Afumați would not have sent Szalánczy to Buda in the spring of 1526 as his primary and most confidential envoy (*per primarium et secretissimum nuntium*) in order to hold talks regarding joint military action against the Turks.²⁰ Radu de la Afumați had obtained precise information regarding the offensive that Sultan Süleyman had launched against Hungary that spring and instructed Szalánczy to propose a bold plan at the court of King Louis II in Buda to counter the Turkish attack. According to this plan, which Szalánczy presented in the strictest confidence, the royal Hungarian army would conduct frontal assaults against Turkish troops in an attempt to halt their advance, while at the same time united Transylvanian and Wallachian military forces would invade undefended Ottoman provinces south of the Danube and attack the Turks, who were operating far away from their bases in the Balkans, from the rear. However, there was not enough time to implement this plan, a deficiency for which Szalánczy could not be blamed. The fact that Radu de la Afumați was forced to send his only son to the sultan's camp as a hostage suggests that the Turks had received some information about the proposed military action in spite of the secrecy that Szalánczy had maintained surrounding his mission to the royal court in Buda.²¹

The first data available regarding János Szalánczy's financial circumstances originates of the time he spent in Buda in June 1526. In recognition of his services, King Louis II gave Szalánczy, his fiancée Anna Bár de Lapugy and their heirs a new endowment composed of the manor house in the market town of Jófő (Dobra, Romania) that had already been owned by his ancestors. In addition, the king granted them one quarter of the specified properties²² that belonged to Anna Bár de Lapugy (presumably the *quarta puellaris*) along with royal prerogatives. The king exempted the latter estates from any tax or service obligations toward the castle in Déva (Deva, Romania) and removed them from the castle domain and attached them to the previously mentioned noble manor

18 Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, vol. II/1, 160–162.

19 Vilmos Fraknói, 'II. Lajos király számadási könyve 1525. január 12–július 16', *Magyar Történelmi Társ.* ser. II:10 (1877) 87, 93.

20 Iosif Pataki, 'Atitudinea lui Radu de la Afumați și a lui Ioan Zápolya în ajunul luptei de la Mohács (1526)', *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Series Historia* 12 (1967) 26.

21 Pataki, 'Atitudinea lui Radu de la Afumați', 18, 24.

22 Felsőlapugy (Lăpugiul de Sus, Romania), Alsólapugy (Lăpugiul de Jos, Romania), Határ (Hotar, Romania), Ohába (Ohaba, Romania), Habuca, Tyej (Teiu, Romania) and Fintoag (Hunyad County).

in Jófő.²³ Although the Transylvanian Chapter executed the royal registration order (*mandatum introductorium et statutorium*) on July 22, 1526,²⁴ Szalánczy felt it necessary during the troubled times following the defeat of Hungarian forces at the Battle of Mohács to have both kings reconfirmed the royal donation. King John I reconfirmed the donation January 1, 1527, and Ferdinand Habsburg, who appeared to have triumphed in the struggle for the Hungarian throne, on September 13, 1528 also reconfirmed the endowment Szalánczy had received from the deceased King Louis II.²⁵ The documents pertaining to the royal conferment of estates to Szalánczy cite the service that he had performed as the secretary of voivode Radu de la Afumați (*secretarius fidelis nostri spectabilis et magnifici Radwl wayuode nostri Transalpinensis*)²⁶ as the specific merit for which the king had granted these estates to him.²⁷ The above data reveals that the Szalánczys began their new lives on the borderlands of Transylvania amid rather modest circumstances after fleeing from the relatively nearby region of southern Hungary where they had previously lived in order to escape the advancing Turks. Here they managed in a fairly short period of time to become integrated into the primarily Romanian nobility of Hunyad County. János Szalánczy's marriage to Anna Bár de Lapugy, the daughter of the late János Bár, between

23 “...in cuius videlicet pacifica possessione instar suorum progenitorum a certis annis perstitisset.” MNL OL Diplomatikai Levéltár (hereafter DL), 30291.

24 *Ibid.*

25 Andrei Veress, *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, vol. 1. București: Cartea Românească, 1929, 5–6; MNL OL DL 30291. One cannot exclude the possibility that he may have even served as an intermediary for Ferdinand toward Radu de la Afumați, who as voivode of Wallachia may have himself played some role in mediating negotiations with the Turks. Cf. Antal Gévay, *Urkunden und Actenstücke zur Geschichte der Verhältnisse zwischen Oesterreich, Ungern und der Pforte im XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert*, vol. 4. Wien: Schaumburg, 1838, 105–106.

26 János Szalánczy was one of the first Hungarians known by name who served as *secretarius* for the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia. Although these countries belonged to the Greek Orthodox world and thus used the Cyrillic script, they were compelled to use the Latin alphabet in communications, most of which dealt with diplomacy, with countries that were affiliated with Western Christianity. Secretaries and scribes, often engaged at the recommendation of the Transylvanian sovereign himself, performed duties pertaining to diplomatic correspondence conducted in Latin and, increasingly from the second half of the sixteenth century, Hungarian. For more on this issue, see Klára Jakó, ‘Methodological Aspects Concerning the Investigation of the Hungarian Correspondence of Wallachian and Moldavian Rulers’, *Colloquia. Journal of Central European History* 8–9:1–2 (2001–2002) 106–122; Klára Jakó, ‘Die ungarischsprachige Korrespondenz der Woiwoden und obersten Amtsträger in der Moldau und der Walachei. Edition ausgewählter Beispiele aus dem 16–18. Jahrhundert’, *Ungarn-Jahrbuch* 27 (2004) 209–230; Klára Jakó, ‘Aspects of the Hungarian Correspondence of Wallachian and Moldavian voivodes in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century’, *Colloquia. Journal of Central European History* 18 (2011) 196–211; and Klára Jakó, ‘Moldva és Havasalfölde viszonya az Erdélyi Fejedelemséghez az államközi szerződések és a külügyi levelezés tükrében’, in Ildikó Horn et al. (eds.), *Művészet és mesterség. Tisztelegő kötet R. Várkonyi Ágnes emlékére*, vol. 1, Budapest: L’Harmattan, 2016, 271–294.

27 “...idem Joannes in variis legationibus et rebus regni nostri saepius ab ipso domino suo ad nos veniens et cum mandatis nostris rediens.” Andreas Veress, *Fontes Rerum Transylvanicarum*, vol. 4. Budapest: Stephaneum, 1914, 143–144.

January 1, 1528,²⁸ and September 13, 1528²⁹ not only served to increase the size of his estate in the vicinity of the market town of Jófő by around 16 socage tenures, but also helped him to develop his contacts with the Romanian voivodeships and the Turkish political world.³⁰

On January 2, 1529, boyars murdered Radu de la Afumați in the chapel of Cetățuia Monastery in Râmnicu Vâlcea, prompting János Szalánczy to resume service for John Szapolyai, who had become king of Hungary as John I in 1526. As a *familiaris* belonging to the inner circle of King John's court, Szalánczy served as a specialist in Ottoman affairs and was also responsible for maintaining relations with the Romanian countries. Data from the account books of the city of Brassó make it possible to follow the diplomatic trips that Szalánczy made between 1530 and the death of King John in 1540. Szalánczy was apparently regarded at both the Sublime Porte and within Romanian political circles as an important and influential person who performed useful services for the king in the course of carrying out delicate missions.

János Szalánczy was, for example, the one who in the autumn of 1530 reconciled the supporters of Radu de la Afumați's successor as voivode, Moise (ruled 1529–1530), and those of voivode Vlad Înecatul (ruled 1530–1532). He also freed István Majláth from the custody of the Turks, who supported the latter candidate, as a result of his negotiations with Mehmed Bey in Wallachia.³¹ During these times of persistent political change, Szalánczy was almost continuously on the road between the royal court in Buda and the territories lying beyond the Carpathian Mountains. In early February of 1532, he and Peter Pythayr, the representative of the voivode of Wallachia, left Buda together for Constantinople to the sultan (*ad imperatorem Thurcarum*).³² On March 22, 1532, Szalánczy made a stopover in the city of Brassó on the way home to Buda from talks with Mehmed Bey.³³ On August 23, 1533, he again passed through Brassó, likely during his return from the court of the voivode of Wallachia.³⁴ Just over two months later, he again stayed in the city along with seven escorts and their nine horses. Szalánczy has also taken Governor Alvise Gritti's (served 1530–1534) six cart-horses with him from Buda to Constantinople as well, though the immediate destination of his journey was the court of voivode of Wallachia

28 Arhivele Naționale ale României Serviciul Județean Cluj (hereafter: SJAN-CJ), Fond familial Kemény din Ciumbrud/A Kemény család csombordi levéltára, Documente medievale, no. 48, *arhivamedievala.ro* CJ-F-00008-1-48.

29 MNL OL Magyar Kancelláriai Levéltára (hereafter MKL), A 57 Libri regii, vol. 1, 129; MNL OL Magyar Kincstári Levéltárak, Magyar Kamara Archivuma (hereafter MKA), E 227 Libri donationum, vol. 1, 115.

30 "...bona... ad numerum sedecim colonorum vel circiter se extendentia." Veress, *Fontes Rerum Transylvanicarum*, vol. 4, 250.

31 *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 2. Kronstadt: Albrecht&Zillich. 1889, 206–207.

32 *Ibid.*, 254.

33 *Ibid.*, 257.

34 *Ibid.*, 316.

Vlad Vintilă de la Slatina (ruled 1532–June 1535).³⁵ Szalánczy spent three days in Brassó beginning on January 23, 1534, on his way home from a visit to Gritti in Turkey.³⁶ Two months later, on March 31, Szalánczy again stopped in Brassó along with a Turk as they traveled from Buda to Constantinople.³⁷ Szalánczy was presumably serving at this time as a confidential messenger between the royal court in Buda and Governor Gritti in Constantinople.³⁸ On June 11, 1534, Szalánczy again stayed in Brassó on his way back to Buda after visiting Gritti in the capital city of the Ottoman Empire.³⁹ Governor Gritti soon followed Szalánczy to Transylvania in order to get rid of his political enemies there, though the murder of the popular Bishop Imre Czibak triggered a genuine revolt against him and finally Gritti himself became a victim of the power struggle on September 29, 1534.

The disappearance of the Venetian carpetbagger Gritti from Hungarian political life served to increase the role that János Szalánczy played in the conduct of relations between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. As a result of the confidential association he had long maintained with the king, Szalánczy for a time exercised the greatest degree of influence over the royal court's contacts with the Turks. His main task was obviously to clarify to the Sublime Porte the new situation that had emerged following Gritti's murder. On January 30, 1535, Szalánczy and a Wallachian boyar stayed in Brassó following a visit to the sultan's court in Constantinople. From Brassó, they traveled on to Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania) with four horses in order to meet with voivode of Transylvania István Majláth.⁴⁰ On April 22, 1536, Szalánczy again passed through Brassó on his way to the Sublime Porte.⁴¹ On March 11, 1537, the town administrator (*Stadthann*) of Brassó dispatched Szalánczy and his longtime acquaintance Peter Pythayr with four horses to visit the voivode of Wallachia.⁴² During the summer of the latter year, King John sent Szalánczy to Wallachia in order to obtain auxiliary troops from the voivode in order to subdue his enemies in Transylvania.⁴³ On June 29, 1538, Szalánczy again passed through Brassó after leaving Wallachia.⁴⁴ One month later, he had to hold talks in Wallachia and obtain information regarding the probable Turkish

35 *Ibid.*, 322.

36 *Ibid.*, 341.

37 *Ibid.*, 347.

38 Henrik Kretschmayr, *Gritti Lajos, 1480–1534*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901; Gábor Barta, 'Ludovicus Gritti magyar kormányzósága, 1531–1534', *Történelmi Szemle* 14:3–4 (1971) 289–319; Ferenc Szakály, *Lodovico Gritti in Hungary 1529–1534: A Historical Insight into the Beginnings of Turco-Habsburgian Rivalry*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1995; Adriano Papo and Gizella Nemeth, 'Lodovico Gritti partner commerciale e informatore politico-militare della Repubblica di Venezia', *Studi Veneziani* 41 (2001) 217–245.

39 *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 2, 356.

40 *Ibid.*, 396.

41 *Ibid.*, 452.

42 *Ibid.*, 514.

43 *Ibid.*, 521–522, 561.

44 *Ibid.*, 565.

attack.⁴⁵ Szalánczy apparently spent time among his friends in Wallachia on this occasion.⁴⁶

However, by 1538 Friar George had assumed the most significant role in shaping the policies of King John. The king's diplomacy aimed at reuniting the remaining parts of Hungary required that he place his foreign policy vis-à-vis both the West and the East under the direction of Friar George. As a result of János Szalánczy's well-known support for cooperation with the Turks, Friar George did not send him to the Sublime Porte over the following years, though continued to engage his services in the conduct of relations with the Romanian voivodes. As Szalánczy revealed in his 1553 testimony, he never forgave Friar George for impeding his trips to Constantinople and for "hindering him before the powerful Turks."⁴⁷ However, Szalánczy was still the one who in September 1538 intervened at both the royal court in Buda and the Sublime Porte on behalf of voivode of Moldavia Petru Rareș (ruled January 1527–September 1538 and February 1541–September 1546), who had fled to Transylvania in advance of a Turkish punitive expedition against Moldavia and whom King John's troops had surrounded and were virtually holding captive at the castle in Csicsó (Ciceu, Romania). According to historiographer Lestár Gyulaffy, Szalánczy persuaded the Sublime Porte to forgive Rareș and prompted King John to permit him to leave Csicsó Castle under the pretence that he be taken to the sultan as a prisoner.⁴⁸

Following the departure of Petru Rareș from Transylvania, Treasurer Friar George placed János Szalánczy, as his trusted associate, in charge of Küküllővár (Cetatea de Baltă, Romania) and the surrounding territory, which had been taken back from the voivode of Moldavia during the autumn of 1538, and Bálványosvár (Unguraș, Romania), thus compelling him to remain in Transylvania, far from the royal court in Buda, for long periods of time.⁴⁹ On April 12, 1540, Szalánczy was in Buda, to take his oath as prefect (*praefectus*) of Küküllővár in the presence of Queen Isabella, Bishop of Transylvania János Statileo and chancellor and *locumtenens regius* István Werbőczy.⁵⁰ Less than two weeks later, on April 24, Szalánczy was attending a session of the diet in Torda

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 567.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 568–569, 571, 597.

⁴⁷ János Szalánczy's testimony reveals that he disliked Friar George and maintained poor relations with him. These factors must be taken into account when interpreting statements that Szalánczy made about Friar George. Gábor Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?* Budapest: Helikon, 1988, 88.

