ANNUAL
OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES
AT CEU

VOL. 17   2011

ANNUAL OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES AT CEU

VOL. 17   2011

Edited by
Alice M. Choyke and Daniel Ziemann

C E U

Editors
Alice M. Choyke and Daniel Ziemann

Technical Advisor
Annabella Pál

Cover Illustration
Beltbuckle from Kígyóspuszta
(with kind permission of the Hungarian National Museum, Budapest)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORS' PREFACE

Lectori salutem!

We are happy to present the 17th volume of our *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU*. In it you will find some of the main research results from the 2009–2010 academic year. As usual, the first section contains articles based on the most innovative MA theses of 2010 as well as other papers presented by some of our students at conferences. As befits the multi-disciplinary nature of our department, the topics covered in these student papers are wide-ranging, reflecting the main intellectual strands within the department itself. The first paper deals with early medieval dialectics in Frankish ecclesiastical texts. The second paper concerns aspects of the foundation of physics in medieval philosophical thought, followed by an assessment of the degree of climatic deterioration in the Hungarian Kingdom in the fourteenth century, mostly using charter texts as a primary source material. A medieval borderland is the central point of the next paper, followed by observations concerning the use of wall-paintings on exterior church walls as political propaganda in late medieval Moldavia. The final contribution to this first part contains an examination of military elites in Byzantine Histria.

This year we are proud to present two interesting thematic blocks. The first one is dedicated to the question of ethnicity and ethnogenesis, a topic that has been in the focus of historical research for some decades now. Most of the articles are based on discussions in a PhD seminar in the 2009 Fall Term. Participants in the seminar reviewed state of the art research questions related to the notion of ethnicity in history and archaeology and discussed the outcomes and consequences for future research.

Special focus was placed on various models of ethnicity, for instance the ones developed in the so-called Vienna and Toronto Schools. Interestingly, the debate surrounding this topic was sparked off a few years ago in a study of the Goths and their "ethnogenesis". The debate not only revealed the different approaches to the topic or a certain diversity of opinions but ignited a debate on what constituted the basis of historical research. The question at stake is about nothing less than the limits of historical methodology. How much do the sources tell us about past societies and how much does the form of our interpretation tell us about our own academic or political environment? Given the history of our own discipline we need to be constantly aware of the limits in our capacity to understand past societies. Talking about ethnicity always implies adoption of our own concepts of society transplanted onto past societies that had a different perception of social reality. Nevertheless, recent discussions have produced

interesting studies concerning various concepts of ethnicity using examples from Antiquity until the present.

Though the seminar focused mainly on the Migration Period and the Early Middle Ages, the issue of ethnic interpretation is relevant for later periods as well. The articles in the present volume demonstrate how recent discussions can influence different areas and research fields.

The second thematic block originates from a CEU Summer University course "Lived Space in Past and Present: Challenges in the Research and Management of Townscape and Cultural Heritage" held at the Department of Medieval Studies in June 2010. The course was organized by Katalin Szende (CEU) as course director with the participation of many well-known specialists in this field as guest faculty, such as Sarah Rees Jones, Peter Johanek, Rossina Kostova, Anngret Simms, Gábor Gyáni, and József Laszlovszky.

The course aimed to follow up on recent trends in historical, archaeological, geographical, architectural and environmental studies dedicated to the exploration of the urban fabric. The participants also discussed the consequences of these research trends, focusing on questions like how the elements of present townscapes reveal the development of past periods and what needs to be done to preserve their values. Within the broad field of cultural heritage, the role of the historian analyzing the built and natural environment of a place had to be reconsidered as well. The course revealed fruitful and interesting outcomes, some of which can be followed in four articles of the present volume written by Anngret Simms, Thomas Stiglbrunner, Ágnes Flóra, and Katalin Szende.

Part II of the *Annual* follows the practice of previous volumes. Thus the Head's Report gives a summary of the main events of the Academic Year 2009–2010. Abstracts of the MA theses and the PhD dissertations for that year provide additional insight into the work of our new graduates.

At the end of the volume Anna Somfai presents her research project on visual thinking and diagrammatic images in medieval manuscript research. József Laszlovszky concludes the present volume with a report on a joint project between the Department of Medieval Studies and the University of Göttingen with the support of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to our coordinator, Annabella Pál, to our PhD candidates Ivana Dobcheva, Veronika Csikós, and Zsolt Magyar for their thorough and dedicated work, and the Archaeolingua Foundation and Publishing House, our constant partner, for finalizing the publication.

We hope that we have piqued your curiosity and wish you a pleasant read.

Alice Choyke & *Daniel Ziemann*   *Budapest, June 2011*

THE ROLE OF DIALECTIC IN THE NINTH-CENTURY PREDESTINATION POLEMICS: BETWEEN *DOCTRINA MUNDANA* AND *DOCTRINA COELESTIS*

Tatiana Krapivina

Alcuin in the *Epistola de litteris colendis* exhorts the addressee:[1]

> For this reason, we advise you not only not to neglect the study of the letters, but rather to acquire the proper knowledge of these in order that with an intention humble and pleasing to God you can penetrate easier and more properly the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures.[2]

This was one of the documents from which the program of ubiquitous and mandatory education of the Frankish clergy was officially launched. Besides regulating ecclesiastical life, one of the main goals of the reforms was to make the clergy "*understand* what they read in the Bible (the italics are mine – *T.K.*)"[3] – a task that, despite its seeming simplicity, required immense effort.

The development of biblical exegesis, as Contreni shows,[4] was rapid, but not homogeneous. On the one hand, one of the ways to acquire biblical wisdom was to rely on teachings of the Holy Fathers, whose texts were studied, simplified, collected, and taught. On the other hand, Alcuin's revival of the liberal arts[5] paved the way for the rise of another method of biblical exegesis. Studying the texts on logic and philosophy and training in grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic laid the

---

[1] The letter was addressed to Baudulf, abbot of Fulda.

[2] *Quamobrem hortamus litterarum studia non solum non neglegere, uerum etiam humillima et Deo placita intentione ad hoc certam discere, ut facilius et rectius diuinarum scripturarum mysteria ualeatis penetrare.* The text of the letter is quoted from the edition by Luitpold Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), 203.

[3] Contreni, "Carolingian Biblical Culture," in *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and his Time.* Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the SPES, Maynooth and Dublin, August 16–20, 2000, ed. J. McEvoy and M. Dunne (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 3.

[4] Contreni, "Carolingian Biblical Culture;*"* Idem, "Inharmonious Harmony: Education in the Carolingian World," in idem, *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 81–96.

[5] For the role of Alcuin in the revival of learning see Andrew F. West, *Alcuin. The Rise of the Christian Schools* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1912); the book is somewhat dated, but it is still useful. Donald A. Bullough, *Alcuin. Achievement and Reputation.* Being Part of the Ford Lectures Delivered in Oxford in Hilary Term 1980 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

foundation for the formation of a *philosophical* approach towards interpreting the sacred texts. Thus, in a few decades the reforms had already yielded results: Hrabanus Maurus' compilations of the Fathers' commentaries on the Bible were widely used[6] and logical tools and vocabulary were applied to theological issues.[7]

Along with the success of the educational reforms, however, mid-ninth-century Carolingian society witnessed problems and contradictions led to by these reforms. The predestination controversy was one of such intellectual conflicts, caused by an active and rapid assimilation of the Christian and Classical sources at this early date.[8] In the present article, I propose to focus on the methodological conflict which occurred during the predestination debates between Eriugena and his opponents, Prudentius of Troyes and Florus of Lyon. These debates are important for understanding how Carolingian theologians searched out and formulated the only true, as they believed, way to "penetrate the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures."

The debate was initiated by Gottschalk, a monk of Fulda and then of Orbais,[9] who in the late 830s started preaching the idea of double predestination based on the teachings of the later Augustine. According to Gottschalk, God predestined the elected to eternal life and the wicked to eternal damnation. His teaching, however, met with strong objections from Hrabanus Maurus,[10] who was Gottschalk's teacher in Fulda, and later from Hincmar,[11] archbishop of Rheims,

---

[6] Contreni, "Carolingian Biblical Culture."

[7] See John Marenbon, *From the Circle of Alcuin to the School of Auxerre: Logic, Theology and Philosophy in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[8] The history and the political implications of the predestination controversy have been discussed by David Ganz, "The Debate on Predestination" in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, ed. Margaret T. Gibson and Janet L. Nelson, 353–373, 2d ed. (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990) 283–302; a detailed account of the debates is given in E. S. Mainoldi, *Giovanni Scoto Eriugena. Dialettica e teologia all'apogeo della rinascenza carolingia*, ed. and tr. E. S. Mainoldi (Florence: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2003).

[9] For the life, works and theology of Gottschalk see J. Jolivet, *Godescalc d'Orbais et la Trinité: La méthode de la théologie a l'époque carolingienne,* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1958); Emmanuel Aegerter, "Gottschalk et le problème de la prédestination au IXe siècle," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 116 (1937): 187–233. É. Amann, "La controverse prédestienne," in *Histoire de l'église depuis les origines jusqu' à nos jours*, ed. Augustine Fliche and Martin Victor, Vol. 6. *L'époque carolingienne* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1947), 320–344. Cyrille Lambot, "Opuscules grammaticaux de Gottschalk," *Revue bénédictine* 44 (1932): 120–124.

[10] Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistola ad Notingum cum libro de Praedestinatione Dei*, PL 112, cols. 1530D–1553C.

[11] Hincmar, *Ad reclusos et simplices*, ed. W. Gundlach, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 10 (1899): 93–144, 258–309.

and his companion, Pardulus of Laon. The cornerstone of the polemical argument was the question of whether God predestines individuals to damnation, death and punishment or only to eternal bliss, which could not avoid discussing of the role of human will and divine grace in salvation. Gottschalk answered their objections with a detailed treatise[12] in which he based his argumentation on the authority of the Church Fathers and also elaborated on Isidore's grammatical treatment of predestination.[13] Other distinguished theologians such as Prudentius of Troyes,[14] Hrabanus Maurus,[15] Lupus of Ferrières,[16] and Ratramnus of Corbie,[17] however, criticizing some aspects of Gottschalk's doctrine, agreed with his main idea.

The next step that Hincmar and Pardulus took to help them solve the problem of predestination was an appeal to John Scot, a master of the liberal arts at the palace school. In 851, John Scot wrote the *De divina praedestinatione liber* (*DP*)[18] offering his own solutions to the problem. The main points of his arguments coincided with ones that Hincmar and Hrabanus asserted.[19] What was novel in the work indeed was the scope with which he applied the trivial arts – grammar, rhetoric and logic – to refute Gottschalk's thesis and to prove his own statements.

Critiques of John Scot's treatise followed immediately – one by Prudentius of Troyes[20] and soon after another one by Florus of Lyon.[21] The targets of their critiques were as much Eriugena's theological and anthropological assertions as his methodological stand. After Florus had written his treatise, the tendency to defend Gottschalk's teaching and to criticize Hincmar's and Eriugena's theses against,

_____

[12] Gotteschalcus, *Confessio prolixior*, *PL* 121, cols. 349C–366A.

[13] Isidorus Hispalensus, *Senteniae*, ed. P. Cazier (Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 111) (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), II 6, 1. *Gemina est praedestinatio, siue electorum ad requiem, siue reproborum ad mortem.* For the role of grammar in Gottschalk's biblical exegesis and in the predestination debate, see Jean Joviet "L'enjeu de la grammaire pour Godescalc," in *Jean Scot Érigène et l'histoire de la philosophie,* Colloques Internationaux du CNRS, No. 561 (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1977), 79–87; Gillian R. Evans, "The Grammar of Predestination in the Ninth Century," *Journal of Theological Studies* 33 (1982): 134–45.

[14] Prudentius, *Epistola ad Hincmarum et Pardulum*, *PL* 115, cols. 971D–1010B.

[15] Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistola ad Hincmarum Rhemensem*, *PL* 112, cols. 1518D–1530C.

[16] Lupus Ferrariensis, *Liber de tribus questionibus*, *PL* 119, cols. 621D–648B.

[17] Ratramnus Corbeiensis, *De predestinatione Dei*, *PL* 121, cols. 11C–80.

[18] Johannes Scottus Eriugena, *De diuina praedestinatione liber*, ed. G. Madec (Turnhout: Brepols, 1978).

[19] The core idea that he aimed to prove was that God is neither responsible for sin and death nor for punishment. This idea also implies that responsibility for sin lies with the free human will.

[20] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, *PL* 115, cols. 1009C–1366A.

[21] Florus, *AduersusJS*, *PL* 119, cols. 101B–250A.

and attitudes towards, Gottschalk became more distinct.[22] Thus, the problem of predestination did not find an unambiguous solution among Carolingian theologians until the end of the debate in 863 at the council in Metz.

By examining a few passages from Eriugena's treatise,[23] Prudentius' work, *De Praedestinatione Contra Johannem Scotum* (*ContraJS*), and Florus' composition *Aduersus Joannis Scoti Erigenae Erroneas Definitiones* (*AduersusJS*), I will analyze the principles inherent in theologians' approaches, their differences and similarities, and the problems and implications contained in their methods. The cornerstone of the methodological conflict was Eriugena's scope in applying of the liberal arts. In the following pages I will outline Eriugena's definition of dialectic and his opponents' answers to it.

Eriugena: Dialectic as a Means of Salvation

In the phrase that opens the treatise, John Scot claims that:

> …What else is the exercise of philosophy but the exposition of the rules of true religion by which the supreme and principal cause of all things, God, is worshipped with humility and rationally sought? It follows then that true philosophy is true religion and conversely that true religion is true philosophy. While philosophy may in many and various ways be divided up, it is seen, however, to have twice two principal parts necessary for the solution of every question.[24]

---

[22] See Amulo Lugdonensis, *Epistola ad Godescalcum*, *PL* 116, cols. 84C–96. Remigius Lugdonensis, *PL* 121, cols. 985B–1068.