⁴⁸ Giurescu, *Istoria românilor*, II/1, 178–180; Radu Constantinescu, *Moldova și Transilvania în vremea lui Petru Rareș. Relații politice și militare (1527–1546)*. București: Direcția Generală a Arhivelor Statului din Republica Socialistă România, 1978, 99–100, 180. The author of the latter book incorrectly asserted that János Szalánczy had no political influence, characterizing him as a "simple castellan" (*simpliciter castellan*); "1540. Joannes Zalanichi vaivodam Moldaviensem Turcarum imperatori captivum sistit." Szilágyi (ed.), *Gyulaffy Lestár följegyzései*, II.

⁴⁹ Albert Berger and Ernst Wagner (eds.), *Urkunden-Regesten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bistritz in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 1. Köln–Weimar–Wien: Böhlau, 1986, 370, 378.

⁵⁰ Veress, *Izabella királyné 1519–1559*, 68; Péter Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri Legationum sorozatának magyar vonatkozású iratai*, vol. 2, 1526–1541. Miskolc: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár, 2003, 280–282.

(Turda, Romania) as the *castellanus* of Bálványos Castle and both of the castles in Diód (Stremț, Romania).⁵¹ He was likely in Transylvania when he heard the news that King John had died in July 1540. Sources throughout the entire year of 1541 place Szalánczy in Küküllővár, where he handled fiscal affairs as a colleague of Treasurer Friar George.⁵²

ON THE SIDE OF QUEEN ISABELLA AND HER SON

The relationship with Friar George – whom János Szalánczy claimed in his previously mentioned testimony he had known all his life⁵³ – and Queen Isabella ensured that after the stabilization of the political situation Szalánczy would again be able to participate in the process of settling political questions of country-wide importance. Szalánczy's testimony at Friar George's murder trial shows that he took part in several important events during this period. As *praefectus* of the royal castles in Déva, Küküllő, Csicsó, Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania), Vinc, Gyalu (Gilău, Romania), and Almás (Almașu, Romania), Szalánczy was always present at negotiations and thus both saw and heard what took place during them.⁵⁴ He was likewise in the milieu of Queen Isabella in late August of 1541, when the Turks took Buda Castle by ruse. In his testimony, Szalánczy described the presentation of the infant John Sigismund to Süleyman and claimed that at Friar George's recommendation the sultan had "confined Bálint Török, Orbán Batthyány, Péter Petrovics, István Werbőczy and the Friar himself in a tent. Thereafter the Friar alone held talks with the sultan and he proposed the seizure of Bálint Török," because he feared Török's combative behavior and was concerned that he might impede the implementation of his plans. Later, while in Gyulafehérvár, Szalánczy overheard Queen Isabella declare publicly in Latin that Friar George had been responsible for the fall of Buda.⁵⁵

In June 1543, the Transylvanian diet, taking into consideration Szalánczy's previous connections at the Sublime Porte, appointed him and János Fekete (a *familiaris* of Friar George⁵⁶) to carry out the task of taking Transylvania's first tribute to Sultan Süleyman.⁵⁷ In October 1543, Queen Isabella postponed the start of the diet until Szalánczy's return from Turkey.⁵⁸ Szalánczy's account of his trip to Constantinople to deliver the tribute to the sultan shows that he was

51 Balázs Orbán, 'Tövis és környéke', *Századok* 20 (1886) 326.

52 *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 2, 673, 686; *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt in Siebenbürgen*, vol. 3. Rechnungen aus dem Archiv der Stadt Kronstadt. Kronstadt: Heinrich Zeidner, 1896, 87–88, III, 114, 117.

53 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72.

54 *Ibid.*; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 96.

55 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 99.

56 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 107.

57 Endre Veress (ed.), 'Historiai jegyzések', *Történelmi Társ.* ser. III:16 (1893) 185; Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comitatus Regni Transylvaniae 1). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1875, 112, 117.

58 Berger and Wagner (eds.), *Urkunden-Regesten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bistritz*, vol. 1, 451; Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 181–182.

an insider at the Ottoman court. This account provides precise details regarding the tribute itself as well as the gifts he and Fekete took to the Sublime Porte and the identities of the Ottoman officials who received them. It also offers descriptions of various customs and procedures, such as the practice of placing official documents regarding Transylvania in the imperial treasury. Szalánczy's contacts at the Sublime Porte, such as the eunuch Süleyman Pasha, furnished him with confidential information and in certain instances – such as when he delivered Transylvania's first tribute – even showed him the letters disparaging Queen Isabella that Friar George had written to the sultan.⁵⁹ Sources clearly show that from this time on Szalánczy continuously served as Queen Isabella's main liaison with the Sublime Porte. He always represented the queen in talks with Ottoman officials regarding the most sensitive issues, including those which placed her in conflict with Friar George. Szalánczy was among the first to report the existence of a so-called *Transylvanian house* or its predecessor, which Friar George's permanent representative in Constantinople maintained as an "envoy's residence" at a cost of 800 forints a year. Szalánczy himself stayed at this house.⁶⁰ Indeed, he likely did so on several occasions, such as when he delivered Transylvania's tribute to Constantinople again in 1544⁶¹ announced the signing of the Treaty of Nyírbátor at the Sublime Porte in April 1550⁶² and presented Queen Isabella's viewpoints with regard to her conflict with Friar George to the sultan in the autumn of the latter year.⁶³

János Szalánczy became an influential political force within the new state being constructed in Transylvania. We frequently find Szalánczy operating in Queen Isabella's milieu. For example, he appeared at Isabella's court on several occasions when the queen stayed at Gyalu Castle between the autumn of 1543 and the summer of 1544.⁶⁴ Historiographer Farkas Bethlen, as previously mentioned, referred to Szalánczy as Isabella's "most trusted man," while Habsburg military commander Giovanni Battista Castaldo described him as the queen's secretary.⁶⁵ Szalánczy's commitment to Isabella is reflected in the fact that during the upheaval related to her conflict with Friar George in the autumn of 1550, he approached the

59 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 107.

60 Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 121.

61 Arhivele Naționale ale României Serviciul Județean Brașov, Primăria orașului Brașov, Colecția de documente Schnell, vol. 3, no. 138, *arhivamedievala.ro* BV-F-00001-03-3-138; *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 2, 656.

62 Bethlen, *Historia*, 442; Lajos Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben', part 1, *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 8:2 (1895) 357, 363.

63 Lajos Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben', part 2, *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 9:1 (1896) 56; Ernst Dieter Petrisch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente im Österreichischen Staatsarchiv, Band 1. (1480–1574)* (Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchives. Ergänzungsband 10/1). Wien: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, 1991, 65, 137; Karl Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica, 1541–1552: Diplomatische Akten des habsburgischen Gesandtschaftsverkehrs mit der Hohen Pforte im Zeitalter Süleymans des Prächtigen*. München: Oldenburg, 1995, 520.

64 Teréz Oborni, 'Izabella királyné erdélyi udvara', *Történelmi Szemle* 51:1 (2009) 30.

65 Kropf, 'Castaldo Erdélyben', part 2, 56.

Turks in order to ask them to help the queen.⁶⁶ Kasim Pasha of Buda and the ailing Szalánczy⁶⁷ rushed to Isabella's assistance, though received news from the queen at their Maros (Mureş) Valley camp in Illye (Ilia, Romania) that she had reached an agreement with Friar George and thus no longer required their intervention. Kasim Pasha concluded that Szalánczy had tried to lure him into a trap, thus put him in irons and subjected him to interrogation. However, Szalánczy made no confession because he in fact knew nothing about the events in Transylvania. Kasim considered enslaving Szalánczy, though the latter is said to have redeemed himself in exchange for his two sons, one of whom later escaped, while he himself became gravely ill.⁶⁸ Szalánczy later transmitted Sultan Süleyman's request for a 20,000-forints tribute for the year 1551.⁶⁹ As is commonly known, Ferdinand I appointed commissioners in late March 1551 to oversee the Habsburg takeover of Transylvania. On July 16 of this year, these commissioners proclaimed a general amnesty that cites János Szalánczy, who had persistently endeavored to obtain Turkish support, by name.⁷⁰

After Queen Isabella and her son John Sigismund left Transylvania in August 1551, János Szalánczy became associated with *magister tavernicorum regalium* András Báthory de Ecsed, who served as voivode of Transylvania under Ferdinand Habsburg from 1552 to March 1553. As Isabella's former prefect, Szalánczy handed the keys to the queen's castles to voivode Báthory and served as the *praefectus* of all his revenue and estates as well as his "*secretarius et auditor* [!]." Szalánczy was thus regarded as Báthory's confidant.⁷¹ On February 8, 1553, General Castaldo – Ferdinand's military lieutenant (*locumtenens bellicus*) in Transylvania – reported to the Habsburg monarch that András Báthory had great confidence in Szalánczy, though the latter resolutely wished to bring Queen Isabella and her son back to Transylvania and was committing many evil deeds.⁷² Although there is no evidence regarding the nature of these alleged misdeeds, Hans Dernschwam did write in his diary that in July 1553 Szalánczy arrived to Buda as an open supporter of Queen Isabella and John Sigismund "in

66 Nicolai Isthvanfi Pannoni, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis Libri XXXIV*. Coloniae Agrippinae: Sumptibus Antonii Hierati, [1622], 295.

67 Árpád Károlyi (ed.), 'Losonczy István két magyar levele', *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:4 (1881) 379.

68 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 267; Ferencz Budai (ed.), *Polgári lexicon*, vol. 3. Pest: Khór és Wein, 1866, 163; László Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 7, *Vegyes levelek. 1549–1559*. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 10). Pest: Eggenberger, 1865, 155–158, 169.

69 Lipót Óváry (ed.), *Az MTA Történettudományi Bizottságának oklevél-másolatai. Második füzet. A mohácsi vész utáni korszakból származó, a XVI. sz. végéig terjedő oklevelek kivonatai*. Budapest: MTA Történelmi Bizottsága, 1894, 97.

70 László Kővári, *Erdély történelme*, vol. 3. Pest–Kolozsvár: Ráth–Stein, 1860, 115.

71 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72; EOE, vol. 1, 417. Szalánczy's actual title was likely *secretarius et adiutor*; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 83.

72 Samu Barabás (ed.), 'Erdély történetére vonatkozó regesták 1551–1553. Hatodik és befejező közlemény', *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:15 (1892) 670.

order to engage in knavery befitting a good-for-nothing character.”⁷³ I will not detail the many inside secrets that Szalánczy revealed in his testimony regarding the exceptionally complex events that took place in Transylvania in the years 1551–1553. I would only like to note that he was indeed deeply involved in these events and his testimony provides valuable information regarding the history of the Hungarian Kingdom and Transylvania during these years, for example, with regard to the sieges of Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania) and Lippa (Lipova, Romania).⁷⁴ Although more research is necessary in order to understand the role that Szalánczy played alongside András Báthory, his cooperation with the Sublime Porte to restore the throne of Transylvania to Isabella and John Sigismund clearly shows that he remained a steadfast supporter of the House of Szapolyai even during the five-year period that the queen and her son spent in exile from 1551 to 1556.

AFTER QUEEN ISABELLA AND HER SON'S RETURN TO TRANSYLVANIA

Following her return to Transylvania, Isabella appointed János Szalánczy to serve as one of her counselors, a position that he held until the end of his life. He and the queen's other designated counselors took their oaths of office at 10 a.m. on October 27, 1556. Thereafter Szalánczy acted as Queen Isabella's "Turkish specialist" and again began to make trips to Constantinople. In 1556, for example, Isabella dispatched Szalánczy and János Kemény to the Ottoman capital city in order to petition Sultan Süleyman for the return of territories in southern Hungary, including the castle of Becskerek (Zrenjanin, Serbia), that lawfully belonged to her and her son.⁷⁵ On December 18, 1556, Isabella sent Szalánczy and András Báthory de Somlyó to see Nyalábvár Castle (near Királyháza/Korolevo, Ukraine) *praefectus* István Vécsey in order to obtain from him money, gold, silver objects and other goods of Friar George kept at this castle.⁷⁶ During the summer of 1557, Szalánczy made two trips to the Sublime Porte.⁷⁷ In the autumn of this year, Queen Isabella commissioned Szalánczy with one of the most delicate tasks of his political career – to explain before the representatives gathered at the Transylvanian diet that convened in Gyulafehérvár from September 29 to October 7 the motives for the queen's order to kill those involved in the Bebek conspiracy. Among other things, he had to display the poison that Bebek had allegedly

73 Franz Babinger (ed.), *Hans Dernschwam's Tagebuch einer Reise nach Konstantinopel und Kleinasien (1553/55)*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2014 (repr.), 4.

74 ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72.

75 Jenő Szentkláray, *A becskerei vár* (Értekezések a történelmi tudományok köréből 12). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1886, 36.

76 SJAN-CJ, Fond familial Vécsey/Vécsey család levéltára, ser. 2, no. 6, f. 27, CJ-F-00452-2-6(27), on website *arhivamedievala.ro* published without a photograph.

77 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 2). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 24; Veress, *Isabella királyné*, 441; Károly P. Szathmáry, 'A győrómonostori b. Kemény-család idősb, fejedelmi ágának okmánytára', *Magyar Történelmi Társ.* ser. II:3 (1871) 20.

received from the Sublime Porte in order to murder the queen as a means persuading the assembled deputies to initiate retroactive proceedings against the conspirators on charges of high treason.⁷⁸ By this time, the nearly 60-year-old Szalánczy had demonstrably become a member of the innermost circle of supporters surrounding Queen Isabella and John Sigismund. In accordance with provisions adopted at the Transylvanian diet that held sessions in Torda between March 27 and April 3 of 1558, royal counselors such as János Szalánczy were to receive sufficient pay to enable them to live alongside the queen.⁷⁹ Szalánczy also received various bestowments, which will be described in the presentation of his financial situation and land holdings below.

János Szalánczy remained by John Sigismund's side as one of his "most confidential and most intimate" counselors even after the death of Queen Isabella.⁸⁰ He also became a member of the small group of people composed of Chancellor Mihály Csáki, Stanisław Nieżowski and Gáspár Bekes who exercised a decisive influence on the young ruler.⁸¹ In 1563, Giorgio Biandrata, a noted anti-Trinitarian thinker who had served as Queen Isabella's physician, joined this inner circle after fleeing to Transylvania from Poland. Szalánczy was the only member of this group who had no connection to Poland, though by this time he had established a kinship relation with Nieżowski. At the partial diet convened in Torda in June 1563, Szalánczy and counselor Farkas Bornemissza introduced John Sigismund's proposed legislation to representatives of the Transylvanian estates.⁸² Subsequent sources pertain only to Szalánczy's participation in the proceedings of the Transylvanian diet. He presumably died sometime between January 20 and March 27 of 1564, since his name does not again appear in contemporary sources following the latter date.⁸³ Szalánczy had remained an unconditional supporter of the Szapolyai dynasty throughout his political career, while at the same time he exercised a great influence during the period in which András Báthory governed Transylvania as Ferdinand Habsburg's appointed voivode. Even Szalánczy's opponents acknowledged his political experience and competence as well as the effectiveness of the methods he employed in the conduct of diplomatic relations with the Turks and potentates in the Balkans.⁸⁴ During the several years in which he served as counselor, Szalánczy remained a firm advocate of cooperation with the Turks.⁸⁵

78 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 42; Bethlen, *Historia*, 620–621.

79 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 30.

80 Budai (ed.), *Polgári lexicon*, vol. 3, 164.

81 Istvánfi, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis*, 435.

82 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 161.

83 On January 20, 1564, Szalánczy received the customary chalice from the Transylvanian Saxons while attending the diet in Segesvár (Sighișoara, Romania). Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 167. John II issued a resolution on March 27, 1564, stipulating that the house that had been granted to Szalánczy *cum iure pignoris* following the death of Ferenc Kendy and the return of which had been requested since 1562 be given back to the city of Kolozsvár. Elek Jakab, *Kolozsvár története*, vol. 2. Budapest: Magyar Királyi Egyetemi Nyomda, 1888, 139.

84 Barabás (ed.), 'Erdély történetére vonatkozó regesták', 676, no. 428.

85 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 258–259; vol. 2, 30, 42, 88, 155, 161.

SZALÁNCZY'S FAMILY LIFE, FINANCIAL SITUATION
AND LAND HOLDINGS

There is much less data available regarding János Szalánczy's family life and material circumstances than there is about his political career. Sources indicate that Szalánczy was married twice. Probably his first marriage in either 1527 or 1528 with Anna Bár de Lapugy produced a son, János Szalánczy Jr., who appears in Christian Schesäus's *Historia Annae Kendi* as the *provisor* of Hunyad Castle (Hunedoara, Romania) in 1557.⁸⁶ In the latter work, Szalánczy's son becomes involved a notorious extramarital affair, committing adultery with the wife of János Török, Anna Kendy – an offense for which he was tied to the tail of a horse and executed by dragging.⁸⁷

As previously mentioned, in 1550 János Szalánczy won his release from Turkish captivity in Illye in exchange for his two sons, one of whom later escaped. One can only presume that these sons were the product of his marriage to Anna Bár de Lapugy and that János Jr. was one of these sons.⁸⁸ A 1553 source shows that Szalánczy had remarried by this year.⁸⁹ Data from the following year identifies his second wife as Dorottya Bánffy, the daughter of László Bánffy and Anna Dobokay, and their children as László, Miklós, György and Erzsébet.⁹⁰ Through his marriage to Dorottya Bánffy, Szalánczy acquired partial estates on the outskirts Vaskapu (Poarta Sălajului, Romania), Csemernye/Csebernye (defunct), Ördögkút (Treznea, Romania) and Szentgyörgy (Sângeorgiu de Meseș, Romania) as well as kinship with one of the most prominent noble families in Transylvania. In 1554, Szalánczy purchased land in nearby Oláhfelegregy (Agrij, Romania) and Szentpéterfalva (Bozna, Romania).⁹¹ Dorottya Bánffy was much younger than Szalánczy: according to a 1585 document, she was 48 years old in this year.⁹² Bánffy thus outlived Szalánczy by a long time. The final known source regarding his second wife – a draft of her will – bears a date from the year 1586. In this document, Bánffy mentions two stepsons. Since there is no evidence indicating

86 Christian Schesäus, *Historia Annae Kendi/Istoria Anei Kendi/Die Geschichte der Anna Kendi/Kendi Anna históriája*. Cluj-Napoca, Gündelsheim: Dacia–Arbeitskreis für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde 1995/1996, 44. The authors of academic literature have incorrectly identified the adulterous János Szalánczy Jr. with the Sublime Porte diplomat and later counselor.

87 Schesäus, *Historia Annae Kendi*, 86, 98.

88 Budai (ed.), *Polgári lexicon*, vol. 3, 163; Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 7, 157–158, 169.

89 Zsigmond Jakó (ed.), *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei*, vol. 2. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, 765.

90 *Ibid.*, 791.

91 *Ibid.*, 791.

92 Béla Sokhegyi (ed.), 'Magyar nyelvű tanúvallomások 1585. évből, Telegdy Orsolya mint rokona a lengyel királynak', *Magyar Családtörténeti Szemle* 15 (1935) 14–16. According to this data, Dorottya Bánffy was born around the year 1537 and by the age of approximately 17 was the mother of four children. One may therefore presume that Bánffy was actually somewhat older than 48 in 1585.

that she had more than one husband, one may presume that these stepsons were Szalánczy's sons from his previous marriage to Anna Bár de Lapugy.⁹³

Among János Szalánczy's children, the least is known about his son Miklós. The only information available regarding Miklós shows that in 1565, presumably at the beginning of his career, he worked as a scribe at the larger chancellery in the Principality of Transylvania.⁹⁴ Another son, László, had a career that closely resembled that of his father. In 1560, László Szalánczy married Dorothea Nieżowska, who had served as a lady-in-waiting for the late Queen Isabella and was presumably the daughter of the influential Polish member of the Transylvanian court, Stanisław Nieżowski⁹⁵ and his first wife, Emerencia.⁹⁶ László's marriage with Dorothea Nieżowska placed him in close contact with her influential relatives in Poland and at his young age gave him access to high-level political circles in the Principality of Transylvania as well. László served as the count (*supremus comes*) of Fehér County and Zaránd County beginning in the years 1566 and 1591, respectively, and from the year 1575 visited the Sublime Porte⁹⁷ and the pasha of Buda⁹⁸ as Transylvania's chief envoy on several occasions. In light of the family tradition, László and his younger brother György (who served as *officialis* to Voivod of Transylvania Kristóf Báthory and married

93 MNL OL, Erdélyi Kormányhatósági Levéltárak, Gyulafehérvári Káptalan Országos Levéltára, F3 Centuria box 14. no. 60, 521–522; Kinga Tüdös (ed.), *Erdélyi testamentumok*, vol. 2. Marosvásárhely: Mentor Kiadó, 2006, 134–136.

94 Zsolt Trócsányi, *Erdély központi kormányzata 1540–1690* (A Magyar Országos Levéltár Kiadványai III; Hatóság- és hivataltörténet 6). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980, 195.

95 Stanisław Nieżowski is depicted in academic literature as the foster brother of John Sigismund, thus explaining how he became a trusted member of Queen Isabella's court. One may venture to suppose that Stanisław Nieżowski was the son of Isabella's nanny since they were born around the same year, in 1519 and around 1520, while Nieżowski was already around 21 years old when John Sigismund was born. For more on Nieżowski, see Ildikó Horn, 'János Zsigmond lengyel tanácsosa, Stanislas Nieżowski (1520 k.–1573)', in József Jankovics (ed.), "Nem súlyed az emberiség!..." *Album amicorum Szörényi László LX. születésnapjára*. Budapest: reciti, 2007, 1387–1392.

96 For information regarding Nieżowski's first wife, see Isthvanfi, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis*, 388. Nothing is known about Stanisław Nieżowski's second marriage other than the fact of the marriage itself. In May 1570, Nieżowski married Zamfira, the daughter of voivode of Wallachia Moise, the widow of István Keszérű. Hurmuzaki and Iorga (eds.), *Documente privitoare la Istoria Românilor*. vol. 15, part 1, 529; Ildikó Horn et al. (eds.), *Politika és házasság. Menyegzőre hívogató levelek a 16. századi Erdélyből*. Budapest: ELTE BTK, 2005, 36–37, 72–74; Ildikó Horn, 'János Zsigmond lengyel tanácsosa', 1391; for details regarding László Szalánczy's marriage, see Albert Berger and Ernst Wagner (eds.), *Urkunden-Regesten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bistritz*, vol. 2, Köln–Weimar–Wien: Böhlau, 1986, 675, and Horn, *Politika és házasság*, 38–39.

97 Vince Bunyitay, *A váradi püspökség története alapításától a jelenkorig*, vol. 2. Nagyvárad: Franklin-Társulat nyomdaja, 1883, 184–185; Miklós Lázár, *Erdély főispánjai, 1540–1711*. Budapest: Athenaeum, 1889, 5–6; Andrei Veress (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*. București: Cartea Românească, 1931, 274. In 1591, for example, László Szalánczy traveled to Constantinople in order to persuade Ottoman authorities to permit Sigismund Báthory to marry an Italian princess. Samu Barabás, 'Portai följegyzések a XVI-ik századból', *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:4 (1881) 173.

98 Árpád Károlyi (ed.), 'Magyar missilis levelek Békés Gáspár zavargása és Báthory István lengyel királlyá való választása történetéhez', *Történelmi Tár* ser. III:3 (1880) 128.

a girl from the Kemény family)⁹⁹ resolutely opposed the effort of Sigismund Báthory to disengage Transylvania from the Ottoman Empire and affiliate the principality with the Holy League that had been established to expel the Turks from Europe. László Szalánczy was on the list of those to be executed when Prince Báthory liquidated his pro-Turkish opposition beginning on August 28, 1594. However, László resisted by force of arms the soldiers whom Báthory had sent to apprehend him and he was killed as they attacked him at the castle in Branyicska (Brănișca, Romania).¹⁰⁰ Aside from estates, silver objects and other valuables, Báthory's men confiscated 50,000 ducats in cash that had belonged to László Szalánczy.¹⁰¹ László's brother György was not executed, though he was imprisoned in Gyulafehérvár,¹⁰² subsequently forced to go into exile and lost all his property.¹⁰³

The Szalánczy family recovered from this heavy blow relatively quickly, since the children of László and György survived and following the fall of Sigismund Báthory regained possession of the property that had been seized from their fathers.¹⁰⁴ László Szalánczy's son, László Szalánczy Jr., played a prominent role in relations between the principalities of Transylvania and Wallachia around the year 1600¹⁰⁵ and another member of family, István Szalánczy, carried out important diplomatic tasks on behalf of the Principality of Transylvania at the Sublime Porte during the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁶

Unfortunately there is only sporadic data regarding the estates that János Szalánczy obtained in addition to those identified above. However, this data reveals that he indeed augmented his holdings a great deal in addition to the manor house in Jófő that he had acquired at the beginning of his career. In 1531, for example, King John granted János Szalánczy, his first wife and their heirs both males and females the right to establish a village on Nyarló Hill in

99 MNL OL Családok, testületek és intézmények levéltárai, P 565 Radák család levéltára, bunch 1, pallium 17; SJAN-CJ, Prefectura județului Cluj. Registre/Kolozs vármegye levéltára. Közgyűlési és törvénykezési jegyzőkönyvek/, vol. I, 76. I would like to thank Veronka Dáné for the latter data.

100 Ladislaus Lukács (ed.), *Monumenta Antiquae Hungariae*, vol. 4. Roma: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1987, 88.

101 Andrei Veress (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării-Românești*, vol. 4. București: Cartea Românească, 1932, 125, 135–136, 214.

102 Veress (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării Românești*, vol. 4. 128, 135.

103 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 3 (*Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 3*). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1877, 334, 338–339.

104 Andrei Veress (ed.), *Documente privitoare la istoria Ardealului, Moldovei și Țării-Românești*, vol. 6. București: Cartea Românească, 1933, 261–262.

105 János Várfalvi Nagy, 'Székely Mózes', *Századok* 3 (1869) 719; Erzsébet E. Abaffy and Sándor Kozocsa (eds.), Szamosközy, *Magyar nyelvű kortársi feljegyzések Erdély múltjából*. Budapest: Magyar Nyelvtudományi Társaság, 1991, 29.

106 For more on István Szalánczy, see Jakó, 'A Szalánczyak'.

Hunyad County.¹⁰⁷ During the 1530 Siege of Buda, the castellan of Hunyad Castle plundered Szalánczy's estates, which King John himself called into question.¹⁰⁸ This incident may have served as the premise for the *sententiales* cited in a September 1532 Transylvanian Chapter *relatio* that called for ownership of land in Tartaria (Tărtăria, Romania) to be transferred from *vicevayuoda* of Transylvania and Székely *vicecomes* Miklós Telegdi back to Szalánczy.¹⁰⁹ On January 20, 1535, Ferdinand confiscated all of János Szalánczy's property in Transylvania on the grounds of pro-Szapolyai disloyalty and granted it to László Drakulya de Szintiesty.¹¹⁰ However, just one month later, on February 14, 1535, King John issued a deed of gift in Várad (Oradea, Romania) in which he rewarded Szalánczy – to whom the sovereign referred in the document as *aulicus noster* – for the loyalty he had shown in the course of his diplomatic missions to the Turkish sultan by granting him an entire estate in Nagykövesd (Cuveșdia, Romania) that belonged to the Arad County market town of Tótváradgya (Vărdia de Mureș, Romania) and thus to the Lipa castle domain.¹¹¹ On April 24, 1551, Queen Isabella awarded *cum iure pignoris* the Kupa estate (valued at 500 forints) in Csanád County to Szalánczy and Péter Litteratus, the castellans of Déva Castle, in recognition of their loyalty and in compensation for their services.¹¹²

In October 1552, during the period in which András Báthory served as voivode of Transylvania, János Szalánczy augmented his previously mentioned holdings in Hunyad, Arad and Csanád counties with estates in Fehér County, near Küküllővár – notably one in Bükkös (Bichiș, Romania) that included a manor house and which later played an important role in the life of the Szalánczy family.¹¹³ In addition, in November 1552 Ferdinand I issued a deed of gift in Ebersdorf that granted ownership of all property that belonged to the estate of István Boncza, who had died without heirs, to Szalánczy, Miklós Forró de Háperton and János Kemény.¹¹⁴ At around this time, Ferdinand accorded Szalánczy the Bábocka estate, which was closer to his birthplace. Szalánczy

107 SJAN-CJ, Fond familial Kemény din Ciombrud/A Kemény család csombordi levéltára, Documente medievale, no. 54; CJ-F-00008-1-54 *arhivamedievala.ro*.

108 Iosif Pataki, *Domeniul Hunedoara la începutul secolului al XVI-lea. Studii și documente*. București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1973, 259.

109 Zsolt Bogdándi and Emőke Gálfi (eds.), *Az erdélyi káptalan jegyzőkönyvei 1222–1599*. Kolozsvár: Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, 2006, 70, 72.