[23] Due to the size limit of the article, I will examine only Eriugena's views on the role of the dialectic. For the importance and applications of rhetoric and grammar in the *DP* see Catherine Kavanagh, "The Philosophical Importance of Grammar for Eriugena," in *History and Eschatology in John Scottus Eriugena and his Time* (*HEJSE*), ed. Michael Dunne and James J. McEvoy (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 61–76. For Eriugena's method, also used in other works, see G-H. Allard. "Jean Scot et la logique des propositions contraires" in *From Athens to Chartres. Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought. Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeauneau,* ed. Jan Westra Haijo (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 181–194. For more on Eriugena's place in the history of medieval thought and theology see M. Cappuyns, *Jean Scot Erigène sa vie, son œuvre, sa pensée* (Paris, Louvain: Desclée de Brouwer, 1933); Édouard, Jeauneau, *Études érigéniennes* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987); D. Moran, *The Philosophy of John Scottus Eriugena. A Study of Idealism in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); John J. O'Meara, *Eriugena* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

[24] Ibid., *DP* I, 1. …*quid est aliud philosophia tractare, nisi uerae religionis, qua summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, deus, et humiliter colitur et rationabiliter inuestigatur, regulas exponere? Conficitur inde ueram esse philosophiam ueram religionem conuersumque ueram religionem esse ueram philosophiam.*

What is striking in this formulation is that, following Augustine's phrasing,[25] Eriugena identifies philosophy with religion and claims that religion and philosophy are one and the same. What does this mean for Eriugena? According to him, philosophy and religion coincide in having one common goal, that is, "the origin and primary cause of all things – God" (*summa et principalis omnium rerum causa, deus*). Their confluence goes further since the means to achieve this goal is not only faith; the logical rules that philosophy contains should by necessity be applied to questions of religion. As Eriugena claims, God is sought *rationally* (*rationabiliter inuestigatur*), which is the same as worshipping God (*humiliter colitur*). What Eriugena also stresses in this phrase is that religion can only be genuine if it is philosophy, that is, if it is based on logical rules, and vice-versa – philosophy is true only if it coincides with religion, that is, if it searches for God. For John Scot, faith was the same as rational reasoning on theological matters, and, consequently, the truth of reason and the Truth of faith (revelation) are one and the same. In light of this discussion, John Scot's expressive definition of the art of disputation as the truth (*...ad ipsam disputandi disciplinam, quae est ueritas...*) can be also explained in the way that dialectic is the discipline that can achieve divine Truth.

Being indispensable in theological questions, dialectic automatically becomes a powerful means of salvation (*humanae salutis caput*). Moreover, this discipline was bestowed on an individual by God himself.[26] It belongs to the same category of God's gifts as free will, that is, one that can be used for both intentions – good as well as bad.[27] Dialectic, being God's gift, belongs not to man's nature in the sense of constituting his nature; nevertheless, it is rooted in his nature, and should not be forgotten, disregarded or neglected. According to John Scot, this faculty needs training and strengthening because it is essential for the fulfillment of the primary goal of people, that is, salvation.

Quae, dum multifariam diuersisque modis diuidatur, bis binas tamen partes principales ad omnem questionem soluendam necessarias habere dinoscitur.

[25] Augustine, *De vera religione*, PL 34, col. 126. *Sic enim creditur et docetur, quod est humanae salutis caput, non aliam esse philosophiam, id est sapientiae studium, et aliam religionem, cum hi, quorum doctrinam non approbamus, nec sacramenta nobiscum communicant.*

[26] *DP* VII, 1. *...disputandi quae dicitur dialectica peritus, quae nullo dubitante a deo homini donatur, si uoluerit bene uti, quoniam ad hoc certissime data est...*

[27] Ibid., Eriugena follows the later Augustine's theory of God's gifts, according to which there are three types of gift, that is, great (*magna bona*), middle (*media*), and inferior (*minima*) good. Justice, prudence, temperance, etc. belong to the first type of God's gift; the free choice of a man and dialectic belong to the second; and the beauty of worldly things belongs to the last group.

The scope in which John Scot applies logic in the treatise – the variety of types of arguments and syllogisms and the frequency of their application – is impressive.[28] As Mainoldi points out, the *DP* itself can be considered "*un grande sillogismo.*"[29] To illustrate John Scot's application of logic to theological questions, I will take his proof that God's predestination belongs to the substance of God. John Scot uses an argument "from definition"

– Divine predestination is preparation and disposition of all things before the creation;[30]
– Before the creation there was nothing except God, but the predestination of God was before creation;
– Therefore, the predestination of God is God himself and belongs to his nature.[31]

This proof and statement on the unity of predestination and God's substance is crucial for Eriugena's theology, and, as I will show below, it was criticized by John Scot's opponents.

Thus, for Eriugena, dialectic as a technique of correct reasoning cannot be used without searching for the divine Truth; in the same way, philosophical reasoning does not stand alone without faith and seeking for redemption. Eriugena refers to his method in various ways, but in this apparent diversity there is a stable unity – the unity of intellectual endeavor and religious experience.

Prudentius and Florus: *doctrina coelestis* contra *doctrina mundana*

Prudentius' *ContraJS* and Florus' *AduersusJS*, although different in style, exegesis, and extent, have many common features. Prudentius and Florus discuss the *DP* in detail, chapter-by-chapter, analyzing and refuting John Scot's theses, attending to minor contradictions as well as correcting the "gravest errors." These works precisely follow Eriugena's treatise in their structures; they are divided into nineteen chapters, and in each chapter they comment on a corresponding one

---

[28] The detailed analysis of Eriugena's application of the means of dialectic can be found in Giulio d'Onofrio, *Fons scientiae. La dialettica nell'Occidente tardo-antico* (Naples: Liguori Editore, 1986).

[29] Mainoldi, *Introduzione*, XLI.

[30] According to Madec, this definition is taken from Augustine's *De dono perseuerantiae, PL*, 45, Cap. XVII, 1018–1019.

[31] *DP*, II, 2. *Est enim diuinia praedestinatio, ut ait Augustinus, onmium quae deus facturus estante saecula preparatio atque dispositio. Si ergo ante saecula nihil creditur et intelligitur praeter solum deum fuisse, praedestinationem autem dei ante omnem creaturam esse nullus sanus ambiguit, colligitur praedestinationem dei ipsum deum esse atque ad naturam eum pertinere.*

from the *DP*. I will consider the works by Prudentius and Florus together because, in my opinion, these theologians are proponents of one and the same exegetical approach.[32]

Florus disputes Eriugena's statement that "every question can be solved with four rules from the whole philosophy:"[33]

> The faith of the Church answers from the contrary statement that the truth of eternal judgment and God's regulation, which are expressed by the word 'predestination,' does not need philosophy, but the apostles and the prophets of God, and it is not in the *quadriuium* of the mundane doctrine, but in one and the true way who said about himself: 'I am the way and truth and life' (John, 14:6).[34]

And as Prudentius formulates:

> For if the discussion is always conducted with the human opinions freely, there would be no lacking of those who dare to struggle against the Truth and who rely on the loquacity of the mundane wisdom. When this pernicious vanity – so much the Christian faith should avoid it! – is known from the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will call all the people to the light; he has chosen not among the philosophers and orators, who might be attendant, proclaiming the Gospels, but he has selected among the humble and fishermen, among whom he has appeared, so that the heavenly doctrine, which was full of virtues, would not have been seen as to require the help of words.[35]

---

[32] For the analysis of Prudentius' and Florus' objections to the contradictions in the *DP* see J. Marenbon, "John Scottus and Carolingian Theology: From the *De Praedestinatione*, Its Background and Its Critiques, to the *Periphyseon*," in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom,* ed. Margaret T. Gibson and Janet L. Nelson, 2nd ed. (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1990), 303–325.

[33] *DP*, I.

[34] Florus, *AduersusJS*, I, 104A. *Cui fides ecclesiae e contrario respondet, ueritatem aeterni judicii et ordinationis dei, quae uocabulo praedestinationis exprimitur, non esse requirendam philosophis, sed apostolis et prophetis dei: nec in mundanae doctrina quadruuiis, sed in una et uera uia, quae dicit de semetipsa: Ego sum uia, ueritas et uita.*

[35] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, I, 1014CD. *Nam si humanis persuasionibus semper disceptare sit liberum, nunquam deesse poterunt qui ueritati audeant reluctari, et de mundanae sapientiae loquacitate confidere: cum hanc nocentissimam uanitatem, quantum debeat fides christiana uitare, ex ipsa domini nostri Jesu Christi institutione cognoscat, qui omnes nationes ad illuminationem fidei uocaturus, non de philosophis aut oratoribus, qui praedicando Euangelio famularentur, elegit, sed de humilibus et piscatoribus, per quos se manifestaret, assumpsit, ne doctrina coelestis, quae erat plena uirtutum, auxilio uideretur indigere uerborum.*

Leaving the rhetoric of these passages aside, one can find sound grounds for John Scot's opponents to disagree with his application of the liberal arts to theological issues.

First, both theologians stressed the separation and principal difference between *doctrina coelestis* (or *doctrina ueritatis*) and *doctrina mundana* – the heavenly doctrine, the doctrine of the Truth, and the mundane doctrine. The first doctrine contains the mysteries of the divine realm, while the second one comprises the laws of the created world. The natures of these doctrines, as is implied in the passages, are different: if the first holds the divine Truth, the second is based on human wisdom.

Second, particular approaches are required to penetrate the spheres of both doctrines. These approaches, since the doctrines have different roots, are specific to each of them. Thus, everything that belongs to the created world is the field of exercise of the human mind (which is the part of the created world) and the proper tools to be applied for its study are those of the liberal arts.[36] The "tools" that are applicable to the celestial doctrine should be taken from the *disciplinae ecclesiasticae*[37] – "the ecclesiastical discipline." In other places, Florus defines it as *regula fidei* – "the rule of faith," which, according to him, is "the testimony of the divine Scriptures and attestation of the teaching of the Fathers."[38] As Prudentius emphasizes, to penetrate the mysteries of the celestial teaching one should use "the fourfold way" of the Gospels, and keep to four traditional methods of biblical exegesis – historical, ethical, allegorical, and anagogic.[39]

Third, an important implication of the separation between mundane and heavenly doctrines is that an application of the tools of one of them to the issues of another is impossible. Thus, according to Prudentius and Florus, the divine

---

[36] Prudentius' and Florus' sharp attacks on dialectic do not reflect their rejection of the liberal arts in general. The negative rhetoric of the fragments, in my opinion, should be understood only towards application of the liberal arts to the *doctrina coelestis*.

[37] Florus' formulation. Florus, *AduersusJS*, II, 110A.

[38] Ibid., II, 108B. *Ecce quanta proposuit, imo uelut omnibus sequenda et nemini dijudicanda, absque ullo testimonio scripturae diuinae, absque ulla attestatione paternae doctrinae, tam multipliciter definiuit. Sed nos, domino adjuuante, uigilanter singula discutentes, quid de eis juxta fidei regulam sentiendum sit discernamus.*

[39] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, Epilogus, 1352AB. *Relinque quadriuium uanitatis, quod sequens extorris uiae factus es ueritatis. Quanto melius, quantoque salubrius ageres, si uni uerae sempiternaque uia innitens, quadriga illius humilis uehi, quam quadriuii tui inflatus typho raptum ire in diuersa diligeres! Quadriga huius uiae sunt quatuor euangelia, uno paradisi fonte manantia, quibus nobis uia panditur salutaris. Quadriga huius uiae quatuor sunt uirtutes prudentia, temperantia, fortitudo, justitia, quibus omnis morum probitas uenustatur. Quadriga huius uiae sunt quatuor diuinorum eloquiorum species historica, ethica, allegorica, anagogica, quibus ad omnem sacrarum litterarum intellectum, illuminante gratia eius, inducimur.*

Truth by nature cannot be an object of human wisdom (*mundana sapientia*). It is not a field for the exercise of human opinions and persuasions (*humanis persuasionibus*), but of faith, and solid and immutable, although hidden, knowledge, which can only be found in the testimonies of the Bible and the Holy Fathers.

Fourth, John Scot erred, the theologians point out, by confusing methodologies that are mutually exclusive. One discipline searches for the divine Truth, while other explores things in the created world. Eriugena, as his opponents accused him, applied the liberal arts – the worldly discipline – to divine matters to which they are not applicable.

Thus, Prudentius and Florus claim the human world is the field of competence of the liberal arts. The world of divine wisdom, on the contrary, is not the place for human reasoning, but only for *doctrina ueritatis* or *ecclesiascticae disciplina* that dwell in it. As Prudentius sums it up, "one thing is to speculate on the human world and another is to treat divine matters."[40]

Application of Dialectic: Inconsistency of the Method?

One of the major points on which Florus and Prudentius disagree with John Scot is his assertion that God not predestines to damnation and that there is only predestination of the elect to eternal bliss. Eriugena, as I stated above, based his arguments on the principle of the unity of the divine substance, which allows him to attribute predestination to the substance of God and identify predestination with foreknowledge.[41] The arguments that the theologians proposed against Eriugena's positions, in my opinion, are worth discussing in detail.

If the usual methods of refuting John Scot's theses were references to the Church Fathers and the Bible and comments on them or pointing out inconsistencies in Eriugena's statements,[42] the issue of whether God predestined to death and punishment was discussed and resolved by both theologians with the help of the categories. I will follow Prudentius' argumentation. Prudentius starts his refutation from the reference to the categories.[43] As he notes, there are ten categories, among which, one is the primary – *usia* – while the other nine are accidents (*accidentia, id est quae accident in substantia*). The category of relation,

---

[40] Ibid., IX, 1120A. …*aliud est enim diuina, aliud humana tractari.*

[41] See *DP*, II, III.

[42] Thus, for example, Florus points out the contradiction between the assertion that predestination is said of God substantially and the statement that predestination can be referred to God only from its similitude to temporal things. Florus, *AduersusJS*, IX, 157BC.

[43] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, II, 1037A–1039A.

Prudentius emphasizes, belongs to accidents, but not to the substance. One can say of a man, for example, that he is "a man" (*homo*), which means that he refers to man's substance which is permanent and does not change with time. On the other hand, if one says of a man that he is "one who determines" (*destinator*), he uses a predication which belongs to accidents. a) It does not say anything about the substance of a man, because the substance of a man does not change throughout his life, but it might be the case that a man is "one who determines" not all the time, but only during some periods of his life. b) The predication "one who determines" belongs rather to the category of a relation, because "one who determines" exists only in relation to something which he determines and vice-versa – a thing which is determined, of necessity, is determined by someone. Thus, a man can be called "a man" all the time, while "one who determines" does so only when there is something determined by him, which is why "determination" is said of a man not substantially, but accidentally.

Everything, as Prudentius continues, that can be said of God is said of him either according to substance or according to relation (*secundum substantiam, aut secundum relationem*); either properly or figuratively (*uel proprie, uel translate*). In the same way as with the predications of a man, the word "predestination" said of God implies, on the one hand, God, who predestines, and, on the other, the world and creatures that God predestines, and since "this relation in God refers partly to God himself and partly to created things,"[44] the predications "one who predestines," as well as "creator," "maker," "regulator," "judge" etc. (*creator, factor, ordinator, judex...*) belong to the category of relation and they are said of God relatively. In contrast, the predications "wisdom," "knowledge," "goodness," etc. (*sapientia*, *scientia*, *bonitas...*) refer to God substantially because they are said of him without reference to something else, but only to the substance of God. Therefore, Prudentius concludes, predestination is not said of God substantially.[45]

Since "predestination" does not refer to the substance of God, but to things that he arranges, regulates, and wills to happen, it is not a mistake to say that the predestination of God is multiple. For, to say "God's predestinations" does not imply a multiplicity of God's substance, but only the multiplicity of his ordinations and operations in the created world which can be as manifold as the things that

---

[44] Ibid., II, 1037D. ... *quae tamen relatio in deo partim ad se, partim ad creaturas refertur...*

[45] Ibid., II, 138A. *...conficitur ergo nullatenus destinationem de deo essentialiter praedicari...*

have been created.[46] Therefore, Prudentius concludes, Eriugena commits an error in referring predestination to the substance of God and claiming that there is only the predestination of those elected to salvation.

Furthermore, the problem of language and its applicability to the divinity was solved by Prudentius differently from the way John Scot proposes.[47] Prudentius agrees with Eriugena that any signs and words taken from similarity to corporal things and applied to the "ineffable divine nature" do not have enough power of signification. Nevertheless, Prudentius, a theologian, argues that when it comes to interpretation of divine actions revealed in the Scriptures, God wants and ordains man to predicate the words in the proper sense.[48] Therefore, the predications "foreknowledge" and "predestination" refer to God properly, and they should be understood as literally signifying, on the one hand, knowledge, and, on the other hand, the establishment and determination of things and events that are going to be. Thus, the solid "authority of the divine eloquence," according to Prudentius, does not allow the interpretation of the Scriptures from contrariety as Eriugena declares. Moreover, as Florus claims, Eriugena's method of direct negation of biblical affirmations is not only dangerous, but it makes no sense. Since the Scriptures' formulations contain the utmost truth, to claim that the truth is not a truth is insane.[49]

Another interesting passage in Prudentius' critical work which I think is worth considering is devoted to a discussion of the nature of man.[50] John Scot claims that the substance of a man, who was created according to the image of God, is rational free will (*uoluntas libera rationalis*),[51] and that the nature of man

---

[46] Florus' argument is similar to that of Prudentius. Florus also states that to predicate "predestination" to the substance of God is impossible; "predestination" can be said of God only relatively since it refers to the created world. See Florus, *AduersusJS*, II, 108C–112A.

[47] *DP*, IX, 1. *Ubi primo notandum, quoniam nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse.*

[48] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, IX, 1118D–1119A. *Uerum est quidem illam ineffabilem, incorpoream immutabilemque naturam quae est trinitas, unus et uerus deus, nullis corporalium rerum signis ac uocibus proferre ualere: quantum tamen ipso uniuersitates auctore datur atque conceditur ipsis quibus humanam naturam uti dedit, uerborum significationibus, pro munere distribuentis, et capacitate sumentis, digne quae sua sunt uoluit institut praedicari.*

[49] Florus, *AduersusJS*, X, 158CD.

[50] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, IV, 1050D–1052C.

[51] *DP*, IX, 1. *Ubi primo notandum, quoniam nihil digne de deo dicitur, omnia poene siue nominum siue uerborum aliarumque orationis partium signa proprie de deo dici non posse.*

has three attributes – *esse*, *uelle* and *scire* – "to be," "to will," and "to know."[52] Prudentius, on the contrary, argues that the will and knowledge do not constitute the nature of man, but they rather belong to God's gifts, serving as "ornaments" (*ornamenta*) of the substance of man.[53] The nature of man, he continues, was created according to the image of God, is not as *uelle* and *scire*, but as a rational soul (*rationalis mens*).[54]

In order to prove his point, Prudentius resorts to reasoning based on syllogisms, which can be recapitulated as follows:

Everything created is established by God as a source.

Whatever is established by a supremely good source is good.

Therefore, everything created is good.

Then, taking the conclusion of this syllogism as a minor premise, Prudentius continues:

Not every human volition is good, since there are evil volitions

(Everything created by God is good)

Therefore, human volition is not a creature of God. [55]

The general conclusion that Prudentius draws from these syllogisms is that "the will and knowledge of man do not belong to his substance, but they are God's gifts imposed on the substance of man,"[56] which is quite important for Prudentius argumentation against the role of the free will of man stressed in Eriugena's treatise.

The difference of views between Eriugena and Prudentius on the nature of man also implies an important theological and anthropological issue, the concept

---

[52] Ibid., IV, 6. *Quamuis enim beatam uitam peccando perdidit, substantiam suam non amisit quae est esse, uelle et scire. Est enim et uult et scit, uult se esse et scire, scit se esse et uelle.*

[53] Prudentius, *ContraJS*, IV, 1051A. *Sed esse est eius natura atque substantia; uelle et scire non sunt eius substantia atque natura, sed ornamenta substantiae, dono conditoris attributa.*

[54] Florus, however, is of a different opinion. He argues that the substance of man is not to be, to will and to know, but body and soul in inseparable connection. He stresses that these three attributes belong to the human soul, but the substance of man is a soul and a body together. Florus, *AduersusJS*, IV, 129A–130B.

[55] Ibid., IV, 1052BC. *Cum enim constet quod omnia quae creata sunt, deo auctore sint condita, nimirum liquet quia omnia quae auctor summe bonus condidit bona sunt, attestante scriptura:* Et uidit deus cuncta quae fecerat, et erant ualde bona (Gen. 1:33) *Patet ergo quod omnis creatura dei, sicut apostolus ait, bona est.* Nulla creatura dei non est bona (I Tim. 4:4)*; omnis autem uoluntas hominis non est bona, quaedam enim uoluntas mala: non est igitur uoluntas hominis creatura dei; nulla enim creatura dei mala, nonulla autem hominis uoluntas mala.*

[56] Ibid., IV, 1052B. *Unde luce clarius colligitur quod uoluntas hominis atque scientia non sunt eius substantia, sed dona dei indita humanae substantiae, id est animae rationali.*

of the image and likeness of God. As I have shown above, Eriugena claims that the substance of man is a three-fold unity – *esse*, *uelle* and *scire* – which means that these three modalities are parts of God's image. Prudentius, however, stating that will and knowledge do not belong to the substance of man, implies that the image of God according to which man was created includes only one modality – *esse* – while *uelle* and *scire* were granted by God only after creation.

These discussions on the predications of God and the nature of man reveal interesting issues. They show not only the mastery and maturity of the theologians in applying philosophical terminology to theological questions, but also in formulating their theological ideas philosophically, which moves this debate onto a philosophical level.

Thus, the predestination controversy had particular significance for the development of Carolingian exegesis. An uncertainty in the received theological tradition and the necessity to establish the proper interpretation of the biblical passages and the testimonies of the Holy Fathers on the predestination question led to the problem of methodology. One of the exegetic strategies was formulated and used during the debate by John Scot Eriugena. He consistently applied techniques borrowed from the liberal arts in resolving theological difficulties. For Eriugena, philosophy and theology formed an inseparable unity, and, consequently, the truth that philosophy seeks is the Truth of religion.

Another methodology for dealing with the Scriptural Truth was proposed by Eriugena's opponents Florus and Prudentius, who were forced to formulate it as a way of confronting Eriugena's method. Prudentius and Florus claim that one should distinguish the principles of theology and the principles of philosophy from each other, something John Scot had confused. Solid knowledge found in the testimonies of the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers is the only source where the divine Truth is revealed. Furthermore, the very language of the self-revelation of God in the holy texts, according to these theologians, is superior to the language of the arts of the *triuium*, which was invented by human reason alone.

In order to *prove* that Eriugena's theological ideas were without foundation, however, Prudentius and Florus themselves could not avoid applying the tools of logic. Although their application of categories and even syllogisms had a rather random character, this particular case is curious in that it shows the complicated intellectual situation in the mid-ninth century.

As this theological and methodological conflict reveals, both theology and philosophy were in the process of establishing their "territories." If philosophy, generally speaking, tried to expand the limits of its application to the scope of theology, theology took an active position in defending its own independence

and showing philosophy the limits it should not step over. This rejection created an opposition (which, however, was formulated only by theology) between philosophical and theological approaches. On the other hand, the polemical language of authority and logical reasoning was common to all the participants, although it was applied to various extents and with different nuances and stresses.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN JOHN BURIDAN

Zita V. Tóth

There is little point in enumerating all the diverse opinions that still mark the study of medieval natural philosophy, especially its methodology. It is enough to point out that while some authors criticize medieval science for its over-rationality,[1] others argue that modern science emerged precisely because of the refutation of over-empiricism that had characterized its medieval antecedent.[2] The present article picks out only one particular aspect of this cluster of problems, together with one specific author, that is, the meaning and role of 'experiment' in the treatise on vacuum in the *Physics* commentary of John Buridan. While the experimental method is often regarded as a main characteristic of modern science, distinguishing it from its predecessors, John Buridan (ca. 1300–1358) was undoubtedly the most influential natural philosopher in fourteenth-century Paris.[3] Thus, examining this crucial concept in the natural philosophy of Buridan might help to situate it in the more general medieval framework; beside this, this examination will also have some consequences regarding the much-debated issue of the relationship between Buridan's methodological practice and theory. In the first section I present an overview and a possible categorization of Buridan's experiments which shows that these experiments were in certain respects remarkably different from those that are regarded as experiments today. In the second section I examine how these experiments relate to Buridan's theory of science and argue that his methodological practice is strongly dependent on his methodological theory.

---

[1] E.g., Richard Hooykaas, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), 87.

[2] Peter Dear, *Discipline and Experience: The Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 4, 29–30.

[3] Buridan has received increasing attention over the last few decades. For a philosophical introduction to his logic, semantics, and metaphysics, see Gyula Klima, *John Buridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). For a more historical study of his life, see Jack Zupko, *John Buridan: Portrait of a Fourteenth-Century Arts Master* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003).

Zita V. Tóth

Experiments and Imaginations: A Possible Taxonomy

Throughout his commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, and especially in the questions on the vacuum,[4] Buridan uses several kinds of arguments, from purely logical reasoning to experimental examples. His "experiments" include simple everyday observations, some more designed experiments, as well as experiments that probably were never performed but were believed on authority, together with some even more abstract demonstrations *secundum imaginationem*.

A. Secundum Experientiam*: Experience and Observation*

The first group of examples Buridan uses to support or demonstrate his theses are the performed, or at least *in theory* performable experiments. One might further divide this category into that of simple everyday observations, more specific experiences, and in-theory-performable but in fact not performed experiments. (These are, of course, not categories with sharp-cut borders, and one might also draw the divisions differently.)

(1) Simple Observations

There are certain experiments that are more just a direct kind of awareness of everyday phenomena. Thus, before presenting the main argument against the possibility of vacuum, Buridan raises some objections indicating an opposite conclusion.[5]

One of them derives from local movement. If straight local movement exists, void also has to exist because a body, moving along a straight line, obviously moves to *some* place. Now if in that place there is nothing, then some void exists; if there is a body, then – since two bodies cannot be at the same place at the same time – this body also has to move. However, in this latter case, repeating the question for this second body and so on, the absurd consequence would follow that whenever something moves rectilinearly, the whole of the heavens would have to move with it. As can be observed, a premise of the argument – which argument, to be sure, can already be found in almost exactly the same form in Aristotle as well as in Grosseteste's and John of Jandun's commentary[6] – is grounded in experience, namely that there *is* something that moves rectilinearly.

---

[4] That is, book IV, questions 7–11 in the same work.

[5] All of them may be found in the *Questiones super octo libros Physicorum libros Aristotelis* (Paris: 1509, Reprint: Frankfurt a. M.: Minerva, 1964) (hereafter 'QP'), IV, q. 7.