110 MNL OL, MKL A 57 Libri Regii, vol. 1, 256; MKA E 227 Libri donationum, vol. 1, 205.

111 MNL OL, Mohács utáni gyűjtemény, R 298 Erdélyi iratok időrendben, bunch 11, 1535.

112 Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Levéltára, (source now kept at the SJAN-CJ), *Colecția soției lui Török Bertalan [!]/Török Bertalan gyűjteménye*, Documente medievale, no. 51; CJ-F-00616-1-51. *arhivamedievala.ro* website published it without a photograph; Endre Veress, 'Hunyadvármegye János király és Izabella királyné korában (1511–1559)', *A Hunyadmegyei Történelmi és Régészeti Társulat Évkönyve* 12 (1901) 157.

113 Szalánczy also acquired estates in Gombucz/Gombostelke (Gâmbuț, Romania) and Lándor (Nandra, Romania). SJAN-CJ, *Colecția soției lui Török Bertalan [!]/Török Bertalan gyűjteménye*, ser. 1, Documente medievale, no. 52; CJ-F-00616-1-52. *arhivamedievala.ro* website published it without a photograph.

114 MNL OL Magyar Kancelláriai Levéltár, A 57 Libri regii, vol. 3, 127; MNL OL MKA E 227 Libri donationum, vol. 2, 88.

likely lost this estate after the years 1557–1558.¹¹⁵ In 1557, Queen Isabella again rewarded Szalánczy for his services by endowing him with the entire Branyicska estate in Hunyad County.¹¹⁶ In 1558, Isabella awarded a stone house that had previously belonged to Antal Kendy in Gyulafehérvár and was located near the residences of Mihály Csáki and Stanisław Nieżowski to Szalánczy and László Bekes, presumably as a result of the roles they had played in exposing the Bebek conspiracy.¹¹⁷ In 1562, John Sigismund granted Szalánczy and Mihály Gyulay Ferenc Kendy's stone house in Kolozsvár, Farkas street *cum iure pignoris*.¹¹⁸ Finally Szalánczy expanded the previously mentioned holdings that he had acquired through his second wife, Dorottya Bánffy, in Doboka and Belső Szolnok Counties with new estates.¹¹⁹

The above data clearly shows that János Szalánczy withdrew from the southern and southwestern parts of Arad and Hunyad counties, which were under the constant threat of Turkish invasion,¹²⁰ to more secure areas of inner Transylvania via the acquisition of estates in Fehér, Doboka, Belső Szolnok and Kolozs counties as a reward for his service or through his second wife.

János Szalánczy lived during the era of major land acquisitions. The collapse of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary not only produced significant population movement, but made the profound transformation of land ownership possible as well. An enormous number of people were forced to flee from their homes, leaving all their possessions behind, in order to start new lives amid completely different circumstances. At this time, it was common practice among those with political influence to ally themselves with the king who offered them the largest estates. As a result of the merciless struggle for power, some acquired immense wealth from one day to the next, while others lost everything – sometimes even their lives. János Szalánczy was a man of his times who without regard

115 János Illésy, 'Várvizsgálatok 1557–58-ban', *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 7 (1894) 222.

116 Arhivele Naționale ale României Serviciul Județean Bihor, Colecția de pergamente, no. 30; BH-F-00066-30, *arhivamedievala.ro*. A note on the back of the half-missing document shows that it was once kept at the Kemény family archives in Csombord.

117 Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Levéltára, (source now kept at the SJAN-CJ), Fond familial Bánffy/Bánffy család levéltára, ser. 2. 1b. fasc. 61, no. 1. CJ-F-00320-1-2-1b-61-1 *arhivamedievala.ro*.

118 Jakab, *Kolozsvár története*, vol. 2, 139; László Pakó, 'Városi polgár – vármegyei nemes?' in András Kovács, Gyöngy Kovács Kiss (eds.) *A reneszánsz Kolozsvár*. Kolozsvár: Kolozsvár Társaság, 2008, 229, 233, 235, 236. The Farkas street (Farkas utca) is a historically important street of Kolozsvár till the present day.

119 In accordance with a December 22, 1558, filing order (*"mandatum introductorium et statutorium"*), ownership of land at the following locations was transferred to Szalánczy on February 20, 1559: entire estates in Vaskapu, Csemernye/Csebernye, Szentgyörgy, Bogya (Bodia, Romania) and Pósa (Păușa, Romania); and partial estates in Iklód (Iclod, Romania), Hídalmás (Hida, Romania), Poklostelek (Păglișa, Romania), Lozsárd (Lujerdiu, Romania), Szentiván (defunct), Gírolt (Ghirolt, Romania), Péntek (Pintic, Romania) and Ór (Iuriu de Câmpie, Romania). Bogdándi and Gálfi (eds.), *Az erdélyi káptalan jegyzőkönyvei*, 80; Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Levéltára, (source now kept at the SJAN-CJ), Fond familial Bánffy/Bánffy család levéltára ser. 2/2, fasc. UU. no. 7; CJ-F-00320-1-2-2-UU-7, *arhivamedievala.ro*.

120 Szalánczy mentioned in his 1553 testimony that the Turks had attacked and destroyed his villages. ÖStA HHStA UA, fasc. 72.

to the employed means used his abilities, connections and influence to enhance his social and material standing. Szalánczy obviously was able to augment his wealth through the income he obtained from his various offices,¹²¹ while his not danger-free trips to the Sublime Part may have produced tangible profit as well and surviving data suggests that on occasion he may have even been engaged in commerce.¹²² As already mentioned, some claimed that Szalánczy “was committing many evil deeds.”¹²³ It may have been obvious to many that obtaining Szalánczy’s “exertions” at the Transylvanian court, in Wallachia and even at the Sublime Porte entailed significant pecuniary sacrifice. János Fáncsi, for example, gave Szalánczy an advance of 100 gold forints and promised that he would receive a further 100 houses of serfs if he could liberate his master, Bálint Török, from Turkish captivity. In 1543, the wife of István Majláth was advised to offer Szalánczy 100 serfs if he could persuade the Turks to release her husband from imprisonment at Yedikule Fortress in Constantinople.¹²⁴

The methods that János Szalánczy used to achieve his objectives and thus reestablish his family’s previous social and economic status cannot be qualified as better or worse than those commonly employed during the turbulent era in which he lived. However, Szalánczy surpassed many of his contemporaries in his steadfast loyalty to the Szapolyai dynasty and commitment to cooperation with the Turks.¹²⁵ In November 1550, Antal Verancsics wrote a letter to Tamás Nádasdy in which he praised Szalánczy, to whom he referred as an old friend.¹²⁶ Szalánczy’s 1553 testimony shows him to have been a confident, decisive and

121 No sources have been discovered that reveal information about the pay that Szalánczy received for serving as the prefect of Queen Isabella’s castles or as Transylvania’s envoy to the Sublime Porte. However, there is data available regarding the gifts – generally gold chalices worth around 25 gold forints – that the Transylvanian Saxon *Universitas* gave Szalánczy in order to obtain his goodwill. Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 2, 132, 135, 139, 155, 167.

122 The account books of the city of Brassó and data contained at the archives in Beszterce (Bistrița, Romania) indicate that Szalánczy may have been involved in the trade of wine and horses. See, for example, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Kronstadt*, vol. 3, 117; Albert Berger and Ernst Wagner (eds.), *Urkunden-Regesten aus dem Archiv der Stadt Bistritz*, vol. 3. Köln–Wien: Böhlau, 1995, 626, 666.

123 Barabás (ed.), ‘Erdély történetére vonatkozó regesták’, 670.

124 Ágoston Szalay, *Négyszáz magyar levél a XVI. századból. Magyar leveles tár*, vol. 1. Pest: Landerer–Heckenast, 1863, 23.

125 As György Szerémi aptly wrote, “And there stood János Szalánczy courageously at the side of King John day and night...” György Szerémi, *Magyarország romlásáról*. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1979, 290.

126 “De Joanne Zalancio homine partium Reginae non obscuro, neque stupido, et turcicis legationibus, in quibus totam aetatem sub Joanne egit...” Szalay (ed.), *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 7, 155. A letter that Verancsics wrote to Szalánczy in Gyulafehérvár on October 12, 1540, regarding the events that had taken place that autumn provides a clear illustration of their friendship. In this letter, Verancsics revealed that Szalánczy had protected his serfs and described the incident in which Queen Isabella had nursed the newborn John Sigismund before the envoy of Sultan Süleyman in order to prove that she was the infant’s mother. László Szalay, *Verancsics Antal összes munkái*, vol. 6. *Vegyes levelek, 1538–1549*. (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptorum 9). Pest: Eggenberger, 1860, 149–151.

intelligent person who liked to highlight his own importance and status as an insider and who unceasingly promoted the interests of Queen Isabella and valiantly defended her against slander. At the same time, Gábor Barta has cast doubt on several aspects of Szalánczy's testimony.¹²⁷

Nothing is known about János Szalánczy's studies, though the appearance of his handwriting and his excellent knowledge of Latin indicate that he had more schooling than most of his contemporaries.¹²⁸ His education, language abilities,¹²⁹ mentality and political convictions suggest that he spent his formative years in a cultural sphere that was exposed to South Slav, Turkish and other Balkan influences. It is therefore not surprising that in terms of his personality Szalánczy was similar to Friar George, Péter Petrovics and other people with South Slav connections who played important political roles under King John. Szalánczy's religious affiliation changed in accordance with the religious transformation that took place in Transylvania during his lifetime. At the time of his 1553 testimony, Szalánczy took the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion as a Catholic with a Franciscan friar in Nyírbátor,¹³⁰ while historiographer Miklós Istvánffy asserted that Szalánczy – just as Mihály Csáki, Stanisław Nieżowski and Gáspár Bekes – gravitated toward Unitarianism near the end of his life under the influence of Giorgio Biandrata and as John Sigismund's counselor.¹³¹ Mihály Balázs's research has shown that statements such as Istvánffy's should be treated with caution. However, other sources show that Szalánczy's second wife, Dorottya Bánffy, was a Protestant in 1568¹³² and that their son László may have been a Unitarian.¹³³

SUMMARY

The Szalánczys arrived to Jófő as destitute refugees. However, János Szalánczy was able via his political career that began as the *secretarius* of the voivode of Wallachia to elevate his family both materially and socially into the Transylvanian political élite. The rise of the Szalánczy family was extraordinary, though not

127 Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 91, 192.

128 For letters that Szalánczy wrote in Latin, see SJAN-CJ, Fond Primăria Oraşului Bistriţa I. no. 1286 and 1310, (1539); Erdélyi Nemzeti Múzeum Levéltára (source now kept at the SJAN-CJ), Colecţia personală Mike Sándor/Mike Sándor-gyűjtemény ser. 1, no. 15; CJ-F-00248-1-15, *arhivamedievala.ro* (1562).

129 Szalánczy's letters and 1553 testimony reveal that he was proficient in Turkish as well as Latin. ÖStA HHStA, UA fasc. 72.

130 *Ibid.*; Barta, *Vajon kié az ország?*, 90–91.

131 Istvánffy, *Historiarum de Rebus Ungaricis*, 435.

132 Dorottya Bánffy made provisions for bestowments on behalf of the preachers in Iklód and Lóna (Luna de Jos, Romania) in her 1586 will. Tüdös (ed.), *Erdélyi Testamentumok*, vol. 2, 135, 136.

133 Mihály Balázs, 'Megjegyzések János Zsigmond valláspolitikájáról', in Mihály Balázs, *Hitújítás és egyházalapítás között. Tanulmányok az erdélyi unitarizmus 16–17. századi történetéről*. Kolozsvár: Magyar Unitárius Egyház, 2016, 33–59; Miklós Bogáti Fazekas dedicated his 1579 work *Castriot György históriája* to the Unitarian László Szalánczy. Amedeo di Francesco, 'Szkender bég a XVI–XVII. századi magyar irodalomban', in Rumen István Csörsz (ed.), *Ghesaurus*. Budapest: reciti, 2010, 200; Pál Ács et al. (eds.), *Bogáti Fazekas Miklós históriás énekei és bibliai parafrázisai* (Régi Magyar Költők Tára 13/A). Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2018, 88.

singular. The intellectual work with which János Szalánczy's career began provided an opportunity for social-economic advancement. With the exception of the bloody interlude during the rule of Prince Sigismund Báthory, the Szalánczys who in accordance with family tradition became diplomats continued along this path of social and economic ascent in the sixteenth century and as high ranking members of the nobility played significant roles in the political life of the Principality of Transylvania. The activity of the Szalánczys in the conduct of relations with the Sublime Porte and the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia provided favorable opportunities to achieve this status. The careers of several Hungarians who filled the position of *secretarius hungaricus* at the chancelleries of the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia demonstrate that intellectual-political service beyond the Carpathian Mountains represented a vehicle for achieving political, social and economic success in Transylvania as well. Naturally, those with superior talent, aptitudes and education were able to attain a higher degree of success in this way and open greater new perspectives for their descendants.

Szabolcs Varga*

PÉTER PETROVICS (1487–1557) IN THE SERVICE OF QUEEN ISABELLA¹

Although the Szapolyais ruled over a part of the Kingdom of Hungary for a half century, very few people witnessed the momentous events in family history during this period. Among them was King John's close relative, Péter Petrovics de Suraklin, who entered the service of the monarch in 1514 and later served his son, John II, and his wife, Isabella, as well. Although the precise relationship between the Szapolyi and Petrovics families is unknown, John and Péter were likely cousins. The primary characteristic of Petrovics's four-decade career was his unbroken loyalty toward the Szapolyai dynasty. According to the sixteenth-century historiographer Ferenc Forgách, there was no man alive at that time whose loyalty was more steadfast and whose love of the homeland more profound than Péter Petrovics.² This study will examine Petrovics's post-1540 career with the objective of gaining a greater understanding of the role he played in Hungarian political events during this period.³

THE GUARDIAN

In the 1530s, Péter Petrovics began to fill increasingly important positions in King John's administration. In 1533, he was appointed to serve as the *ispán* (count) of Temes and the captain general of Lower Parts of Hungary, while in

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1 This study was completed as part of the "Mohács 1526–2016: Reconstruction and Remembrance" project of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences "Excellence Cooperation Program" (KEP-1/2017). I would like to thank Teréz Oborni for the assistance she provided during the writing of this study.

2 "*Hoc sane viro neque in fide constator, neque patriae amantior esse potuit quisquam.*" Ghymes Forgách Ferencz nagyváradai püspök Magyar históriája 1540–1572 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 16), published by Fidél Majer, introduced by Ferencz Toldy. Pest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1866, 168.

3 For a previous biographical summary, see Varga Szabolcs, 'Petrovics Péter', in József Szentpéteri (ed.), *Szürke eminenciások a magyar történelemben*. Budapest: Kossuth Kiadó, 2003, 54–55.