[6] Robertus Grosseteste, *Commentarius in VIII Libros Physicorum Aristotelis,* ed. R. Dales (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 1963) (hereafter 'GQP'), 85; also *Ioannis de Ianduno*

The other three objections found in the same *questio* are similar; they argue from rarefaction, condensation, and augmentation. The argument is, again, rather simple. If rarefaction, condensation, or augmentation exists, then void also has to exist; but one can observe the former, therefore the conclusion (i.e., there is void) follows. Condensation or rarefaction is usually imagined as a kind of local movement where the particles comprising the matter either come closer to or move further away from each other, respectively. That, however, is not possible without the void either receiving the particles (as in the argument taken from local movement) or without vacuum being produced between them.[7]

These examples, therefore, are not so much experiences of a concrete instance than that of a general principle or characteristics of nature. Buridan does not direct the reader to specific examples of rectilinear motion; he only refers to the general phenomenon. While replying to these objections, he does not consider the above experiences as experiences, but only their – previously incorrect – explanation. The key to his reply lies in the concept of condensation and rarefaction, which, according to Buridan, are not describable by local movement, but are quantitative changes, enabling in turn straight local movement and augmentation as well.[8]

(2) Specific Experiences

In the same part of the same question, however, Buridan also uses some other specific experiments which require a more attentive design or more creative interpretation. Showing that condensation and rarefaction must indeed exist, he refers to the experience of fermenting wine. As he describes it, wine fermenting in a well-sealed jar can increase in volume to such a degree that it can break the jar; or, air could be rarefied in such a way that if a sealed jar is only half-filled with wine this wine can come out through a hole in the bottom, although nothing enters the jar to refill it. Condensation can also be observed if a bottle is heated above a fire and its orifice put into water afterwards; in this case, when the air in the bottle cools down, it condenses, so that the water ascends in the bottle. Moreover, if a slat is bent intensely, as in the case of a bow, its concave surface

---

philosophi acutissimi super octo libros Aristotelis de Physico auditu subtilissimae quaestiones (Paris: 1551, Reprint: Frankfurt a. M.: Minerva, 1969) (hereafter 'JQP'), fol. 59 rb B.
[7] QP fols. 72 vb–73 ra; it is also found in Grosseteste, GQP 85, and in John of Jandun, JQP fol. 59 rb B.
[8] QP IV, q. 11.

will be much shorter than the convex one, which can only come about by the violent condensation of the interior, and the rarefaction of the exterior parts.[9]

A similarly common, concrete example was meant to support Buridan's thesis that nature abhors a vacuum. The experiment was made with a hollow reed with one end placed in wine; if someone, having the other end of the straw in his mouth, draws up the air that was in the reed, the wine follows the air upwards although it is heavy. That shows that nature prevents the formation of a vacuum so strongly that it forces the wine to follow the air immediately whenever the air is drawn out.[10] Similarly to the previous examples, this experience must have been rather common, and indeed, many similar descriptions can be found from antiquity.[11]

In another place, Buridan makes use of the example of the pendulum. Having argued that the medium through which a body descends is not the only resisting force that can cause finite speed in the motion of a falling heavy body, he refers to the lead in the pendulum, which, while moving, is not only resisted by the air, but even more by the cord tied to it.[12]

As these examples already suggest, there are some remarkable characteristics in the medieval concept of *experimentum* which seem not to be found in the modern one. First, as with the pendulum or the fermenting wine in a jar, the experiments do not necessarily require more than observations from everyday life. And this is their advantage: they would have hardly been questioned by anyone, and were, indeed, widely used in natural philosophical reasoning. In the thirteenth century, for instance, Arnald of Villanova explicitly argues in favor of everyday experiences:

> For since the properties of things cannot be discovered by reason but only by experiment or revelation, and experience and revelation are common to the ordinary man and to the scholar, it is possible that knowledge of properties may be attained by the common people sooner than by others.[13]

---

[9] QP fol. 77 vb.

[10] QP fol. 73 va.

[11] For its history, see Edward Grant, *Much Ado about Nothing: Theories of Space and Vacuum from the Middle Ages to the Scientific Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 80–81; it is also apparent in Roger Bacon *Questiones Supra Libros Octo Physicorum Aristotelis,* ed. F. M. Delorme (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), 230, and in JQP fol. 60 vb E.

[12] QP fol. 75 ra.

[13] *Repetitio super vita brevis;* quoted and transl. by Lynn Thorndike, "Roger Bacon and Experimental Method in the Middle Ages," *The Philosophical Review* 23 (1914): 289: *Nam cum notitiam proprietatum non possit haberi per rationem sed tum experimento vel revelatione, et experientia*

Therefore, if one were to acquire knowledge of the properties of things, one should not despise the experiences of everyday people but rather use them. Buridan does so not only in these *questiones,* but throughout his commentary; he uses experience in arguments even in the famous passage of the impetus-theory, where he refers to such instances as the smith's mill, or a loaded ship pulled on a river.[14]

Secondly, the medieval concept was broader than the modern one in yet another sense. As Roger Bacon notes,

> All doubted [things] become known by certitude, and all errors are dissolved by the solid truth. But in mathematics we can come to the entirety of truth without error, and to all certitude without doubt: because in mathematics we come to truth by demonstration through the proper and necessary cause [*demonstrationem per causam propriam et necessariam*]. And the demonstration makes us to know the truth. And similarly, it also contains *the sensible example of everything, and the sense experience of drawing and counting, so that everything is manifest to the senses*: because of this, we cannot have doubt in mathematics.[15]

According to Bacon, mathematics is the most certain of the sciences precisely because it is *experiential*: all of its theses and demonstrations rely on experience. Experience is, therefore, anything that can be observed, be it a sensory experience of external objects, an observed figure in geometry, or even our own act of counting.

What clearly distinguishes this concept of *experience* – together with the first two kinds of Buridan's *experientia* – from modern *experiments* (the medieval authors usually used the two terms interchangeably) is the concept of experiment as intervention, which can be clearly seen in a passage by Francis Bacon stating what is explicitly denied by Aristotle. According to Bacon, "the secrets of nature reveal themselves more readily under the vexations of art than when they go their

---

et revelationes sunt communes vulgo et sapientibus, possibile est ut proprietatum notitiae prius habeantur a vulgaribus quam ab aliis.

[14] Cf. QP VIII, q. 12.

[15] *The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon,* ed. John H. Bridges (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), I, 105–106. (Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine; also my emphasis here): *Omne dubium fit notum per certum et omnis error evacuatur per solidam veritatem. Sed in mathematica possumus devenire ad plenam veritatem sine errore, et ad omnium certitudinem sine dubitatione: quoniam in ea convenit haberi demonstrationem per causam propriam et necessariam. Et demonstratio facit nos cognosci veritatem. Et similiter in ea contingit haberi ad omnia exemplum sensibile, et experientiam sensibilem figurando et numerando ut omnia ad sensum manifestentur: propter quod non potest esse dubitatio in ea.*

own way."[16] On the contrary, in the *Physics*, Aristotle clearly distinguished between things by nature and things created by art; the *differentia specifica* of the former is precisely that they contain their principles of motion in themselves.[17] Thus, nature is nature *just insofar as* it goes its own way; it can only be observed as long as it remains undisturbed. The Baconian concept of nature, which today is rather obvious for scientists, would have been extremely problematic for an ancient as well as for a medieval thinker: the principles of nature cannot be studied unless allowed to act spontaneously.[18]

(3) Not Performed Experiments

Buridan's third kind of experiment are those that were described but presumably not performed by Buridan or his readers; their outcome was accepted either because an authority or a supposedly expert person affirmed it, or because it easily followed from already accepted principles.

One of the most interesting examples of this category is the following *experimentum,* presented again as a *sed contra* argument in favor of the existence of vacuum. If there is a pot filled with ashes, one can pour just as much water in it as if it were empty. The advocate of the possibility of vacuum interprets the experiment by saying that this is only possible if a void exists between the specks of the ashes.[19] (The other variant, the existence of two bodies in the same place, is dismissed as evidently self-contradictory.)

This experiment already appears in Aristotle, who, in turn, traces it back to earlier authors not mentioned by name.[20] Averroes's treatment of it is worth quoting in its entirety, for his treatment is the one Buridan refers to in his solution.

> And there is another argument, which is brought up as a proof by those who say that vacuum exists. Namely, they say that the same jar receives just as much water when it is full of ashes as when it is empty. And this I have not experienced, but if it is indeed so as they say, it has no other reason than the water being destroyed by the ashes, either entirely, if we assumed that between the parts of ashes there is no air distributed

---

[16] Francis Bacon, *The New Organon and Related Writings*, ed. Fulton H. Anderson (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1960), 95 (*Novum Organum* I, 98).

[17] Cf. *Physics* 192 b8-35.

[18] Bacon's concept of nature was not without antecedents. The vexation of art is most apparent in medieval magic, which in this respect, is truly a forerunner of modern science. See Frances Amelia Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

[19] QP fol. 73 va.

[20] *Physics*, 213 b20.

in such a way that no parts of it remain in it (except some quality); or it is destroyed partly, and parts of the air, which is mixed with the ashes, emerge, while some parts of the ashes are dissolved. And this latter is more probable. And its sign is that when the ashes are squeezed, some parts of the water come out of them, but not all, and when the ashes dry out, [their quantity] becomes less than it was before.[21]

The passage, in itself, is quite obscure. Buridan summarizes its content saying that if the ashes are hot and dry then they cause a great part of the water to evaporate, while the remainder can enter into the fine parts of the ashes which were previously occupied by the air.[22] What is, however, more important from a methodological point of view is that Averroes, as he rightly admits, never performed the experiment – this might at least partly explain its obscurity – but concerning its outcome, he believes those who allegedly carried it out. Interestingly, Autrecourt, when describing the experiment with reference to Averroes, accuses him of "neglecting such an easy experiment."[23] Whether he himself made it, of course, cannot be determined, but it is at least questionable.

Buridan probably never performed it either. However, this "neglect" of Averroes, as well as of Buridan whose solution was the same, is partly explainable by the fact that their main point did not concern the experiment *as* an experiment, but was rather about its theoretical interpretation. Averroes could have, for example, objected to the circumstances or means of its performance or could have questioned its outcome, which neither he nor his medieval followers did. Averroes gave another explanation for the same observable phenomenon, showing therefore that this observation alone does not necessarily involve the existence of a vacuum. Accordingly, Buridan also does not discuss the experiment itself, and

---

[21] Averroes, *Aristotelis De Physico Auditu Libri Octo, Cum Averrois Cordubensis Variis in Eosdem Commentariis* (Venetiis apud iunctas, 1562, Reprint: Frankfurt a. M.: Minerva, 1962), fol. 149M-150A: *Et hec est alia ratio particularis: et induxit ipsam pro testimonio dicentium vacuum esse. Dicunt nam quod idem vas tantum capit de aqua quando est plenum cinere, quantum capit de aqua quando est vacuum. Et ex hoc non sum expertus, et si est, sicut dicunt, non habet aliam causam nisi quia aqua corrumpitur a cinere, aut secundum totum, si dixerimus quod inter partes cineris non est aer divisus ita quod ex eo non remaneat in eo nisi qualitas tantum, aut corrumpantur ex ea partes aliquae, et aeri, qui est mixtus cum cinere, succedunt ex eo partes aliques, et dissolvuntur a cinere aliae partes, et hoc est verius. Et signum eius est quoniam quando cinis exprimitur exit quedam pars aque ab eo et non tota, et quando cinis desiccatur, revertitur minor quam erat.*

[22] QP fol. 73 vb.

[23] *The Universal Treatise of Nicholas of Autrecourt,* transl. R. Arnold et al. (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1971), 94.

he even omits the closing words of Averroes's passage where the Commentator at least gives a reason for choosing one interpretation over the other.

There is another experiment with a rather long history that is meant to prove that nature abhors vacuum, that is, that "we cannot separate one body from another, unless some other body intervenes."[24] By expelling the air from a bellows, which results in its sides collapsing and coming into contact, and by completely closing all its openings so that no air could enter, Buridan argues that their surfaces can never be separated. "Not even twenty horses could do it if ten were to pull on one side and ten on the other,"[25] he claims, so greatly does nature resist the possibility of producing a vacuum.

This bellows experiment, which for Buridan was an experiment against the possibility of nature producing a void, later had quite a bright career.[26] In this form, it cannot be found either in Grosseteste or in Roger Bacon (the latter, though, uses far more *experimenta* than Buridan does), but in a much less elaborated form it is apparent in the *Physics* commentary of John of Jandun,[27] who describes it briefly as if it would have been familiar and evident to his readers.

Later, it was used by the Jesuits in the *Physics* commentary written at the University of Coimbra and in the *Physics* commentary of Franciscus Toletus.[28] When, however, it encountered the anti-Aristotelian supporters of the vacuum in the sixteenth century, the experiment took a new turn. Bernardino Telesio, for example, transforms the whole experiment by stating that the sides of the bellows could be easily separated if the force applied was large enough and the bellows strongly built. He insists that the scholastics failed precisely because they did not pay much attention to the appropriate means and circumstances of the experiment. He uses, therefore, basically the same experiment as Buridan (but with a different outcome) to show exactly the opposite thesis; as he explains, when the sides of the bellows are separated, void is produced between them.[29]

Then, the history moves on to Otto von Guericke, the inventor of the air pump in the second half of the 1650s, who was perhaps the first person

---

[24] QP IV, q. 7, fol. 73 va: *Nos experimur quod non possumus unam corpus ab alio separare quin interveniat aliud corpus.*

[25] Ibid: *Immo nec viginti equi hoc posset si decem traherent ad unam partem et decem ad aliam.*

[26] For sixteenth-century developments, see Charles B. Schmitt, "Experimental Evidence for and against a Void: The Sixteenth-Century Arguments," *Isis* 58 (1967): 352–366.

[27] JQP IV, q. 11, fol. 60 vb

[28] For quotation and full references, see Charles B. Scmitt, "Experimental Evidence for and against a Void…", 355.