1540 he led a punitive expedition against the rebellious voivode of Transylvania, István Maylád, and was present at King John's deathbed in Szászsebes (Sebeș, Romania) the same year. According to historiographical tradition, King John at this time selected Péter Petrovics and Friar George to serve as guardians for his son and made those of his counselors who were present swear that they would support his flesh-and-blood successor and preserve the kingdom for him.⁴ Ferenc Forgách, who wrote about this event three decades later, attributed the king's decision to appoint Petrovics as guardian to the fact that he was a blood relative and that his age and childlessness made him reliable.⁵

Sixteenth-century historiographer Giovanni Michèle Bruto described King John's appointment of the custodians somewhat differently. Bruto wrote a history of the Kingdom of Hungary at the behest of Prince of Transylvania and later King of Poland Stephen Báthory, examining events that had taken place in the realm from a strongly pro-Szapolyai perspective. According to Bruto, Friar George was initially the only guardian and Isabella appointed Bálint Török and Péter Petrovics to serve alongside him in this capacity – Török as a result of his military virtues and Petrovics as a result of his faithful counsel.⁶ Since the year between the death of King John in July 1540 and the fall of Buda the following summer represents one of the peaks of Petrovics's political career, the sources regarding this period are worth examining more thoroughly.

While both Friar George and Péter Petrovics were in Szászsebes when King John died in this town, Bálint Török was still in Fogaras (Făgăraș, Romania) at this time. Thus Friar George and Petrovics were the ones who informed King Sigismund of Poland that King John had died and asked him to provide political and military assistance to his grandson's Hungarian kingdom. They were aware that under the prevailing circumstances the main tasks would be to delay the attack of the Habsburg monarch and to gain the Sublime Porte's recognition of the infant heir to the throne. Friar George and Petrovics therefore urged the king of Poland to act in support of their effort to reach these objectives in Vienna and Constantinople and to persuade King Francis I of France to back his

4 "...quae mala cum humanis remediis vix levare posse videret, Tutores constituit Petrum Petrowithium sibi sanguine junctum, et Georgium Eremitam Episcopum Váradiensem; obtestatusque est singulos Proceres per antiquum Hungarici nominis decus, ut sui sanguinis potius quam externae gentis Regem in Pannonia regnare paterentur." Wolffgangi de Bethlen Historia de rebus Transsylvanicis. vol. 1, Cibinii: Martini Hochmeister, 1782, 321.

5 "Petrus autem, quem sanguine attingebat, et ob aetatem jam provectiorem et perpetuam orbitatem suspicione omni vacabat." Forgách, *De statu reipublicae Hungaricae*, 2.

6 "At apud Reginam ita summa rerum penes Georgium erat, ut summo in honore duo essent, quorum alter nobilitate, alter praetera regia affinitate conspiciebatur: Valentinus Terek, praeter nobilitatem, cum primis rei militaris clarus, et Petrus Petruicius, cum magni usus et consilii homo, tum fidei et virtutis spectatae, quam ad extremum usque diem magna cum constantiae laude, in tutelae administratione retinuit, Georgio datus, collega." Brutus János Mihály m. kir. történetíró Magyar Históriaja 1490–1552 (Monumenta Hungariae Historica II; Scriptores 14), edited by Ferencz Toldy and Iván Nagy. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1876, 42.

grandson as well.⁷ Although Bethlen claimed that in response King Sigismund encouraged Friar George and Petrovics to defend the kingdom of the successor to the throne, this does not conform completely to the facts. In a letter dated August 13, 1540, Sigismund rejected the request for military support and did not even address the diplomatic questions, promising only to send an envoy to his daughter, Isabella.⁸ On August 17, King Sigismund wrote a letter to Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain Charles in which he asked the House of Habsburg sovereign to support Isabella. On the same date the king of Poland sent a letter to Ferdinand in which he warned him not to attack his daughter's country.⁹ Friar George and Petrovics were likely unaware of Sigismund's correspondence with Charles and Ferdinand and because the letter they had received from the king of Poland had not provided them with reassurance, the custodians of the heir to the throne sent another letter to Kraków on September 5, this time from Csáklya (Cetea, Romania), near Nagyenyed (Aiud, Romania). In this letter, Friar George and Petrovics warned that military action from Ferdinand would prompt the sultan to order an immediate invasion of his grandson's realm.¹⁰

Interestingly, although those in the court of King John clearly discerned the future threat, they made little progress in the accomplishment of concrete tasks. King John's funeral procession had only completed 30 kilometers of the trip to Székesfehérvár in the month and a half following his death. Initially, those organizing the procession believed that they should wait for the rebellion in Transylvania to be quelled before proceeding toward Hungary. However, news arriving from Vienna and Buda prompted them to resume the trip to Székesfehérvár despite the uprising.¹¹ After arriving to the latter city, King John was buried at the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary according to the longstanding custom. Queen Isabella did not attend the funeral. The procession then continued on to Buda, where the crown prince was elected king with the regnal name and number John II at a diet convened at Rákos Field near Pest. According to Bethlen, the diet appointed a triumvirate to serve alongside Queen Isabella, thus making Bálint Török the infant king's third guardian alongside Friar George and Petrovics. The diet declared that the three guardians "should decide on all issues with a common will, though with the qualification that Petrovics, whom a blood relationship of some kind connects

7 Bethlen, *Historia*, 325–329; Péter Tóth (ed.), *A lengyel királyi kancellária Libri Legationum sorozatának magyar vonatkozású iratai II. 1526–1541*. Miskolc: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Megyei Levéltár, 2003, 298–300 (no. 142).

8 Tóth (ed.), *Libri Legationum*, 302–303 (no. 145).

9 *Ibid.*, 308–309 (no. 151.), 309 (no. 152).

10 "Si enim Ferdinandus et eius factio regnum hoc invaserint, Thurca procul dubio ediverso irrumpet, sicque nos in medio conterimur, penitusque opprimemur." *Ibid.*, 314 (no. 158).

11 Sándor Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1 (*Monumenta Hungariae Historica III; Monumenta Comititalia Regni Transylvaniae 2*). Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1875, 6.

to the royal scion, be the director of internal affairs, George stand at the head of the state treasury and Bálint deal primarily with military affairs.”¹²

Events unfolded quickly over the subsequent weeks and five centers of power emerged that all exercised an influence over the destiny of the Kingdom of Hungary. Ferdinand Habsburg soon made it obvious that compliance with the stipulations of the Treaty of Várad – that is, unification of the kingdom under his rule – represented his main objective. King Sigismund soon abandoned the idea of supporting his daughter and grandson and already by September 15 signaled to Ferdinand that he would accept him as the king of Hungary,¹³ while on October 5 he informed Charles V of this fact as well.¹⁴ Sigismund's objective was to ensure that his family members would be permitted to seek refuge in Kassa (Košice, Slovakia) and would receive suitable compensation for surrendering their rule over the kingdom. Isabella was in Buda pondering her next move, vacillating between the options of hasty departure from the city and assertion of her son's claim to the throne. Isabella's Hungarian counselors can be regarded as a separate group. These men believed that it would be possible to preserve the political practice established during the reign of King John I of keeping both the Habsburgs and the Ottomans at a distance and that through preservation of the Kingdom of Hungary they could continue to maintain equilibrium between the great powers in the Carpathian Basin. Initially they appeared to be successful in this endeavor: on October 17, 1540, István Werbőczy and János Eszéki sent a message to Buda stating that Süleyman would accept John II as the king of Hungary.¹⁵ Werbőczy and Eszéki could not have known that the sultan had already decided in favor of military intervention and had intentionally misled them with regard to his recognition of John II.¹⁶

The attempt of Leonhard von Vels–led Habsburg forces to quickly take Buda in order to turn the fortunes of war in their favor served to complicate the situation. Already on October 5, Vels asked Isabella to inform him immediately if she wanted to leave the royal palace.¹⁷ In the meantime, he was holding continual negotiations with Friar George and Isabella's other counselors in an effort to persuade them to relinquish the castle. Péter Petrovics also participated in talks conducted in Óbuda on October 22 and 23 and may have even led the Hungarian delegation in the name of the queen. However, the following day Petrovics was unable to take part in the negotiations as a result of illness and Tamás, the *custos* of Székesfehérvár, replaced him.¹⁸ These talks were naturally

12 “...quos communi suffragio arbitros omnium consiliorum esse voluerunt; cum hac tamen limitatione, ut Petrovithius, ceu aliqua cognatione stirpi Regiae annexus, intimorum consiliorum sit rector: Georgius aerario publico praesit: Valentino vero potissimum rei militaris cura incumbat.” Bethlen, *Historia*, 345.

13 “Nos enim serenissimo domino Romanorum regi regnum Hungariae ex animo favemus, neque nepotem in eo nostrum regnare cupimus.” Tóth (ed.), *Libri Legationum*, 322 (no. 161).

14 *Ibid.*, 334–335 (no. 166).

15 *Ibid.*, 335–336 (no. 168).

16 Pál Fodor, *Magyarország és a török hódítás*. Budapest: Argumentum, 1991, 68–69.

17 Tóth (ed.), *Libri Legationum*, 333–334 (no. 165).

18 *Ibid.*, 336–339 (no. 169), 339 (no. 170).

unsuccessful and Petrovics and his colleagues presented King Sigismund with the unvarnished truth regarding the reasons for their failure. According to them, every border castle in the country had fallen into the hands of the sultan, who had declared that he would not accept a foreigner on the throne of Hungary, only a Hungarian – namely the son of the late King John. Petrovics and his colleagues believed that if Isabella left Buda and surrendered the city to the Habsburgs, the sultan would destroy the entire country.¹⁹

It is difficult to discern Péter Petrovics's own considerations in the decision of the counselors. During the initial months, Petrovics apparently acted jointly with Friar George and, subsequently, Bálint Török as well. It is perhaps not by accident that in late 1540 Sigismund asked not them, but István Werbőczy to defend Isabella.²⁰ We know that on one occasion Petrovics stood up for Isabella against Friar George. Already in October, Ferdinand sent Nicholas, Count of Salm, to meet with the queen in order to request that she comply with the conditions of the Treaty of Várad. However, Friar George wanted to make this decision instead of Isabella and did not want to permit Nicholas to see the queen. However, "Petrovics was of a different opinion" and the Count of Salm was finally allowed to enter the palace.²¹

Péter Petrovics played an important role in the events of 1541 as a result of his kinship with the Szapolyais, his position as guardian for the infant king, his military strength and his relationship with Ottoman commanders. According to contemporaries, Petrovics took 1,000 Serbian soldiers to Buda and eventually spent the winter with them alongside Mehmed Bey in Kalocsa.²² Although this was untrue, in late February of 1541 Petrovics indeed asked Mehmed to release Christians captured and taken away from Vác.²³ It is likewise not far from the truth that in addition to Bálint Török and the commanders of the Danube war barges, Petrovics also provided military support to the Ottoman troops attempting to relieve Buda.²⁴

Petrovics was apparently convinced that the country – that is, the kingdom of the Szapolyais – could be saved only by driving back the Habsburgs and gaining the support of the sultan and acted in accordance with this principle over the following weeks. Petrovics became increasingly wary of the Polish emissaries in Hungary and during the spring of 1541 even he began to insist that Isabella

19 "Si enim maiestas reginalis abierit et Buda tradatur Germanis, Thurca illico concordiam cum adversariis initam protendet, omneque regnum statim depopulabitur et desolatum reddet ac nos in nihilum rediget." *Ibid.*, 381–383 (no. 182).

20 *Ibid.*, 396–397 (no. 188).

21 Bethlen, *Historia*, 353.

22 József Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*. Budapest: Magyar Helikon, 1981, 51.

23 "Petrowicz ad eliberandos eos, qui ex oppido Waczow sunt abducti, ad exercitum Mehmedbek est profectus." Tóth (ed.), *Libri Legationum*, 429 (no. 199).

24 Ernst Dieter Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente im Österreichischen Staatsarchiv, Band 1. (1480–1574)* (Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs. Ergänzungsband 10/1). Wien: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, 1991, 62 (reg. 130).

must be separated from them.²⁵ In April of this year, Petrovics and Friar George signed a letter addressed to the Transylvanian estates declaring that the sultan would allow only the Szapolyais to rule the Kingdom of Hungary and urging the estates to refrain from considering the possibility of other candidates.²⁶ Petrovics played an important role in the effort to retain possession of Buda. His soldiers uncovered the betrayal of the citizens of the city in June 1541 and in August of the same year he and Bálint Török were among the Hungarians who went out on horseback to meet Süleyman. Thus Petrovics was involved in the delivery to the Ottomans of 400 German prisoners whom Janissaries immediately executed.²⁷

On August 29, Petrovics's name appeared on the list of the sultan's guests as well. As a relative of John Sigismund, it was his duty to bring him before the sultan. However, the child king began to cry as he waited in the sultan's tent, thus he remained in the arms of his nanny throughout the visit. Petrovics was then among those whom the sultan asked to remain after dinner. For the next week, Petrovics, along with István Werbőczy, Friar George, Bálint Török and Orbán Batthyány, held talks regarding the political situation in Hungary and during this time their lives were not out of danger.²⁸ However, in the end Petrovics emerged victorious from these negotiations: not only was his life spared, but the sultan appointed him to serve as the sanjakbey of Temesköz (the region lying between the Danube, Tisza and Maros [Mureș] rivers). Petrovics was therefore able to retain his baronial office, though from then on only through the grace of the Sublime Porte.²⁹ It is, however, characteristic of manipulative Ottoman political tactics that Petrovics received his appointment only after leaving Buda on September 5 and until that date had feared that he would be recalled and imprisoned.³⁰ The world had changed immensely for Petrovics in hardly a year's time. He had gone from being a knight banneret of the Kingdom of Hungary to a dignitary of the Ottoman Empire and he bore as much responsibility for the loss of Buda as Friar George.

THE SANJAKBEY OF TEMES

Due to a lack of precise sources, we can only surmise what took place in the sultan's tent in the days following the fall of Buda. Bálint Török remained in captivity and István Werbőczy died a few weeks later, thus in addition to Orbán Batthyány the two men who came out of the negotiations on top – Péter

25 Tamás Bornemisza, 'Emléközet', in István Bitskey (ed.), *Magyar Emlékirók 16–18. század*. Budapest: Szépirodalmi Kiadó, 1982, 72.

26 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 22–23.

27 Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*, 56 and 60.

28 Emil Hargittay (ed.), *Régi Magyar Levelestár (XVI–XVII. század)*, vol. 1. Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1981, 72–75; Fodor, *Magyarország*, 105–107.

29 "*Monachum Episcopum Váradiensem, quem ipse Joannes Rex constituerat suorum Tutorem, in eo munere confirmavit, addita ei Regni administrandi auctoritate; Petrovithium vero Tömösváriensem Praefectum constituit.*" Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 77–78.