[29] Bernardino Telesio, *De Rerum Natura*, ed. Vincenzo Spampanato, 3 vols. (Modena: Formiggini, 1910–1923), vol. I, 88.

to actually perform the experiment. He joined two copper hemispheres (the so-called "Magdeburg hemispheres") and pumped the air out of the sphere; then, tying eight horses to each hemisphere, he showed that they could not separate them. As can be seen, the outcome of the experiment – although the means are slightly different from Buridan's – is the same; Guericke, however, like Bernardino Telesio, draws the opposite conclusion and interprets his experiment as disproving the hypothesis of *horror vacui.*[30]

In Buridan's case, however, this *experimentum* is more of a thought-experiment; whether it was not performed because of technical difficulties (it would not have been easy to pump the air completely out of a bellows, seal it hermetically, and really attach it to twenty horses, especially because the air-pump had not yet been invented), or simply because it was thought to be unnecessary, probably can never be clearly determined. The context and the mode of expression, however, at least indicates that for Buridan it was not a kind of *experimentum crucis* (a concept which did not exist in his time), but only an illustration or example. While he has no doubt about the outcome of the experiment, he does not bother at all about its possible – either technical, or theoretical – difficulties, nor with the question of why would one need twenty horses exactly to demonstrate nature's resistance to a vacuum.

All in all, these experiments (despite their occasional actual falsity, as with the pot with the ashes) were mostly accepted by everyone because other authors confirmed them.[31] This either implicit or explicit reliance on authority was, indeed, a common feature of medieval natural philosophical reasoning.[32] As even Roger Bacon argued,

---

[30] His description of the experiment is found in Otto von Guericke, *Experimenta nova (ut vocatur) Magdeburgica de vacuo spatio* (Amsterdam: Apud Joannem Janssonium a Waesberge, 1672).

[31] Although not in the commentary of Buridan, there is another famous, often-used, but never performed simple false example, which perhaps first appeared in Johannes Canonicus, but was still used in the fifteenth century. Arguing for the possible existence of void, a well-sealed jar full of water is said to have been put outside in winter; when the water freezes, it is said to condense, therefore creating a vacuum above it in the bottle. Had anyone actually tried this experiment they would have noticed that the water actually does not condense but expands when it freezes. For the long history of the argument see Schmitt, "Experimental Evidence for and against a Void…", 357–59.

[32] Another interesting example of "copied experiments," described by Alastair C. Crombie, concerns the determination of the depth of the sea by means that were not available at the time. See Alastair C. Crombie, *Robert Grosseteste and the Origins of Experimental Science: 1100–1700* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), 24.

First one should be credulous until experience follows second and reason comes third. … At first one should believe those who have made experiments or who have faithful testimony from others who have done so, nor should one reject the truth because he is ignorant of it and because he has no argument for it.[33]

Accordingly, the experiment (supposedly) performed by another respected author had the same force in the argumentation as one performed by the author itself. Ancient books are often referred to as *experientiae,* as for instance the *Geometry* of Plinius and Marcianus in Grosseteste.

B. Secundum Imaginationem

The last remark leads to the second main group in Buridan's arguments – the even theoretically unrealizable *secundum imaginationem* demonstrations. Depending on the subject, these thought experiments often occupy the majority of Buridan's argumentation. They are not simple imaginings in the sense that anything could be imagined, but resting on some elementary principles, they proceed according to certain well-defined rules. As Peter King argued,[34] there was a whole genre of philosophical literature which served to establish these rules; the *obligationes* examined precisely what happens if a certain condition, *positum* is given – that is, when one can assent to or reject a sentence following from such a *positum* – even if this *positum* is, in fact, impossible.[35] Most of Buridan's arguments for and against motion in the void are, indeed, of this latter kind, that is, of reasoning *per impossibile*: the initial setting is a specific concept of void (usually the earth being annihilated while the lunar orb remained the same), and the consequences following from this setting and from the principles of the motion of elements and mixed bodies.

Buridan is, again, not the only one who uses *secundum imaginationem* demonstrations in arguing his theses. It was this kind of reasoning that John

---

[33] *The 'Opus Majus' of Roger Bacon,* ed. J. H. Bridges (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), VI, 11: *Unde oportet primo credulitatem fieri, donec secundo sequitur experientia, ut tertio ratio comitetur… . Et ideo in principio debet credere his qui experti sunt, vel qui ab expertis fideliter habuerunt, nec debet reprobare veritatem propter hoc quod eam ignorat et quia ad eam non habet argumentum.*

[34] Peter King, "Medieval Thought-Experiments: The Metamethodology of Medieval Science," in *Thought-Experiments in Science and Philosophy*, ed. T. Horowitz and G. Massey (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1991), 43–64.

[35] A good selection of the *obligationes* can be found in Lambert M. De Rijk, "Some Thirteenth-Century Tracts on the Game of Obligation I–III," *Vivarium* 12 (1974): 94–123, 13 (1975): 22–54 and 14 (1976): 26–42.

Murdoch referred to as "natural philosophy without nature,"[36] or Edward Grant as "empiricism without observation."[37] One can even encounter an interesting thought-experiment in the *Divine Comedy,* where Beatrice is arguing with Dante about the nature of the Moon:

> From such an *instance* (if you will do your part)
> you may escape by experiment (that being
> the spring that feeds the rivers of man's art.
>
> Take three clear mirrors. Let two be set out
> at an equal distance from you, and a third
> between them, but further back. Now turn
>
> to face them, and let someone set a light
> behind your back so that it strikes all three
> and is reflected from them to your sight.
>
> Although the image from the greater distance
> is smaller than the others, you must note
> that all three shine back with an equal brilliance.[38]

There is no sign here that Dante was supposed to really perform the acts designed by Beatrice; it was enough that he *thought of* these acts and their consequences.

It is rather hard to determine what role these various kinds of experiments played in Buridan's overall argumentation. In the first question on the existence of vacuum, the thesis that void does not exist was first proposed as following from direct experience ("from such experimental induction it seems to us that there is no vacuous place"[39]), but the main arguments for this thesis mostly relied on thought experience and logical reasoning. The vacuum is imagined as a result of a certain thought experiment, although this imagination is proved to be impossible by reasons following from the concept and properties of space. The already mentioned bellows experiment and the hollow reed are used as examples supporting or illustrating Buridan's thesis, but the main reason for which the existence of void should be excluded are not these examples. In the case of

---

[36] John E. Murdoch, "The Analytic Character of Late Medieval Learning: Natural Philosophy without Nature," in *Approaches to Nature in the Middle Ages,* ed. L. D. Roberts (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1982): 171–213.

[37] Edward Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy: From the Ancient World to the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 200.

[38] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. John Ciardi (New York: New American Library, 2003), 609–10 (Paradiso, canto II).

[39] QP fol. 73va.

condensation and rarefaction, their existence is again shown by simple observation, but their explanation is provided through logical reasoning. The experiments, like the pot with the ashes, are used as examples, often for the opposite thesis.

Generally speaking, therefore, direct observations are mostly used for proposing a thesis, while they have little role in the argumentation part of the questions. In the naturally impossible cases, direct observation was replaced by particular imaginings such as in the question on the existence of void by the divine power. Nevertheless, the use of these imaginings is rather restricted in the explanations where the main role is played by universal logical reasoning.

Methodological Theory and Methodological Practice

It is a view quite commonly held by historians of science and philosophy that there was a certain inconsistency between methodological theory and practice in the Middle Ages. As Edward Grant once formulated it,

> There is a great anomaly in medieval natural philosophy. Aristotelianism was empirical and rooted in sense perception. … And yet we see very little direct observation in the questions literature on Aristotle's natural books.[40]

A similar view is held by John Murdoch[41] and by David Lindberg[42] as well. However, to elaborate on this anomaly, we should look at Buridan's methodological theory in some more detail.

Buridan, as his contemporaries in general, inherited the requirements of scientific knowledge from Aristotle. Scientific knowledge in this sense is of the necessary, therefore of the eternal; it is universal; it is demonstrated, and it involves knowledge of the causes. There are at least two questions that now have to be answered: what these requirements mean exactly and how they can be obtained

---

[40] Edward Grant, "Natural Philosophy, Theology, and Reason in the Late Middle Ages," Lecture before Department of History and Philosophy of Science, February 4, 2000. (https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/95/HPS%20 LECTURE%202-4-2000?sequence=1, last accessed: March 14, 2011) Also expressed in Edward Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy*, 215–225.

[41] John E. Murdoch, "The Analytic Character of Late Medieval Learning: Natural Philosophy without Nature," in *Approaches to Nature in the Middle Ages*, ed. L. D. Roberts (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1982), 171–213.

[42] David C. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, Prehistory to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 262–263.

in a generally empiricist framework ('empiricist' in the Aristotelian, and not in the British (e.g., Humean) sense).

(1) First, as Buridan makes clear in his commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics,* there are two characteristics of a scientific proposition which guarantee its necessity and eternity: Its subject needs to have a special kind of supposition (*suppositio naturalis*), while its predicate has to be predicated essentially. Essential predications are necessarily true with the presumption of the existence of the supposita of their subject, which is precisely the pre-condition taken care of by their subject having natural supposition. As Buridan makes clear,

> That is called natural supposition, according to which a common term indifferently stands for present, past, and future things.[43]

For example, the sentences "a man will be white," or "a man is sitting," do not have natural supposition, for they can be true at one time and false at another. On the contrary, the sentence "the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles" is not restricted to any time; it is true whenever the sentence is formed, even if in that instance no triangle exists. In this case, then, the subject needs to stand in natural supposition, otherwise, provided that according to the medieval semantic theory the truth of a proposition presupposes the existence of its subject, this mathematical proposition could be true at one time while false at another, which is absurd.

Similarly, therefore, in demonstrative science, all propositions are true regardless of time; the sentence "every human is an animal" or "the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles" are true even if no human beings or no triangles exist, their subjects encompassing all past, present, and future humans or triangles. This kind of supposition enables one to make a universal, necessary statement without knowing whether its subject is actually instantiated.

The other guarantor of the necessary truth of a sentence is that its predicate is predicated essentially on the subject. This criterion is needed because otherwise one could not distinguish between a definition of man as a "bipedal white animal" or as a "rational animal," of which only the second statement catches the essence of being human.

According to Buridan's definition, an essential predicate is one that, contrary to accidental predicates, signifies its *significata* absolutely, not in connection to

---

[43] *Questiones in Duos Aristotilis Libros Posteriorum Analyticorum* (hereafter 'QAnPo') I, q. 16*,* available at http://buridanica.org (last accessed: March 14, 2011): *Vocauerunt tamen suppositionem 'naturalem' secundum quam terminus communis indifferenter supponit <pro> praesentibus, praeteritis et futuris.*

anything external to it.[44] The crucial characteristic of an essential predicate is, therefore, that it can never become false relative to its subject unless that subject ceases to exist.

Furthermore, what we need for an essential predication in scientific sentences is an absolute, substantial, common term, subordinated to a similar concept. Absolute terms, as opposed to connotative ones, are ones that "signify substance without any extraneous connotation."[45] Thus, for example, the term 'human' in the sentence "Socrates is human" is absolute (if Socrates ceases to be a human, he ceases to be at all), while the term 'white' in "Socrates is white" is connotative, since beside Socrates it also connotes his whiteness that does not belong to his essence. What makes essential predication more difficult is the fact that not all connotative terms *manifestly* connote something else beside their *supposita*; that is, not all connotative terms are relative terms.

Second, scientific knowledge must be demonstrated; that is, it has to proceed from first principles that are "indemonstrable because of their evidentness."[46] A demonstration, therefore, has to consist of premises that are either themselves first principles and thus evidently known, or, if they are not, can be further resolved into first principles.

Finally, scientific knowledge also has to involve knowledge of the causes. As Buridan notes, knowledge in the strict sense has to exclude any doubt; but if there were no knowledge of causes, then a doubt would occur about why a thing is such as it is – therefore, it could not be knowledge in the strict sense.[47] For example, proper knowledge of a lunar eclipse not only affirms that it is a lunar eclipse, but it also has to be clear about why this lunar eclipse occurs, namely, that it is the result of the earth coming between the sun and the moon.[48]

But how can we acquire such knowledge? Can we acquire it at all, if our senses are directed to everyday objects, which are neither necessary nor universal, and which do not necessarily contain information on causal connections?

---

[44] *Summulae de Dialectica* (hereafter 'SD') 2.5.2. Translations are from John Buridan, *Summulae De Dialectica*, trans. Gyula Klima, Yale Library of Medieval Philosophy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 127.

[45] SD 3.1.8. tr. *[S]ignificant substantiam sine connotatione aliena.* Gyula Klima, 151.

[46] QAnPo I, q. 8: *Primum est idem quod indemonstrabile propter sui evidentiam.*

[47] QAnPo I, q. 7.

[48] Ibid. With this example Buridan follows a long tradition of defending the demonstration *propter quid* as the proper demonstration of science; Aquinas uses the same example when he argues that although we cannot conclude – at least in the sublunar world – to the effect from its cause, it is possible to make the inference in the other direction, from the effect to its causes. For Aquinas, see *Expositio libri Posteriorum Analyticorum* I, l. 16; II, l. 7.

The key to Buridan's solution on the acquisition of substantial concepts is the tool of abstraction. The intellect, after conceiving and sorting out the confused sensorial data, is able to form a substantial concept from it: the confused sensory data enables the intellect to grasp the essential characteristic of a given object.[49] That does not mean that the substantial concept is made up of the accidental concepts (as British empiricists would suggest); Buridan makes it clear that a substantial concept contains nothing else than the substance.[50] On the other hand, neither does this activity of the intellect imply that Buridan assumes some other source of knowledge apart from the senses; the matter with which the intellect works is precisely sensory data, which, however, the senses are simply unable to analyze beyond a certain point.

It is also the process of abstraction that helps the intellect to acquire the *common* concepts, that is, concepts that indifferently signify many individuals. For example, considering the white Socrates and the white Plato, first the intellect observes that the whiteness does not belong to their substance; then, as it realizes that this whiteness is similar in both of them, it further abstracts the common concept of whiteness and humanness – a concept that is applicable to all white (or human) creatures in the world.[51]

This solution, which assumes that the intellect – from finitely many observations – is able to arrive at a true, universal concept or proposition, rests on the strong assumption that one might label as 'the intellect's natural inclination to verity:'

> Experience, deduced from many observations and memories, is nothing else than induction from singulars, through which the intellect … due to its natural inclination towards verity, concedes to a universal proposition.[52]

These universal propositions might not have the evidence of the first logical principle, but they have no need to. What is interesting in this quote, however, is that experience *itself* already entails this universality: "experience" does not mean a single instant of sensation, but is a result of a complex process involving multiple sensations of the same object and memory. As Buridan, elaborating more on this point in his *Metaphysics* commentary, notes:

---

[49] Ibid.
[50] QP I, q. 4, fol. 5 ra.
[51] Cf. *Questiones in libros Aristotelis De Anima secundum tertiam lecturam* III, q. 8.
[52] QP I, q. 15, fol. 19 ra: *Experientia ex multis sensationibus et memoriis deducta non est aliud quam inductio in multis singularibus per quam intellectus . . . ex eius naturali inclinatione ad veritatem concedere propositionem universalem.*

Experience is a judgment from the memories of previously sensed similar things about another that similarly occurs. For example, if you have frequently seen some fire, and touching it you have learnt that it is hot, and so you have a memory of it, then it happens that when you see a fire, without touching it you judge that it is hot. And such a judgment is called experimental, which you gained by memory or memories that you preserved of fires that you had touched.[53]

Thus, experience, being a judgment, already presupposes – besides sensation – the active role of the intellect, and is itself in some sense universal.

Finally, Buridan's reply to the question of whether a scientific demonstration must contain causes rests on the same principle as his reply to the problem of induction. In the *Physics* commentary, he proposes some objections that would deny that demonstrations can proceed from causes, and that knowledge of causes is altogether possible.[54] The most important of them probably derives from Autrecourt;[55] if there are two distinct things, *a* and *b,* then it is impossible to infer the existence of *b* from the existence of *a*: If they are really distinct, God can maintain one while the other is destroyed, so the existence of one without the other does not entail a logical contradiction. Therefore, if we know that *a* exists, but nothing else, we can be never sure that *b* also exists. Now, causes and effects are distinct things; the cause does not contain its effect nor vice versa. In this case, however, one can never infer the existence of the effect from the existence of the cause, or the existence of the cause from that of the effect.[56]

In his answer, Buridan again refutes the claim that every demonstration should be reducible to the first logical principle.[57] Thus, it is not impossible for

---

[53] *In Metaphysicen Aristotelis Questiones Argutissimae Magistri Ioannis Buridani* (Paris:1588, Reprint: Frankfurt a. M.: Minerva, 1964) I, q. 8, fol. 7 va: *[E]xperientia est ex multis memoriis consimilium prius sensatorum iudicare de alio simili occurrente, verbi gratia ut sepe vidisti ignem et ad tactum cognovisti illum esse calidum et de illo tu habes memoriam tunc cum occurrit tibi quod tu vides ignem et absque hoc quod tu tangas illum tu iudicas illum esse calidum; et tale iudicium vocatur experimentale quod sit tibi per memoriam vel memorias quas alias retinuisti de ignibus quod alias tetigisti.*

[54] The *questio* is in QP I, q. 4.

[55] Whether Autrecourt was really the target of Buridan's arguments here and elsewhere, can neither be adequately proved nor disproved. The former was attempted by Jack Zupko, "Buridan and Skepticism," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31 (1993): 191–221, while the latter was argued by Johannes M. M. H. Thijssen, "John Buridan and Nicholas of Autrecourt on Causality and Induction," *Traditio* 43 (1987): 237–255.

[56] QP I, q. 4, fol. 4 vb.

[57] QP I, q. 4, fol. 5 vb.

the intellect to arrive at some knowledge of *b* from the knowledge of *a*, even if *a* and *b* are distinct entities; to use Buridan's own example, if one sees a man one can conclude that he has a heart, even if it cannot be directly observed. For we know – it is demonstrable – that a man cannot live without heart, while the minor premise, that the man lives, is evident from the senses.[58] It means that the knowledge of causes does not directly derive from sensory experience, but its source is an inference made by the intellect.

Thus, with his elaboration on the problem of the knowledge of causes, of the acquisition of substantial concepts and of the formation of universal scientific statements, Buridan can be said to have successfully argued for the possibility of scientific knowledge in the Aristotelian sense. Our intellect is able to acquire some information about the essences of things from which the necessary and universal scientific propositions can be formed, given that the intellect, with its natural inclination toward verity, can generalize the acquired substantial concepts without losing their evidentness. This evidentness is not the same as that of the first logical principle, but it is enough for the natural sciences. We can also acquire knowledge of causes, since – in this weaker degree of evidence – we can infer the existence of one thing from the existence of another. Buridan's solution concerning universal knowledge as well as the knowledge of causes, however, rests on the principle of the intellect's natural inclination toward verity, which, however, can hardly be demonstrated within this framework.

Consequently, the role of sensory experience in Buridan's theory of science is twofold. First, there is a group of principles that can only be acquired by experience; they form the basis of scientific reasoning. On the other hand, however, the senses' preeminent role must be understood with certain restrictions even in the case of concept acquisition. First, the assent to or dissent from a certain sense experience is always given by the intellect; it is the latter that can judge whether the disposition of the senses or the medium is adequate enough for providing reliable information. Second, the acquisition of substantial concepts, although originating from sensory experience, is again carried out by the intellect. It is the former which provides sufficient data, but it is the latter that can grasp the essential characteristic of a given object. Finally, it is also the intellect's task to concede to a universal proposition by induction from singular instances and to arrive at the knowledge of causes when only the effect is known.

It is not an accidental feature, therefore, that scientific reasoning – which, by definition, has to be universal and an explanation of causes – does not proceed

---

[58] QP I, q. 4, fol. 6 ra.

primarily from experience. As we have seen, experience did play an important role in the formation of Buridan's theories, but not in their demonstration and causal explanation; thus, it corresponds precisely to the twofold role of sensory experience in the formation of scientific propositions. For although it is sensory experience that provides the basis of our cognition, it alone cannot produce scientific concepts and even less scientific explanations. Therefore, the – in certain respects restricted – role of experience in Buridan's scientific practice, instead of contradicting, seems rather to directly follow from his methodological theory; experience, indeed, cannot be given more weight in scientific explanations unless the fundamental scientific question ceases to be a question about causes.

LATE MEDIEVAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES ON THE SOUTHERN GREAT HUNGARIAN PLAIN – A CASE STUDY[*]

András Vadas 📥

> …water is a good servant,
> but it is a cruel master…
> (*John Bullein*)

Introduction

The study of the environmental conditions in the wetland-areas of the Carpathian Basin has been an increasingly important field of scholarship in the last decades. Research has been carried out in the surroundings of the major lakes in present-day Hungary on past environmental conditions especially the water-level fluctuations in the basin of Lake Balaton and Lake Fertő (Neusiedler See) where, despite the scarcity of written evidence, important conclusions have been drawn.[1] There are regions, however, which have been less in the spotlight such as the southern

[1] On Lake Balaton, see: Károly Sági, "A Balaton vízállás-tendenciái a történeti és kartográfiai adatok tükrében," [Water-level tendencies of lake Balaton in the light of historical and cartographical data] *Veszprém Megyei Múzeumok Közleményei* 7 (1968): 441–468. On Lake Fertő: Andrea Kiss, "Changing Environmental Conditions and the Water Level of Lake Fertő (Neusiedler See) before the Drainage Works (13th–18th Centuries)," in *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU 1997–1998*, ed. Katalin Szende. (Budapest: Archaeolingua, 1998), 241–248; eadem, "Historical Study of the Changing Landscape of Fertő during the Later Middle Ages (13th c. – 15th c.)," (MA Thesis: CEU, 1998); Fritz Kopf, "Wasserwirtschaftliche Probleme des Neusiedler Sees und des Seewinkels," *Österreichische Wasserwirtschaft* 15 (1963): 190–203, and Zoltán Zorkóczy, "A tómeder, vízgyűjtőterület, valamint a vízháztartás adatai," [Data on the lake-basin, the watershed and the water economy] in *A Fertő-táj Monográfiáját előkészítő adatgyűjtemény. Vol 2: Természeti adottságok – A Fertő-táj hidroszférája és vízgazdálkodása* [Data collection for the preparation of the monograph of the Lake Fertő – natural conditions, hydrosphere, and water economy of the Lake Fertő], ed. László Aujeszky, Ferenc Schilling and Sándor Somogyi (Budapest: Vízgazdálkodási Kutató Intézet, 1975), 5–43.

part of the Great Hungarian Plains. Today, these regions have a closely regulated hydrography with no major lakes or far-flung flood plains. In the late medieval and early modern period, however, the situation was somewhat different. There were at least two supposedly permanently water-covered areas which were comparable in size to the major lakes in today's Hungary, the water world of the Körös River with Lake Sarkad and the complex of the Temes and Bega Rivers connected to Lake Becskerek; the focus of the present study.

In the study of the environmental conditions of the wetland-areas of the Carpathian Basin, historical data has been less emphasized because of a general lack of descriptive sources. Nonetheless, some studies showed that both textual sources and historical maps contain data that is potentially useful in the study of late medieval or early modern environmental changes.[2] Despite the promising possibilities, archaeological research and scientific methods have been more frequently applied. In the present study, my focus is on historical data, and more specifically on early maps which I will argue represent a good source of data for studying this wetland-area.

It is a commonplace that the plains of the Carpathian Basin are more sensitive to climatic and environmental changes than the hilly regions or more mountainous areas. The extent of the water-covered or temporarily water-covered areas on the Great Hungarian Plain has changed radically over the last millennium.[3] In the past two centuries, the most important factor in the fluctuation

---

[2] For examples of the utilization of textual data: Andrea Kiss and Ferenc Piti, "A fertői fok," [The *fok* of Fertő] *Soproni Szemle* 59, No. 2 (2005): 164–184, Andrea Kiss, "*Rivulus namque, qui dicitur Fuk, fluens de prefatu lacu* – Fok, Sár, Foksár," in *Antropogén ökológiai változások a Kárpát-medencében* [Ecological changes of anthropogenic origin in the Carpathian Basin], ed. Bertalan Andrásfalvy and Gábor Vargyas (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2009), 49–63. For the usage of maps: Balázs Székely, Gábor Molnár and Gábor Timár, "Lázár deák és a folyódinamika – térképezési hibák vagy valós mederváltozás?" [Lazarus and river-dynamics – mapping fault or real morphological change?], in *Környezettörténet – Az utóbbi 500 év környezeti eseményei történeti és természettudományos források tükrében* [Environmental history – the environmental events of the last 500 years in light of historical and scientific evidence], ed. Miklós Kázmér (Budapest: Hantken Kiadó, 2009), 75–98.

[3] On the debates around the extent of these areas and their change in historical times, see the differences in the maps of: Woldemár Lászlóffy, *Magyarország vízborította és árvízjárta területei az ármentesítő és lecsapolási munkálatok megkezdése előtt (falitérkép, M=1:600000)* [The water-covered and periodically flooded areas of Hungary before the water-regulations and the drainage works – map] (Budapest, 1938) and its criticism: Zsolt Pinke and Beatrix Szabó, "A Kárpát-medence vízborította és vízjárta területei az ármentesítő és lecsapoló munkálatok megkezdése előtt című térkép vizsgálata," [Analysis of the map entitled 'The water-covered and periodically flooded areas of Hungary before the water-regulations and

of marshlands and agricultural land on the Great Hungarian Plain was the water regulation of the major rivers of the region, the Danube, the Körös, the Temes and, especially, the Tisza. Thus, it is impossible to find an unaffected study area on the Great Hungarian Plain where it is possible to reconstruct the late medieval environmental conditions and trace the transformation of conditions over the centuries.[4] Archaeological investigations have been sporadic in the area and, in most cases, the environmental conditions have only been a very peripheral focus of the investigations. However, there are smaller study areas where the climatic and environmental historical consequences were studied in more detail which will be discussed below.

Environmental Conditions in the Southern Part of the Great Hungarian Plain

Micro-regional investigations on the medieval settlement history of the Great Hungarian Plain are key to understanding how the natural environment changed in this period. Several regions have been investigated in the last decades where the environmental patterns were taken into consideration. The most important from my point of view is the research of Marianna Bálint. Her dissertation on the medieval settlements of the Dorozsma-Majsa Region (the Danube-Tisza Interfluve in Hungary) revealed the existence of several small settlements on the margins of ponds in the Árpád Period. The presence of these ponds was attributed to the

---

the drainage works'] in *A Hidrológiai Társaság XXVIII. Országos Vándorgyűlése. Dolgozatok* [28th annual meeting of the Hungarian Hydrological Society. Studies]. Proceedings of the conference held in Sopron, 7–9 July, 2010. (http://www.hidrologia.hu/vandorgyules/28/dolgozatok/pinke_zsolt. html) (last accessed: 12 April, 2010) György Györffy, *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza I–IV.* [The historical topography of Hungary in the Árpád Period] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963–87); Sándor Somogyi, "Hazánk vízrajza a honfoglalás idején és változásainak tájrajzi vonatkozásai," [The hydrography of Hungary in the age of the Hungarian conquest and the geographical consequences of its changes] in *A táj változásai a Honfoglalás óta a Kárpát-medencében* [Landscape changes of the Carpathian Basin since the Hungarian conquest], ed. György Füleky (Gödöllő: Gödöllői Agrártudományi Egyetem MSZKI, 1997), 41–58; György Györffy and Bálint Zólyomi, "A Kárpát-medence és Etelköz képe egy évezred előtt," [The Carpathian Basin and the Etelköz one thousand years ago] *Magyar Tudomány* 8 (1996): 899–918, and the maps of Békés county in the volumes of the *Magyarország régészeti topográfiája* [Archaeological topography of Hungary] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982–98).
[4] Somogyi, "Hazánk vízrajza" and Györffy–Zólyomi, "A Kárpát-medence és az Etelköz".

wetter climate of the Medieval Warm Epoch.[5] The existence of a long-lasting wet period in the Árpád Period is rather questionable. However, it is more relevant for the focus of this study that Bálint shows that this part of the plain was rich in water in the medieval period.[6] Her results on the desertion of settlements in the late Árpád Period are important as she demonstrated in this sample area that the major period for this process was not a consequence of the Mongol invasion but took place in the fourteenth century, something which must have partly been connected to environmental effects. Szabolcs Rosta has recently carried out research in the Kiskunság (Danube-Tisza Interfluve, Hungary), another area close to this territory. Although Rosta focused on routes passing through the region, he made some interesting remarks concerning the late medieval topography of Akasztó. As he explains, the environmental situation of the area surrounding the settlement is quite problematic as the roads leading to Kiskunhalas would have had to cross the so-called Nagy-Sár (Big Muddy), a marshy area in the late medieval period. This fact raises questions concerning the existence of the marshland earlier on in the Middle Ages.[7] Other investigations around the town of Kiskunhalas yielded somewhat different results from those of Bálint. György V. Székely and Piroska Biczó inferred the crucial role of the Mongol invasion in the desertion of the surroundings of Kiskunhalas. They suggested that only a few villages were actually abandoned in the second half of the thirteenth century.[8] László Szekeres also carried out regional-scale research on settlements in the northeastern part of the Bácska Region (Bačka). He collected the names of settlements mentioned in perambulations, donations and so on. His settlement pattern reconstruction

---

[5] Marianna Bálint, "Az Árpád-kori településhálózat rekonstrukciója a Dorozsma-Majsai Homokhát területén," [Reconstruction of the Árpád period settlement-network in the Dorozsma-Majsa region] (PhD diss., Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2006), 45–46, 70; Bálint assumed conditions were wetter based on Western European investigations.