30 Hargittay (ed.), *Levelestár*, 84; Fodor, *Magyarország*, 110.

Petrovics and Friar George – were aware of the complete truth, although each one of them later described the sultan's command differently. According to the author of *Memoria rerum*, Süleyman sent the following message to Isabella: "I gave your son Transylvania, Lippa (Lipova, Romania), Solymos (Șoimuș, Romania), Lugos (Lugoj, Romania), Karánsebes (Caransebes, Romania), Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania) along with all those whom Friar George and Péter Petrovics could persuade beyond the Tisza after King John. I also ordained that Friar George beside me be tutor and guardian for you and your child just as King John was for you. Péter Petrovics should look after military affairs and defend you by force of arms from all enemies who would harm you as the king's son grows up."³¹ This indeed signified a return to the situation that had existed under King John in which Friar George had been responsible for civilian administration and Petrovics for the defense of the realm.

Friar George spoke differently at the diet held in Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș, Romania) at the end of January 1542. Friar George presented the following interpretation of the sultan's command to the assembled nobles: "The Transtisza part of Hungary and Transylvania belong to the son of King John – with the exception of four places Várad (Oradea, Romania), Temesvár, Fogaras and Kassa, though Friar George will govern these two countries until he [John Sigismund] grows up. Transylvania and the part of the Kingdom of Hungary will pay 10,000 gold forints to the felicitous Porte in return for the Michaelmas tax even in the event that not even a single fillér is left afterwards. Várad, Fogaras and Kassa will belong to the Friar and Petrovics will have Temesvár as a sanjak."³²

This also served the premise for Farkas Bethlen, who claimed that Friar George received the duty of governing the kingdom, while Petrovics was accorded the captaincy of Temesvár.³³ Moreover, Bethlen believed that in April 1542 Queen Isabella redistributed the spheres of authority in order to prevent rivalry among the guardians. The blood relative Petrovics received Lippa and Temesvár along with Serbian-inhabited lands stretching to the Danube, while Friar George was given control over the area between the Tisza and Körös rivers, Lénárd Czeczey was accorded Kassa and the surrounding area and

31 "Fiadnak attam Erdélyt, Lippát, Solymost, Lugost, Karánsebest és Temesvárt mind azokkal igyetemben, kiket az fráter Gyergy és Péter Petrowyth Tiszán túl János király után birtanak. Hattam is, hogy az fráter Gyergy legen tenéked és az gyermekednek énutánam, a miképen János király tinektek vót, tutora és gondviselője. Péter Petrowyth pedig az hadi dologra vigyázzon, és oltalmazzon titeket fegyverrel minden ellenségtől, ki titeket bántana, míg az király fia megnövekedik." Bessenyei (ed.), 1504–1566 *Memoria rerum*, 72.

32 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 34; "Quod Castrum Themessvár cum suis pertinenciis Petro Petrowith Sua Majestas ad possidendum Szancsaksággol (sic) dedit." Bessenyei (ed.), 1504–1566 *Memoria rerum*, 78; Fodor, *Magyarország*, 106–107.

33 "Monachum Episcopum Váradiensem, quem ipse Joannes Rex constituerat suorum Tutorem, in eo munere confirmavit, addita ei Regni administrandi auctoritate; Petrovithium vero Tömösváriensem Praefectum constituit..." Bethlen, *Historia*, 390.

the queen maintained her rule in Transylvania.³⁴ Regardless of what actually occurred, Friar George's ambitions and political successes soon overshadowed the original designs and in a period of just a few years he pushed the queen and her entourage – along with Petrovics – into the background and with nearly absolute power laid the foundations for the new state.³⁵

Péter Petrovics may have had mixed feelings about his appointment to the positions of *ispán* (*comes*) of Temes and captain general. Petrovics likely performed the duties proceeding from this offices according to the traditions of the Kingdom of Hungary. He consequently participated in the talks connected to the Treaty of Gyalu and convened the Torda diet on January 10, 1542.³⁶ However, the Sublime Porte continuously warned Petrovics that he had become a vassal whose only duty was to carry out orders from the sultan. In this regard it is worthwhile to consider two circumstances to which the authors of scholarly literature have paid little attention. The first of these circumstances is the strategic situation surrounding the area lying between the Danube, Tisza and Maros rivers (the Temesköz). This region bordered the Ottoman Empire at the Danube and from here it was possible to maintain control over shipping routes on the Danube and Tisza rivers. Since possession of the Temesköz entailed supremacy over the entire central portion of the Carpathian Basin, the person who conducted civilian and military administration in this region exercised a very important function. The Sublime Porte presumably trusted Petrovics and did not fear that he would engage in political machinations that would place the territory in danger. This confidence proved to be warranted: Petrovics remained loyal to King John's political legacy – and thus to the Ottoman Empire – until the end of his life. The second circumstance is also connected to the appointment of Petrovics to the post of sanjakkbey. Carrying out his duties in this office put Petrovics into nearly daily contact with various Ottoman military leaders and permitted him to gain new acquaintances in Constantinople as well. Correspondence and the sending of envoys enabled both Petrovics and Friar George to establish substantive contacts with members of the Ottoman élite. Petrovics may have therefore been the only person in Transylvania who was in a position to easily transmit information to the Turks and in the form of the militarized Serbian population living in territory under his authority had access to substantial military power that could be used against both internal and external enemies. At the same time, Petrovics's presence and position made the survival of the Hungarian world possible in a province in which the Hungarian ethnicity and nobility were rapidly dwindling. It is not an exaggeration to state that of the territories belonging to the former realm of King John, "the Serbs

34 "...quo omnem, dissidii fomitem in Regni inter Tutores tolleret, ita Regni administrationem inter illos partita est: Petrovithium, Regiam stirpem cognatione attingentem, foris summae rerum cum imperio, Lippae, Temesvárino, totique Rascianorum (qui antiquitus Maesi aut Scordisci et Lardani dicebantur) regioni usque ad Danubium praefecit." Bethlen, *Historia*, 408; Fodor, *Magyarország*, 113.

35 See Teréz Oborni's study in the present book.

36 The summons to the diet was signed "*Petrus Petrowyth, Comes Themesiensis parciumque Inferiorum Capitaneus generalis.*" Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 75.

and the Temes borderlands remained loyal through the person and strength of Petrovics.”³⁷

Already in 1542, Péter Petrovics was forced to confront several serious issues, which he resolved to the satisfaction of the Ottomans. Petrovics dutifully forwarded letters that he received from the Habsburgs to the Sublime Porte, thus placing Habsburg diplomacy in an unpleasant position.³⁸ During this year, he several times received orders to mobilize his military forces and consolidate them with those of the beylerbeys and the Romanian voivodes on their way to relieve Buda.³⁹ Based on orders that the sultan issued over the subsequent years, it appears that Petrovics – just as Friar George – became a submissive functionary in the Ottoman administration. In December 1544, the sultan transmitted the same command to Petru voievod of Moldavia, Friar George and Petrovics in which he instructed them to seize Radu, the defiant voivode of Wallachia, if he attempted to flee.⁴⁰ In early 1545, Petrovics was compelled to collect 2,500 *müd*⁴¹ of flour and send it to warehouses in Belgrade and to transport barley to Buda at the expense of the Transylvanian tax.⁴²

In connection to the resettled village of Pancsova (Pančevo, Serbia), there are several documents that shed light upon the little-known internal conditions in the Temesköz region at this time. In 1545, Péter Petrovics filed a complaint charging that the residents of Pancsova had illegally founded the village. The bey of Szendrő (Smederovo, Serbia), who was in charge of investigating this affair, decided that the village should be qualified as a *hass* estate, thus removing it from the territory of the Temesköz. However Petrovics managed through his emissary to have this matter reexamined.⁴³ It turned out that in 1543 many Christians had escaped from Kalocsa and Bácska (Bačka) and more than 100 families that had fled from these regions settled in Pancsova, which was located on the northern bank of the Danube and was therefore part of the Temesköz. Since Pancsova had been founded without authorization it was decided at the Sublime Porte to eliminate the village and force its inhabitants to move back to

37 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 122.

38 In the course of Tranquillus Andronicus's talks at the Sublime Porte in late 1542, Süleyman Pasha charged that Ferdinand was attempting to incite the subjects of the Ottoman Empire to rebellion, though Friar George, Péter Petrovics and Orbán Batthyány had forwarded the relevant letters and stood alongside the Ottomans. “*Rex tuus non solum immisit in nos Hispanos et Italos, sed etiam nostros subditos literis et nuntiis contra nos sollicitat: regem videlicet Polonie, Moldavum, fratrem Georgium, Petrovich, Urbanum Bathiani. Hi autem omnes literas regias ad nos miserunt et volunt esse nobiscum.*” Karl Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica 1541–1552. Diplomatische Akten des habsburgischen Gesandtschaftsverkehers mit den Hohen Pforte im Zeitalter Süleyman des Prächtigen* (Südosteuropäische Arbeiten 95). München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1995, 29.

39 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 97.

40 Géza Dávid and Pál Fodor, “Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való” A szultáni tanács Magyarországra vonatkozó rendeletei (1544–1545, 1552). Budapest: História–MTA TTI, 2005, 39. A similar command was issued via Orudj Chavush on January 29, 1545. *Ibid.*, 94–95.

41 One *müd* is equal to 513.160 kilograms.

42 Dávid and Fodor, “Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való,” 69–72, 97.

43 *Ibid.*, 55, 99, 100, 124–125.

their original homes.⁴⁴ In this way Petrovics managed to assert Christian legal practice within the Ottoman administrative milieu and preserve the integrity of the territory that had been placed under his authority.

This same situation arose with regard to the important commercial center of Becse (Bečej, Serbia) on the banks of the Tisza river. On March 29, 1545, the sultan first ordered Petrovics to relinquish the castle in Becse to the beylerbey of Buda on the grounds that the Ottomans had already conquered the town once and therefore it belonged to the lands of Islam. The evacuation order noted that this excellent river port and crossing on the west bank of the Tisza had come under Petrovics's control illegally and that it rightfully belonged to the sultan.⁴⁵ The scope of the sultan's demand was later expanded to include the surrender of the castle in Becskerek (Zrenjanin, Serbia),⁴⁶ though this town lay deep within the region of the Temesköz and could thus not be justified on legal grounds. In both instances, however, Petrovics was able to resist compliance with these demands and the castles in Becse and Becskerek were turned over to the Ottomans only in the autumn of 1551, after Petrovics had resigned from his offices and left the region. Therefore, responsibility for the loss of the Temesköz in 1552 did not rest with Petrovics, who indeed defended the territory that had been placed under his authority in accordance with Hungarian interests in spite of his appointment to serve as sanjakkbey.

FLIGHT AND RETURN

The conflict between Friar George and Queen Isabella in the eastern half of Hungary became increasingly intense during the second half of the 1540s. Péter Petrovics was the leading figure among the aristocrats who supported Isabella in this conflict. The death of King Sigismund of Poland on April 1, 1548, signified the loss of a powerful mainstay supporting the preservation of equilibrium in the part of Hungary under Szapolyai control. Talks between Ferdinand Habsburg and Friar George intensified in 1549 and resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Nyírbátor on September 8 of this year. In this treaty, Friar George promised to renounce claims to the throne in favor of Ferdinand, though failed to inform Queen Isabella of this pledge.⁴⁷ Péter Petrovics was the first to learn about these negotiations and informed both the queen and the sultan about them. During the summer of 1550, Süleyman therefore sent a *firman* to Transylvania via Mahmud Chavush in which he deprived Friar George of all his offices.⁴⁸ In early

44 *Ibid.*, 191–192.

45 *Ibid.*, 152–153, 157–158.

46 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 202.

47 Teréz Oborni, 'Isabella királyné erdélyi udvarának kezdetei (1541–1551)', *Történelmi Szemle* 51:1 (2009) 32–33.

48 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 307–311; Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 468–469 (no. 181). Petrovics to Rüstem Pasha, Gyulafehérvár, June–July 1550. In this letter Petrovics expressed appreciation for the favor that he had enjoyed until that time and warned that Friar George was causing a great deal of harm. Petrovics also stated that for this reason he was

September, another envoy arrived to Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia, Romania) and presented a golden flag to the king and an ornamented garment to Petrovics.⁴⁹ This envoy also appointed Petrovics to all of Friar George's former offices.⁵⁰ It appeared that Isabella and her supporters had triumphed in this struggle.

It is difficult to determine why the strife between Isabella and her followers and Friar George flared up again at precisely this time. Ferenc Forgách offers the surprising conclusion that Petrovics was behind the intensification of this conflict. According to Forgách, Petrovics feared that in the event of his death, John Sigismund's inheritance might be appropriated and thus urged that selected dignitaries be assigned the task of safeguarding the assets of the realm until the king reached adulthood.⁵¹ Petrovics apparently did not have confidence in the ability of Isabella to preserve her son's inheritance. At the same time, Friar George feared that he would lose his political influence once the child king grew up and that the effort to unify Hungary under Habsburg rule would not succeed after all. Forgách maintained that these two concerns provoked the power struggle between Isabella and Friar George that ended in an armed conflict.

Péter Petrovics's actions and behavior in the years 1550–1551 were the subject of the greatest amount of criticism. Many of his contemporaries concluded that Petrovics would have been capable of regaining power for Isabella in September 1550, though had failed to do so as a result of his personal weaknesses.⁵² Although Petrovics had occupied Alvinc (Vințu de Jos, Romania) and Branyicska (Brănișca, Romania) in the course of the summer, he was unable to prevent Friar George from assembling a suitable-sized army and laying siege to the queen's city, Gyulafehérvár, and thereby forcing her to abdicate. Isabella had been compelled to relinquish the throne despite the fact that during the summer the queen had been in continuous contact with Rüstem Pasha, the sultan's son-in-law through whom she sent gifts to the ruler of the Ottoman Empire.⁵³ Interestingly, in June 1550 the rumor circulated in Constantinople that Petrovics had died in Temesvár.⁵⁴

grateful that Mahmud had been sent to him (*"quod magnificum dominum Mahmuth cum eiusmodi mandato huc mittere dignati sunt"*). For more on Mahmud, see Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds.), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Frühe Neuzeit 54). Tübingen: De Gruyter, 2000, 307–317.

49 "...per eum Regi parvulo aureum vexillum, simul que Petrovithio vetes auro distinctas offert." Bethlen, *Historia*, 446.

50 Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 263.

51 "Nam Petrus, dum perspiceret opes regni non in publicum, neque regis usum converti, sed ad augendam propriam potentiam distrahi; tum etiam ne morte eius, incerta familiarum fide, thesauri dissiparentur: volebat ut opes regni atque thesauri ab electis ad custodiam praesentissimus hominibus adulto regi cumlarentur, conservanturque." Forgách, *De statu reipublicae Hungariae*, 3.