[6] Pál Sümegi, Gusztáv Jakab, Péter Majkut, Tünde Törőcsik and Csilla Zatykó, "Middle Age Palaeoecological and Palaeoclimatological Reconstruction in the Carpathian Basin," *Időjárás* 113, No. 4 (2009): 284–285 and András Grynaeus, *Dendrológiai kutatások Magyarországon* [Dendrochronological research in Hungary] (PhD diss., Budapest, 1997).

[7] Szabolcs Rosta, "A Kiskunsági Homokhátság középkori település- és úthálózata," [The medieval settlement and road network in medieval Kiskunsági Homokhátság] in *Középkori mozaik* [Medieval mosaic], ed. Balázs Nagy (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem Történettudományi Intézete, 2010), 101–148.

[8] György V. Székely, "Árpád-kori települések a történeti Halas határában," [Árpád Period settlements in the borders of Kiskunhalas] in *Kiskunhalas története I. Tanulmányok Kiskunhalasról a kezdetektől a török kor végéig* [Studies on Kiskunhalas from the beginnings to the end of the Ottoman period], ed. József Ö. Kovács and Aurél Szakál. Available online: http://www.halas.hu/kiskunhalas/tort1/index.html (last accessed: 12 April, 2010).

also showed the crucial roles of minor streams, rivers, and, in several cases, small lakes such as Lake Kelebia and Lake Gyékény, on the shores of which there were settlements in the late medieval period.[9] Apart from archaeological results from the western region of the Danube-Tisza Interfluve, archaeologists have drawn attention to landscape changes in a few other excavations at the sites of Szentkirály and Monostorossáp.[10] Changes in climate and their impacts on the former landscape were considered at these sites, unlike most other cases where archaeologists have disregarded this factor. Although there are several settlement-pattern investigations from the Great Hungarian Plain, there have been no major attempts recently to summarize the changes in the network of villages in this part of the Carpathian Basin and to understand the impact of changes in the natural environment on settlement structures.[11]

With regard to suspected changes in the water-covered area, it is crucial to choose a study area where water played an important role in the formation of the settlement structure in order to trace late medieval environmental changes. In this respect, a good study area may prove to be the Temesköz (Banat, Serbia and Romania),[12] as based on visual and textual data in this region, there were wetland areas and even a large lake that may be a good marker of past environmental conditions. It was marked as a lake on maps in the first phases of the Early Modern Period but completely dried up during modern times. Apart from that, the extent of the water-covered area in the region was large, especially around the two major watercourses in the region, the Temes (Timiş, Romania; Tamiš, Serbia) and the Bega (Bega, Romania; Begej, Serbia) Rivers.

---

[9] László Szekeres, *Középkori települések Északkelet-Bácskában* [Medieval settlements in northeastern Bácska] (Újvidék: Forum, 1983), 26–27, 33. Similar conclusions were drawn based on historical data: Györffy–Zólyomi, "A Kárpát-medence és az Etelköz," 15.

[10] See the research of András Pálóczi Horváth, "A késő középkori Szentkirály határhasználata és gazdálkodása," [The land-management and farming in late medieval Szentkirály] in *Gazdálkodás az Alföldön. Földművelés* (Arany János Múzeum Közleményei 9.) [Farming at the Great Hungarian Plain], ed. László Novák (Nagykőrös: Arany János Múzeum, 2002), 53–68 and other publications of the author. On the history of Monostorossáp, see: Miklós Rácz and József Laszlovszky, *Monostorossáp, egy Tisza menti középkori falu* (Dissertationes Pannonicae III. 7.) [Monostorossáp, a deserted medieval village and its landscape] (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, 2005).

[11] The research has focused on towns, see e.g. András Kubinyi's publications on the hierarchy of towns in the region.

[12] The geographical unit of Temesköz is the same as the historical Bánát region.

András Vadas

The Present and Past Environmental Conditions in the Temesköz

When discussing the environmental conditions of a region, it is traditional to review the climate, the fauna, the flora, the geomorphology, and, within this the major rivers and lakes. However, in this case the study of the hydrography may be one of the most important elements, if not the most important. Water management was a basic feature in the economic system in various parts of the plains. The system of *fok* seems to have been a crucial factor in the economic system of settlements. They were connected to living waters and in some cases lake-side villages as well.[13] The small channels (the *fok* itself) that connected the living waters and the lower flood plains behind the sand dunes were not only important elements of flood protection; they were also the best fishing areas in medieval times as these areas provided good spawning grounds for many fish. A stream connecting two bodies of water was also a good place for milling, while the territories in-between could be exploited for grazing or planting fruit trees. Sándor Frisnyák, one of the most prominent scholars in Hungarian historical geography, drew attention to another characteristic of the medieval and early modern economic system of lowland areas, the continuous drives of animals from higher flood plains to lower flood plains – he called it meadow transhumance – which ensured grazing for animal husbandry all year long.[14] Marshland was

---

[13] The most fundamental literature on the system of *fok* is: Bertalan Andrásfalvy, *A Sárköz és a környező Duna-menti területek ősi ártéri gazdálkodása és vízhasználatai a szabályozás előtt* [The ancient economic system and water use on the flood plain of the Danube and the Sárköz before the water regulation] (Budapest: Vízdok, 1973); Zsigmond Károlyi and Gerzson Nemes, *Az ősi ártéri gazdálkodás és a vízi munkálatok kezdetei (895–1846)* [The ancient economic system of flood plains and the beginnings of water works] (Budapest: Vízdok, 1975); Zoltán Fodor "Az ártéri gazdálkodást tárgyaló elméletek és alkalmazhatóságuk a magyarországi Tisza-szakasz kéziratos térképein szereplő fokok alapján," [The theories and the applicability of the flood plain economic systems of the Hungarian Tisza Valley in the light of *fok*s on maps] *Agrártörténeti Szemle* 43 (2001): 89–149.

[14] Sándor Frisnyák, *Magyarország történeti földrajza* [The historical geography of Hungary] (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1992). The fundamental geographical structure presented by Frisnyák has been somewhat criticized; geographers have offered different geomorphological categorizations of the Great Plain: Pál Beluszky, *A Nagyalföld történeti földrajza* [The historical geography of the Great Hungarian Plain] (Pécs: Dialóg Campus, 2001), 36–47, and Gábor Csüllög, "A Kárpát-medence vízrajzának szerepe Magyarország középkori településhálózatának kialakulásában," [The role of the hydrography of the Carpathian Basin in the formation of the settlement network of medieval Hungary] in *A táj változásai a Kárpát-medencében – A víz a tájban* [Landscape changes in the Carpathian basin – the water in the landscape], ed. György Füleky (Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem, 2004), 56–58.

not only an important factor in the economic system, but was also used as a means of natural protection. The marshlands represented buffer zones on the Little Hungarian Plain as well as in the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain within the border-protection system of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom. Several castles and fortifications profited from these natural obstacles, such as the town of Temesvár itself in the Temesköz region and the castle of Becskerek (Zrenjanin, Serbia) (to be discussed in detail below).[15]

Fig. 1. The present-day geographical conditions in the Temesköz (Google Earth).

The region was morphologically quite structured despite the general plain-like characteristics (see: *Fig. 1*). In some cases, there is only a few meters' difference in the elevations of micro-regions. Such differences however, could nevertheless lead to fundamentally diverse possibilities for agricultural activity, settlement or trade. In the short description of the micro regions I will use the

---

[15] On the role of Temesvár in the fourteenth century, see: István Petrovics, "The Fading Glory of a Former Royal Seat: the Case of Medieval Temesvár," in *The Man of Many Devices, Who Wandered Full Many Ways. Festschrift in Honor of János M. Bak*, ed. Balázs Nagy and Marcell Sebők (Budapest: CEU Press, 1999), 527–538, and István Petrovics, "Royal Residence and Urban Development During the Reign of the Anjou Kings in Hungary," *Historica Urbana* 5, No. 1 (1997): 39–66, especially: 49–53. However neither of the two studies discusses in detail the role of the location of the castle of Temesvár in becoming the center of the Hungarian Kingdom in the mid-1310s.

most widespread categorization based on geomorphology (and soil types).[16] The highest elevations in the Great Hungarian Plain are the sand-hills such as the so-called Deliblát sand dunes (called *Maxond* in medieval times) in the Temesköz.[17] The higher flood plains are generally covered with loess and they provide the best land for agricultural activity in the region; in the Temesköz, however, these agricultural territories were almost entirely missing before the water regulation works. As only a narrow zone in these regions was entirely protected from high water, a considerable part of the Temesköz was regularly flooded. The remainder of the region belongs to the lower flood plains, such as the Temes lowlands, but considerable areas – the flood plains of the major rivers – were flooded regularly by the Temes, the Bega, the Tisza, and the Danube Rivers.[18]

When attempting to reconstruct the medieval environmental conditions of a certain region it is dangerous to project its present state back to the Middle Ages and this is particularly true in the case of the Temesköz. In the Early Modern Period the region was subject to major landscape changes due to radical human intervention.

Environmental Changes in Late Medieval and Early Modern Times as Reflected in Maps

The role of maps as historical evidence will be highlighted in this part of the article. Although maps are extremely rare in the Late Middle Ages, there are a considerable number of maps from the sixteenth century which can help in furthering understanding of late medieval environmental conditions in the selected region.[19] Amongst these maps the most frequently discussed is one produced by Lazarus from 1528. It is considered to be the first precise map ever made of the

---

[16] This geographical categorization is referred to both by Beluszky, *Nagyalföld*, and Györffy, *Árpád-kori.*

[17] In the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period it was called Maksond, or Campus Maron, as on the Lazarus map: László Blazovich, "Az Alföld domborzati képe Szent Gellért korában," [The morphology of the Great Plain in the age of Saint Gerhard] in *Szent Gellért vértanúságának 950. évfordulóján* [On the 950th anniversary of the martyrdom of Saint Gerhardus], ed. András Döbör, Csaba Jancsák, Gábor Ferenc Kiss, Tamás Nagy and László Szegfű (Szeged: Belvedere Meridionale, 1998), 21.

[18] László Blazovich, *A Körös-Maros-köz középkori településrendje* [The medieval settlement network of the Körös Maros interfluve] (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Tanács, 1985), 17–30.

[19] On medieval maps from Hungary, see: Árpád Papp-Váry and Pál Hrenkó, *Magyarország régi térképeken* [Hungary on old maps] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1990).

whole Carpathian Basin.[20] This map has frequently been used in disciplines from history to cartography to linguistics. Geographers and historians have started to discuss the environmental historical information provided by maps only in the last few years.[21] Small sections of early maps – and in some cases especially the Lazarus map – have been selected in order to examine their reliability in reflecting local environmental conditions, as in a recent case study for the region at the mouth of the River Garam.[22] Besides settlements, the Lazarus map depicts the main features of the natural environment including mountain ranges, significant rivers, and some lakes. Lazarus depicts three lakes: *Balaton lacus*, the *Neusiedler See* (or *Ferteu*), and a *See* in the Temesköz region (see: *Fig.* 2) while, for example, Lake Velencei is missing. The first two appear in maps up to modern times, but the third is much more problematic. What makes the investigation of this lake more interesting is that the size of the lake is shown as being, more or less, equal to the Fertő Lake, although the projection also enlarges the region where the lake is situated.[23]

The Lazarus map is not the only one to depict this lake; it appears on most of the maps from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century and was called *Lacus Becskerek*; in the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the lake disappears.[24] During this period most, but not all, of the maps referring to this territory indicate the presence of a stable lake, as on the second map of the

[20] Lazarus Secretarius, *Tabula Hungariae ad quatour latera.* OSZK App. M. 126, Lajos Stegena, ed., *Lazarus Secretarius: The First Hungarian Mapmaker and His Work* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982).

[21] Amongst others, see: Gábor Molnár, Gábor Timár and Balázs Székely, "Lázár térképének georeferálásáról," [On the geo-referring of the Lazarus-map] *Geodézia és Kartográfia* 4, No. 1 (2008): 26–30; Gábor Timár, Balázs Székely, Gábor Molnár, Csaba Ferencz, Anikó Kern, Csilla Galambos, Gábor Gercsák and László Zentai, "Combination of Historical Maps and Satellite Images of the Banat Region – Re-appearance of an Old Wetland Area," *Global and Planetary Change* 62, No. 1–2 (2008): 29–38; Balázs Székely, Gábor Molnár and Gábor Timár, "Tabula Hungariae (1528): Errors in Mapping or Surface Evolution Rearranging the Watercourses?," *Geophysical Research Abstracts* (2006) 8., 04854. On the recent trends of the study of historical maps in Hungary, see the special issue of *Acta Geodetica et Geophyisica Hungarica* 44, No. 1 (2009).