52 *Ibid.*, 14; Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*. vol. 1, 261.

53 Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 463–464 (no. 178), Petrovics to Rüstem, Temesvár, June 13, 1550. In this letter, Petrovics stated that he was sending four hunting falcons to Süleyman and two to Rüstem, whom he asked to intervene on his behalf with the sultan.

54 "Qua era venuta nova che Petrovith de Temeswar era morto; ma non è verficata anchora." Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 468 (no. 180), 1550. Johann Malvezzi to Ferdinand, Constantinople, June 18, 1550.

In the autumn of 1550, it appeared from the outside that nothing had yet been decided. The estates preserved the balance of power between the two sides and wished to commit the task of raising the young sovereign to Friar George and Petrovics.⁵⁵ At the same time, it was evident that the *ispán* of Temes was fortifying the castles in the country in preparation for the impending war.⁵⁶ During these weeks Isabella stood up for Petrovics, to whom she referred in a letter to the sultan as her pillar of support and suggested that if necessary she could personally visit the Sublime Porte along with her son and her advisor.⁵⁷ At the same time, Ferdinand also did everything possible to obtain Ottoman support. In late 1550, Ferdinand informed his envoy to the Ottoman Empire, Johann/Giovanni Malvezzi, that he was conducting negotiations with Friar George and if these talks succeeded then he would also be willing to pay an annual tribute to the sultan just as Isabella and Petrovics.⁵⁸

In January 1551, Friar George finally assumed the strategic initiative and within just two months acquired total power in Transylvania. At the diet held in Várad on January 22 of that year, Friar George accused Petrovics of *Turcismus* and posing a threat to Christianity.⁵⁹ After seeing the superior strength of Castaldo's army in May and June of 1551, Petrovics withdrew to Lippa, where he continued to oppose Isabella's abdication.⁶⁰ Petrovics therefore did not attend the meeting in Szászsebes at which Isabella signed her declaration of abdication, though after some hesitation he did comply with the queen's order to cede the castles in Temesvár, Lippa, Lugos, Karánsebes and Déva (Deva, Romania) to the Habsburg king of Hungary. Ferdinand proposed to Petrovics that he switch his allegiance to him and in this case he would be permitted to maintain control over these castles. However, Petrovics refused this offer. According to Farkas Bethlen, Petrovics asserted at this time that he would be greatly surprised "if anybody is able to

55 "...filium in spem capessendae Reipublicae educandum Petrovithio et Georgio Monacho traderet" Bethlen, *Historia*, 460.

56 "...bene sciens Petrovithium impigre arces et propugnacula Regni firmare" *Ibid.*, 480. "De rebus Transsylvaniae hoc nobis constat: Fratrem Georgium et Petrum Petrovith magnam discordiam inter se habere et utrinque arma sumpta esse. Quis sit secuturum, adhuc sciri non potest." Letter from Ferdinand to Malvezzi, Vienna, October 3, 1550. Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 513 (no. 193).

57 "Io, nostro figliolo et Petro Petrovith, subditi de Vostra M.tà, siamo aparati a venir ala Gran Porta sua." Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 519 (no. 195).

58 "...si felicem, ut speramus, effectum haberet, nos nihilominus statuimus, Sultano et rustem Pascha aliisque paschis tantum quantum a regina Isabella et Petro Petrovith solvitur annuatim solvere, ac potius cum bona amicitia Sultani, quam bello et armis ipsam Transsylvaniam obtinere et in potestatem nostram redigere." *Ibid.*, 542 (no. 204).

59 "Más urat kell keresniök ki ezt megtehesse, mert ha Petrovicscsal mindnyájan törökké akarnak is lenni ő olyan urat keres, ki az országot keresztyénül tartja meg." Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 269.

60 "Petrovithius vero cum iis, quas tunc auxilio Reginae adduxerat copiis, videns illas ad resistendum tantae potentiae impares esse, atque ad praecavendum, ne tam gravibus conditionibus, ad quas misera Regina redigebatur, sua praesentia subscribere videretur, illos non expectans ad arcem Lippam discessit." Bethlen, *Historia*, 486.

defend these castles against Soliman's forces for two years on end.”⁶¹ In exchange for the castles, Petrovics received the Munkács (Mukachevo, Ukraine) dominium, which he took over from Georg Werner at the end of 1552.⁶²

Historiographer Ferenc Forgách learned that Petrovics had justified his actions to Süleyman by claiming that they were aimed at defending King John II.⁶³ Contacts between Temesvár and the Sublime Porte may have been continuous already during the summer of 1551, therefore we might even accept the letter and its contents. In Constantinople, the captain general was regarded as a loyal vassal even in June 1551.⁶⁴ However, this disposition then began to change and by the end of the summer Friar George had managed to convince the envoys of the Sublime Porte that Petrovics was a traitor.⁶⁵

Petrovics left the country along with the queen, although there could not have been complete accord between them by this time. Gianbattista Castaldo claimed that he had heard from Isabella that she would rather die than entrust her son to Petrovics in Kassa.⁶⁶ The author of *Memoria rerum*, however, emphasized that when “Petrovics went to Kassa with the queen he would not leave the side of the king's son.”⁶⁷ The queen and her entourage had hardly left Transylvania when Sokollu Mehmed crossed the Danube at Pétervárad (Petrovaradin, Serbia) and occupied the castles in Becse and Becskerek that Petrovics had previously declined to cede to them.

The judgment of Péter Petrovics at the Sublime Porte developed in an interesting manner. Petrovics suffered no retribution from the Ottomans for having surrendered the sanjak over which they had granted him authority to the enemy. At around this same time, however, Rüstem Pasha – who had previously counted as one of his allies – concluded as a result of Friar George's effective

61 “*Se non recusaturum fieri agazonum illius, qui has arces per biennium adversus vim Solymani tutatus fuerit.*” *Ibid.*, 493.

62 In August 1552, Isabella urged Ferdinand to accede to the transfer of Munkács because, in the words of the queen, Petrovics – without an estate of his own – was following her around everywhere like a Gypsy. Samu Barabás, ‘Erdély történetére vonatkozó regesták (IV. közlemény)’, *Történelmi Társulat* ser. III:15 (1892) 291 (reg. 275).

63 “*Ad Solymanum tamen nuntium cum litteris ablegavit, quibus eum edocebat, quae agebantur. Quod vero Temesvaro et inferiori Ungaria sibi cedendum esset, id sese invitum facere, ne Johanni Secundo, qui artibus Georgii in potestate Germanorum iam esset, nex aut perniciēs inferretur.*” Forgách, *De statu reipublicae Hungaricae*, 14.

64 “*...ipse etiam Petrowitch nobis est fidelis subditus begus*” Árpád Károlyi, ‘Fráter György. Befejező közlemény’, *Történelmi Társulat* ser. III:5 (1882) 122; Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente*, 147.

65 Friar George admitted to Nádasdy that he would attempt to persuade the Sublime Porte that Petrovics had been responsible for what had taken place and this is indeed what happened. „*A te arcodat – felelék neki – a hatalmas szultán fehérnek találta, s a te ellenséged Petrovics megszökönt. mert váraiban mindenütt németekre akadtak, míg ő maga megszökött.*” Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 347–348.

66 *Ibid.*, 281.

67 Bessenyei (ed.), *1504–1566 Memoria rerum*, 95.

diplomacy that Petrovics was unreliable.⁶⁸ The following year the sultan sent a couple of orders to Transylvania charging that “the turmoil erupted entirely because of the Friar and Petrovics.”⁶⁹ At the same time, other sources reveal that those in the sultan’s milieu had by February 1552 at the very latest become aware that the situation was the result of Friar George’s treason. Although the Ottomans called Petrovics to account for his decision to relinquish the castles and questioned his loyalty to the Sublime Porte, they believed that his devotion to Isabella had remained unbroken. The letter that Petrovics received at this time shows that the Sublime Porte knew how to influence the old *ispán* of Temes: “Transylvania is still the young prince’s sanjak. If you join forces with one another, you will drive the Austrians out by force of arms [and if] no injury befalls the queen and the prince, but instead they are brought back to their previous location, then he [Petrovics] will remain in possession of his castles and parts of the country, enjoying the grace of the sovereign. Do not allow the wealth of the prince to be lost, beware of Ferdinand’s machinations lest he be able to cause harm.”⁷⁰

The situation in Transylvania soon changed. Friar George was assassinated in December 1551, Temesvár fell in 1552 and General Castaldo withdrew with the Habsburg armies from the remainder of King John’s realm. There was an outbreak of plague in Brassó (Braşov, Romania) in 1553 that the following year spread toward Nagyszeben (Sibiu, Romania), where 3,200 people died of the disease in 1555.⁷¹ The peoples of Transylvania quickly learned the bitter lesson that the Habsburgs were still unable to defend them, thus preparations for a restoration of power soon began. Already in October 1552, Castaldo informed Ferdinand that the Transylvanians wanted to break away from the Habsburgs and dragoman Mahmud paid a visit to Péter Petrovics in order to discuss the reinstatement of elected King John II. During these talks, Mahmud promised Petrovics that he would again be permitted to exercise the office of *ispán* of Temes under the same conditions as previously.⁷² On December 26, 1552, news began to circulate in Gyulafehérvár that within days Petrovics would arrive to Munkács, where he would meet with Ferenc Kendy, one of the voivodes whom Ferdinand had appointed to govern Transylvania, and in the meantime Isabella had been notified from Transylvania that her return was awaited.⁷³ Castaldo increasingly feared Kendy, whom he suspected of being the most significant

68 “*El bassa rispose che Petrovich et fratre Georgio erano inimici et che non credeva a Petrovich; et disse che fratre Georgio era fedel servitore del Sig.or Turcho.*” Nehring (ed.), *Austro-Turcica*, 595 (no. 231).

69 Dávid and Fodor, “*Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való*”, 574. Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente*, 188.

70 Dávid and Fodor, “*Az ország ügye mindenek előtt való*”, 272–273.

71 Mihály Siegler, ‘A magyarok, az erdélyiek és a szomszédos tartományok történetének kronológiája’, in Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Krónikáink magyarul*, vol. 3/2, translated by Péter Kulcsár. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2007, 95.

72 Barabás, ‘Erdély történetére vonatkozó regesták’, 489 (reg. 319).

73 *Ibid.*, 660 (reg. 368).

source of local support for the pro-Isabella faction despite the fact he was serving as a representative of Ferdinand's authority in Transylvania. On January 4, Castaldo wrote a letter to Ferdinand in which he accused Kendy of being a traitor and recommended that he be placed under arrest. Castaldo furthermore complained about the decision of leaders in Brassó to send a tribute to the sultan and also suggested that István Dobó, Ferdinand's other voivode in Transylvania, apprehend Petrovics when he returned from Poland.⁷⁴

Several documents from the year 1553 concern the erstwhile *ispán* of Temes. After rumors in January that Petrovics was headed to Munkács, his followers in Transylvania sent him 1,000 shields and lances the following month.⁷⁵ On February 23, Tamás Varkocs wrote to Castaldo from Várad that two of Petrovics's envoys, one of whom was Pál Bakics, were on their way to meet Kasim sanjakbey of Temesvár, and afterward would continue on to Constantinople. On March 5, Varkocs provided Ferdinand with even more concrete information. Varkocs had learned that the Sublime Porte had ordered Petrovics to organize the return of the prince and had promised the military support of 10,000 Serbian soldiers from Syrmia for this purpose. In addition to Kasim, Ali Pasha of Buda and Derviš, sanjakbey of Szeged, were Petrovics's greatest sources of support. News indicated that the sultan was also prepared to return Lippa to him.⁷⁶ A few weeks later, rumors also emerged that Petrovics himself would pay the sultan 50,000 gold forints in exchange for Temesvár, Lippa and the Lower Parts (*Partes Inferiores*) of Hungary and that Transylvanian conspirators awaited him and his entourage in the village of Nagykeréki in Bihar County.⁷⁷ Petrovics finally surfaced on the border of the Partium region at the end of the summer, though after leaving Debrecen Ferdinand's military forces under the command of Ferenc Tahy and Mátyás Zaberminus prevented him from reaching Várad, forcing him to withdraw on October 3.

After his failed attempt to return to Transylvania in 1553, Péter Petrovics tried again via another route the following year – this time with success. Petrovics arrived to Lugos by way of Munkács and Moldavia after the sultan gave him the former city along with Karánsebes⁷⁸ so that he could prepare for Isabella's return in coordination with local Serbs.⁷⁹ On March 6, 1554, Süleyman announced to the citizens of Brassó as well as to Ferenc Kendy and other Transylvanian nobles that he had given the realm to John Sigismund and that Petrovics would temporarily receive the sanjakbey flag symbolizing power. The sultan instructed

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 663 (reg. 378).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 666 (reg. 393), 671 (reg. 409).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 676 (reg. 430).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 681 (reg. 457).

⁷⁸ In the 1540s, there was a conflict between Péter Petrovics and the city of Karánsebes, several dozen citizens of which had confessed under oath against the *ispán* of Temes before pro-Habsburg Chief Magistrate László Rakovicsai. Bálint Lakatos, 'Városi nemesek Karánsebesen a 15–16. század fordulóján', *URBS Magyar várostörténeti évkönyv*, vol. 3. Budapest: Budapest Főváros Levéltára, 2008, 78.

⁷⁹ Bethlen, *Historia*, 553.

them to be loyal to him and to their king. Süleyman also sent this command to Sokollu Mehmed of Bosnia, Toygun of Buda, Kasim Pasha of Temesvár and the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia.⁸⁰

Over the subsequent year and a half, Péter Petrovics prepared in Lugos for the return of the royal family. The Transylvanian estates decided at the diet convened in Marosvásárhely in December 1555 to recall King John and sent official envoys to Petrovics in Lugos.⁸¹ The elderly magnate wasted no time, responding to the invitation via his emissary, Kelemen Hagymássy, already at the beginning of January and traveling shortly thereafter to Szászsebes, where he accepted the homage of the Transylvanian Saxons. Petrovics himself convoked the diet held on March 8 in Szászsebes at which he was chosen to serve as governor until the return of Queen Isabella. According to Farkas Bethlen, the estates authorized Petrovics to deploy stewards to royal cities, gold and silver mines and customs houses, to appoint *ispáns* to govern counties and even placed the justice system under his control.⁸² During these days, Petrovics also received an order from Süleyman to prepare for the return of John II and to drive Ferdinand's military forces out of the province.⁸³

Péter Petrovics reached the pinnacle of his career during the twilight of his life with his appointment as governor. A council composed of two members from each of the three recognized nations – the Hungarian nobility, the Székelys and the Saxons – assisted Petrovics with his duties as governor. The following representatives served on this six-member council: Boldizsár Pathóchy, who was related to Petrovics, and Miklós Forró on behalf of the Hungarian nobility; Miklós Kornis and Márton Andrási on behalf of the Székelys; and Péter Haller, Ferdinand's former treasurer, and Brassó magistrate Johann Benkner on behalf of the Saxons. However, there is no data regarding the activity of these councilors.⁸⁴ Petrovics officially served as the *locum tenens* for Isabella and John II in Hungary and Transylvania (*infra reditum Maiestatum suarum in iurisdictione earundem Maiestatum suarum tam in regno Hungariae quam etiam in hoc regno*

80 Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente*, 254.

81 Bethlen, 561. For the events of 1556, see Teréz Oborni, 'Bornemissza Pál és Dobó István távozása Erdélyből (1556)', in Teréz Oborni and László Á. Varga (eds.), *Memoria Rerum. Tanulmányok Bán Péter tiszteletére*. Eger: Heves Megyei Levéltár, 2008, 349–361.

82 "Praeterea constituunt Petrovithium Locumtenentem, ut ipse Regni negotia omnia ad adventum Reginae cum filio administret." Bethlen, *Historia*, 597. "Though until we are able to bring His Majesty along with our lady Her Majesty together among us in accordance with their eminence: we place in the image of His Majesty lord Péter Petrovics, in whose hands we place every domain – befitting the royal eminence – in the cities, the castles, the villages, the salt mines, the gold and silver mines, the thirtieth tax and all estates... Petrovics His Lordship shall place bailiffs everywhere and *ispáns* in the counties – let His Lordship dispense the law." Szilágyi (ed.), *Erdélyi Országgyűlési Emlékek*, vol. 1, 570–571.

83 Petritsch, *Regesten der osmanischen Dokumente*, 335.

84 Győző Ember, *Az újkori magyar közigazgatás története Mohácstól a török kiűzéséig*. Budapest: "Budapest" Irodalmi, Művészeti és Tudományos Intézet, 1946, 407; Zsolt Trócsányi, *Törvényalkotás az Erdélyi Fejedelemségben*. Budapest: Gondolat Kiadó, 2005, 26.

Transsylvaniae locumtenens) and in similar fashion to Friar George exercised nearly regal authority.⁸⁵

Over the subsequent months, Péter Petrovics handled the affairs of the part of the country that had been placed under his authority with exceptional energy. Petrovics summoned the voivodes of Moldavia and Wallachia to the realm to deal with István Dobó, who was supporting Ferdinand, and already in early March ordered Menyhárt Balassa to seize Gyulafehérvár. With soldiers and weapons obtained in Nagyszeben, Petrovics managed to reoccupy the royal capital city. He then traveled to Kolozsvár (Cluj-Napoca, Romania), where the assembled Transylvanian estates decided to recall the queen and her son. After returning to Transylvania from Lemberg (Lviv, Ukraine), Petrovics met Isabella in Dés (Dej, Romania) and together they entered the gates of Kolozsvár on October 22, 1556.⁸⁶ Ferenc Forgách suggested that Petrovics had at the end of his life become estranged from the queen and may have even killed her had he not died first.⁸⁷ However, the fact that Petrovics left his entire estate to Isabella in his will contradicts Forgách's hypothesis.⁸⁸

Péter Petrovics's enemy, Pál Bornemissza, wrote in September 1557 that the queen existed in Transylvania only as a painted picture and was unable to rule because everything took place according to the will of Petrovics, whom evil had possessed and for this reason all his actions were merciless and tyrannical.⁸⁹ However, the queen did not, in fact, have to fear this as in the case of Friar George one decade previously. Her lieutenant was not dazzled by power and vacated his office as *locum tenens* immediately after the return of the prince. The loyalty of his old relative became a subject of study for the young sovereign, who in Poland had been placed under the tutelage of the humanist Albertus Novicampianus. Writing under the pseudonym Scopus Biblicus, Novicampianus wrote a book that he dedicated to Petrovics, in which he highlighted the humility and selflessness with which Petrovics had renounced ownership over his enormous estates.⁹⁰

85 Magyar Országos Levéltár, Erdélyi Országos Kormányhatósági Levéltárak, Gyulafehérvári Káptalan Országos Levéltára, F 5 Cista diversorum comitatum, Cista 1, Fasc. 1, no. 15.

86 Bethlen, *Historia*, 596.

87 Forgách, *De statu reipublicae Hungaricae*, 168.

88 "Regina omnium Bonorum suorum haerede constituta." Bethlen, *Historia*, 610. "Péter Petrowyth died and was buried in Kolozsvár and all his treasure was left to the queen." Bessenyei (ed.), 1504–1566 *Memoria rerum*, 105.

89 Pál Bornemissza's letter to Tamás Nádasdy, Nyitra (Nitra, Slovakia), September 26, 1557. "Reginam non secus, atque tabellam pictam, nihil posse agere, aut imperare sed omnia fieri nutu Petrovich, quem putant daemone obsessum, aut potius daemonem in corpus ipsius transformatum esse. Unde omnia ipsius acta impia et tyrannica." Georgius Pray, *Epistolae Procerum Regni Hungariae*, vol. 3. Posonii: Ex Tipographeo G. A. Belay, 1806, 123.

90 Orgona, 'Jan Zygmunt', 14. "Illustri item ac Magnifico domino Comiti Petrowicz viro mitissimo et integerrimo, tuique amantissimo, qui propter te unum possessiones amplissimas in Hungaria demisit: caeterisque omnibus. Multo tamen te chariorem fore putato, si, ut, coepisti, pietati caeterisque virtutibus et disciplinis Principe dignis studueris. Nihil enim charius, nihil amabilius virtute." Scopus Biblicus *Veteris & Novi Testamenti authore Alberto Novicampiano*. Cracoviae: Lazarus Andree excudebat, 1553, [16].

However, Péter Petrovics differed greatly from his queen and king in terms of religious inclination. For unknown reasons, Petrovics was among the aristocrats of Hungary who became very early supporters of Protestantism. Mihály Balázs wrote the following with regard to this subject: “Governor Péter Petrovics – certainly as a result of his longer-term political objectives – was not only a supporter of the Reformation, but in programmatic fashion engaged the services of preachers who, although they espoused divergent dogmatic concepts, had all made a radical and permanent break with the entire institutional and dogmatic system of Catholicism, allowing for no retreat or compromise.”⁹¹

Among those whom Petrovics patronized were the radical Italian reformer Francesco Stancaro, one of the first promulgators of Unitarian theology, and Márton Kálmáncsehi Sánta, who likewise engaged in a radical effort to purify churches and rites. It is uncertain whether we can speak of a conscious religious-political concept in the case of Petrovics, who was very likely illiterate,⁹² though in 1549 he certainly took István Szegedi Kis into his service in Temesvár and in 1550 convened a synod in Tornya (Turnu, Romania) in Csanád County for priests from the region who were leaning toward Protestantism and at which the opinion of more radical parish clerks who were more open to Calvinist doctrine triumphed.⁹³ The disturbances that took place in Kolozsvár in December 1551, which resulted in the – for the time being temporary – expulsion of the Franciscan community from the city, can be interpreted as an expression of support for Petrovics against the occupation of the Catholic Habsburgs.⁹⁴ Data indicating that Petrovics’s former court priest, whose name is unfortunately unknown, was elected to serve as parish priest in Kolozsvár in late 1552 is compatible with this supposition.⁹⁵ On March 15, 1556, just one week following Petrovics’s appointment as governor, the early phase of the Reformation concluded in Kolozsvár with the expulsion of the Franciscans and Dominicans from the city and the confiscation of their landed property.⁹⁶ In 1557, it was decided that a school should be founded in the building of the Dominicans as an endowment from Isabella and the possibility that Petrovics left his estate to the queen in order to support the establishment of this school cannot be excluded.

91 Mihály Balázs, ‘Megjegyzések János Zsigmond valláspolitikájáról’, *Credo* 14:1–2 (2008) 69.

92 I am not aware of any letter or signature from him in his own mother tongue. Instead of a signature, Petrovics placed his seal on documents. Vilmos Fraknói, *Werbőczy István életrajza*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1899, 320, illustration 106; Endre Veress, *Isabella királyné 1519–1559*. Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1901, 267, illustration 82. The signature “*idem manu propria*” is derived from the same handwriting that drafted the diploma with the reference as in note 85.

93 Géza Kathona, *Fejezetek a török hódoltsági reformáció történetéből* (Humanizmus és Reformáció 4). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974, 217.

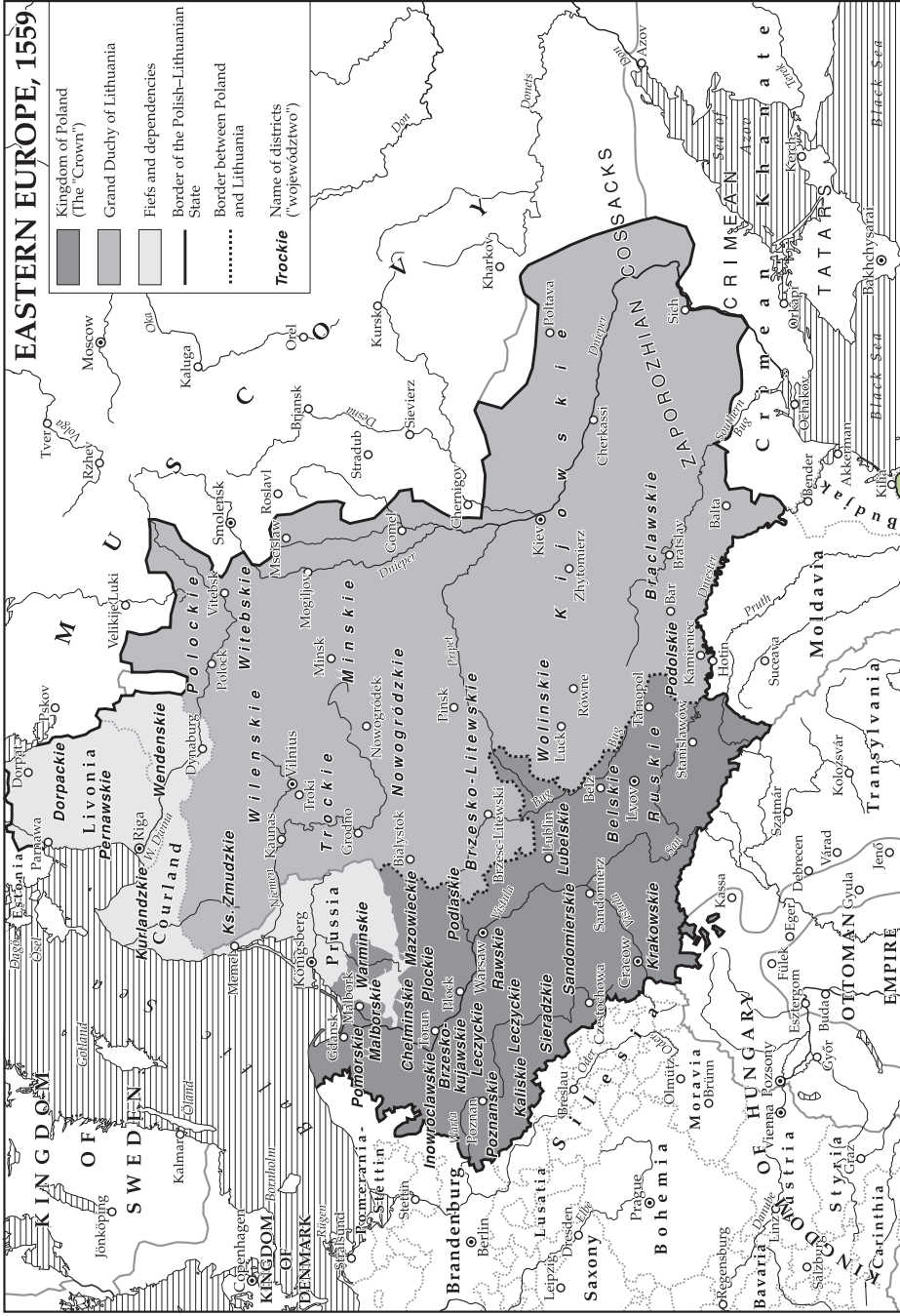
94 Radu Lupescu, ‘Utriusque ordinis expulsi sunt. Kolozsvár, 1556. március 15.’, in József Csurgai Horváth (ed.), *Az első 300 év Magyarországon és Európában. A Domonkos-rend a középkorban*. Székesfehérvár: Alba Civitas Történeti Alapítvány, 2017, 295.

95 Zsigmond Jakó, *A kolozsmonostori konvent jegyzőkönyvei 1289–1556*, vol. 1 (Magyar Országos Levéltár Kiadványai II; Forráskiadványok 17). Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1990, 87.

96 Lupescu, ‘Utriusque ordinis expulsi sunt’, 300–301.

Péter Petrovics presumably died a satisfied man. At the end of decades of service for the Szapolyais he was able to restore to elected King John II the realm of his father. He accumulated neither wealth nor property and thus did not have to worry about the fate of his inheritance. At the end of his life, he helped Márton Kálmáncsehi Sánta transform the citizens of Kolozsvár into followers of Calvin, thus he had no reason to feel shame before God. At the same time, the fact cannot be concealed that among the supporters of King John, Petrovics – with the exception of the most unrepentant renegades – stood the closest to the Sublime Porte. Whereas Friar George had attempted to maneuver between the two great powers and retain the place of John's kingdom among the Christian realms, Petrovics had regarded the benevolence of the sultan to be a necessary condition for survival. The early modern history of Transylvania proves that Petrovics's conclusion was not unfounded, though his career proves a clear demonstration of the narrow boundaries of this pathway.

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MOHÁCS 1526–2026
RECONSTRUCTION AND REMEMBRANCE

The first English-language volume of the series discusses the life of Queen Isabella Jagiellon (1539–1559), wife of King John I Szapolyai.

In 1539, Isabella, a princess whose Italian mother had prepared her for court life in the spirit of the Renaissance, arrived in Hungary. Perhaps recalling the example of her parents, King Sigismund I and Queen Bona of Poland, she may have hoped that her marriage to King John would be happy, fruitful, and enduring. With a little luck, Isabella could have had a fate very similar to that of her mother. However, with the death of King John, she suddenly found herself without the guarantees and protections with which she could have grown into her role as queen.

Although Isabella did not have the long and tranquil life that she had envisioned at the time of her marriage, she nonetheless had an interesting life, as she was forced to confront challenging political and personal circumstances.

The present volume highlights a few aspects of Isabella's life in the hope that a new monograph on the queen will be published as part of an international endeavor within the next few years.