[22] Székely et al., "Lázár deák," 75–98.

[23] Molnár et al., "Lázár térképének," 28–30.

[24] The most complete collection of these maps: Lajos Szántai, *Atlas Hungaricus. Magyarország nyomtatott térképei (1528–1850) I–II.* [Atlas Hungaricus. The printed maps of the Hungarian Kingdom (1528–1850)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1996). For examples of the maps from the eighteenth century where the lake is not marked, see: Szántai, *Atlas*, I/88, 117, 130, II/459, 541, 587, 641.
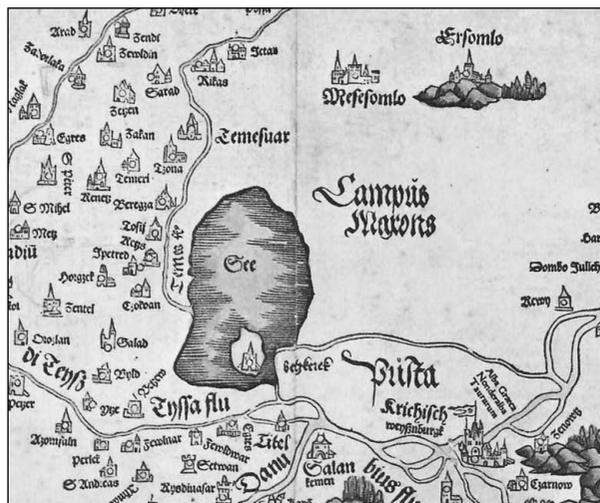
Fig. 2. Lake Becskerek and its surroundings on the map of Lazarus Secretarius (1528).

Fig. 3. Lake Becskerek and its surroundings in the map of Giacomo Gastaldi (1546).

Hungarian Kingdom by Giacomo Gastaldi (1546) (see: *Fig.* 3).[25] The lake is shown on the map of Lazius (1552) and it also appears the map of Matthias Zündt (1567). However, on the map of Domenico Zenoi from 1566 the lake is not present at

---

[25] Giacomo Gastaldi, *La vera descrittione di tutta la Ungheria: Transilvania: Valachia...* 1546. Bib. Vat. Stampe. Geogr. I.150. On this map: Pál Hrenkó, "Magyarország Gastaldi térképén," [Hungary on the Gastaldi-map] *Geodézia és Kartográfia* 27, No. 2 (1975): 110–121, and Katalin Plihál, "Magyarország Giacomo Gastaldi 'La vera descrittione di tutta la Ungheria ...' című térképén," [Hungary on the map of Giacomo Gastaldi] *Cartographica Hungarica* 6, No. 1 (1998): 2–8.

all, although this map used data from the work of Gastaldi and was not based on local data-gathering.[26] The lake is shown to have been similar in extent to what is shown by Gastaldi or Zündt on the rather precise map made by Alexander Mair (1595). Like its predecessors Mair's map depicts Lake Becskerek as occupying the main parts of the Temes-Bega Interfluve area[27] during what might have been an exceptionally humid decade.[28] Its disappearance in the eighteenth century is partly the result of the water-control drainage works and water regulation in the region. The presence of such extensive regulation work in the late medieval and Early Modern Period is worth a more detailed discussion.

Some of the historical maps of the region have recently been made an important subject of investigation by Hungarian cartographers. In a new study, a research project led by Gábor Timár and his colleagues refers to Lake Becskerek as a marshland, an area not constantly water-covered in the Early Modern Period.[29] The authors, however, do not attempt to explain why it might have been only temporarily inundated. Despite the lack of references to later descriptions from the region, the authors pointed out that Lake Becskerek supposedly reappeared during the Temes River flood in 2005 (see: *Fig.* 4). This flood produced the highest water-level ever recorded on the Temes River. Satellite photographs from 2005 show a major flooded area in the Temes Valley, which, according to scholars, marks the re-filling of the basin of the former marshland and lake north of the town of Becskerek.[30] Based on investigations of the micro-topography of the territories affected by the flood, research has indicated the existence of a low – once regularly flooded area or a constantly water-covered – area north of Becskerek, partly connected to Lake Becskerek. This research revealed the fact that the two water-covered areas, although not entirely identical, have common territories.[31] The problem of the permanent existence of medieval Lake Becskerek is still unresolved despite detailed modelling of the flood plain of the Temes. In their research, Timár and his colleagues used only the Lazarus map from among the available sixteenth-century maps, although several other maps from the same period also marked the location of Lake Becskerek.

---

[26] Domenico Zenoi, *Az 1566. évi magyarországi hadműveletek térképe.* 1566. OSZK App. M. 127.

[27] Alexander Mair, *Hungariae Regni superioris noua et accurata descriptio emendata et evulgata Anno 1595.* App. M. 139.

[28] Lajos Rácz, *Magyarország éghajlattörténete az újkor idején* [The climate history of Hungary in the modern times] (Szeged: Juhász Gyula Főiskola Kiadó, 2001), 256.

[29] Molnár et al., "Lázár térképének," 26–30.

[30] Timár et al., "Re-appearance."

[31] Ibid. 36–37.
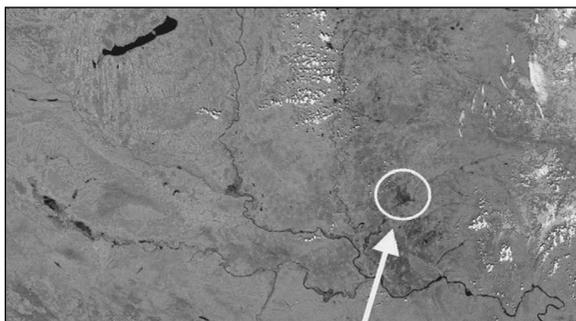
Fig. 4. The flooded area on 23 April, 2005 during the Banat flood event on the Temes River
(after: Gábor Timár et al., "Re-appearance of an Old Wetland Area").

Fig. 5. Part of the map by Alexander Mair which depicts the Temesköz.

The Lazius (1552) and the Mair (1595) maps (see: *Fig. 5*), also showed the region between the Bega and the Temes Rivers as a lake and placed a fortress and a town called Becskerek in the middle of it.[32]

There is little medieval written evidence referring directly to the environmental conditions in this region. However, one noteworthy mention of Becskerek comes from a French diplomat, Bertrandon de la Broquière, who wrote a detailed vernacular account of his travel to the Holy Land and back again called *Voyage*

---

[32] Wolfgang Lazius, *Regni Hungariae descriptio vera*, OSZK Térképtár, TA 7107/14. Becskerek had a minor fortification, but during the nineteenth-century excavations environmental information was not taken into consideration: Jenő Szentkláray, *A becskereki vár* [The castle of Becskerek] (Értekezések a történettudomány köréből. XII. 10) (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1886).

d'Outremer et retour in 1433.[33] He describes how he stopped in the town of *Beuxquerel* (Becskerek) on his way from Belgrade (Serbia) to Szeged after crossing the Temes River (it was probably the Temes, although Broquière does not mention the name of the river). He then continued his journey towards Becse (Bečej). However, before arriving in the town – according to his travelogue – he had to cross two bridges over other rivers.[34] One of the rivers he crossed might have been the Bega, but the name of the other is less apparent. Perhaps it was another branch of the same river (discussed below) or a small stream which could have been swollen because of the Danube flood (also mentioned by Broquière).[35] Broquière did not have to cross by boat; he mentions bridges, which suggests there was quite a stable hydrography in this region. A sixteenth-century economic account book on the incomes in Becskerek under Ottoman rule confirms the stability of the hydrography. In this list one of the most important sources of income are the tolls paid at certain bridges.[36] Apart from the fact that Broquière did not mention any kind of lake it is important as well that we do not have any sign of a castle. He mentions a *ville* which could either refer to a village or a market town but certainly not a castle. However, there has been a castle in the town from Early Modern times. Jenő Szentkláray in the late nineteenth century studied the ruins of the castle (beneath the modern town hall of Becskerek) and showed by the study of both historical and archaeological data that the fortification of the castle dates to the 1520s or perhaps the 1530s.[37] The first maps come from this period, and

---

[33] On his route in Hungary: Balázs Nagy, "The Towns of Medieval Hungary in the Reports of Contemporary Travelers," in *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation. Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Derek Keene, Balázs Nagy and Katalin Szende (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 177.

[34] Bertrandon de la Broquière, "Voyage d'Outremer et retour," in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica. Magyar történelmi emlékek. Első osztály: Okmánytárak* 4, ed. Mihály Hatvany (Pest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Történelmi Bizottmánya, 1859), 310. *"Item de la je vins une ville leu nomme Beuxquerel* [Becskerek] *que est audit despot et je passay la deux rivieres a pont, et de la je vins a une ville qui est audit despot, qui a nom Verchet* [Becse]*, et la passay une tres grosse riviere et moult parfonde que leu nomme la Tisce* [Tisza].*"*

[35] István Szamota, ed., *Régi utazások Magyarországon és a Balkán-félszigeten, 1054–1717* [Ancient travels in Hungary and the Balkan Peninsula, 1054–1717] (Budapest: Franklin Társulat, 1891), 90–91.

[36] Géza Dávid, "Vámok és kincstári bevételek a temesvári vilájetben," [Taxes and fiscal revenues in the Vilayet of Temesvár] in *Pénztörténet – Gazdaságtörténet. Tanulmányok Buza János 70. születésnapjára* [Monetary history – economic history. Studies in honor of János Buza on his 70th birthday], ed. József Bessenyei and István Draskóczy (Budapest: Mirio, 2009), 83.

[37] Szentkláray, *Becskereki,* 21–23.

although the surveys for the Lazarus map were carried out a few decades earlier it seems reasonable that the presence of the lake has some connection with the creation of an easily protectable fortification against the Ottomans.

Most of the sixteenth-century maps were drawn to show the border areas and the battlefields between the Hungarian Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire. During this period, the Temesköz region was far from the frontlines and was relatively quiet. Thus, the maps of the period continued to depict the situation from the mid-sixteenth century with the lake and the town of Becskerek in the middle of it.[38] From the late seventeenth century however, new surveys were carried out and the Temesköz region and Lake Becskerek was depicted differently as seen on the map by Frederik De Wit from 1680.[39] On this map, the lake itself is shown as a wider segment of the Temes River and even more, the map no longer shows Becskerek as an island but rather as a peninsula only partly surrounded by water. This is particularly interesting in light of the fact that according to research on the water-level tendencies in the major lakes of the Hungarian Kingdom, lake levels started to decrease some time from the late sixteenth to the early seventeenth century. In the case of Lake Balaton, Károly Sági has suggested a peak at the turn of the sixteenth century and then assumed a slow drop in water-levels (see: *Fig.* 6). In the case of Lake Fertő, Andrea Kiss has drawn attention to a source which indicates very low water in the lake in 1683, only three years after De Wit's map was published. The lowered water-levels paralleled the shrinking tendency displayed by Lake Becskerek (see: *Fig.* 7).[40] Again, it should be emphasized that the map of De Wit was not based on surveys from these particular years. Nonetheless, De Wit's map can be compared to another much more important map from the period by General Marsigli, whose maps are surveys of the border regions of the Hungarian Kingdom made during the expulsion of the Ottomans from the country.[41] There are major differences on the maps of the region drawn by Marsigli. The lake, or some form of the lake, is present on all the maps, but the extent of the lake changes from one map to another. On the map from 1697 showing the surroundings of the castle of Becskerek, the water-level seems to be extremely low (see: *Fig.* 8). Parts of the basin of a larger and deeper lake can

---

[38] Dávid, "Vámok," 77–98.

[39] Frederik de Wit, *Regnum Hungaria In Omnes Suos Comitatus*, OSZK Térképtár, TR 7095.

[40] For example, see the data from Boz, Fertő region: Kiss, "Changing," 243, and for the main tendencies of Balaton, see: Sági, "Balaton".

[41] The maps referring to the Temesköz region: György Kisari Balla, *Marsigli tábornok térképei* [The maps of general Marsigli] (Budapest: Kisari Balla György, 2005), No. 29, 53, 69, 83, 101, 102, 126.

be identified, which might have been closely connected with the defence of the castle, but this lake is almost entirely dried out. This feature may have been related to the fact that in the same year, 1697, the castle was destroyed by the Habsburgs and the water may have been drained from the moat. The presence of a once existing lake is more likely because some kind of sluice or dam can be identified on the image (left from the ruins of the castle).
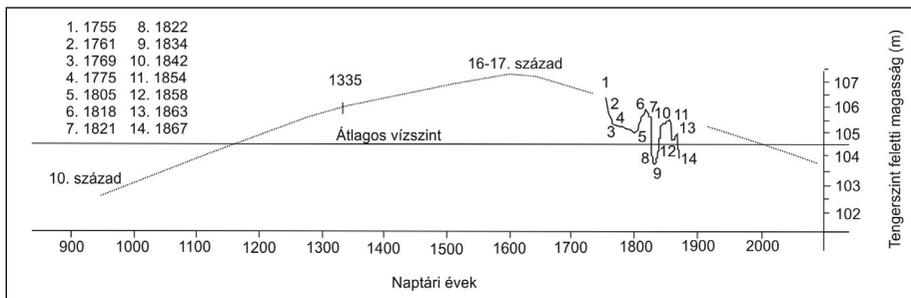
Fig. 6. Changes in water-level of Lake Balaton in the past millennium
(after the works of Károly Sági).

Fig. 7. Lake Becskerek and its surroundings on the map of Frederik de Wit (1680).
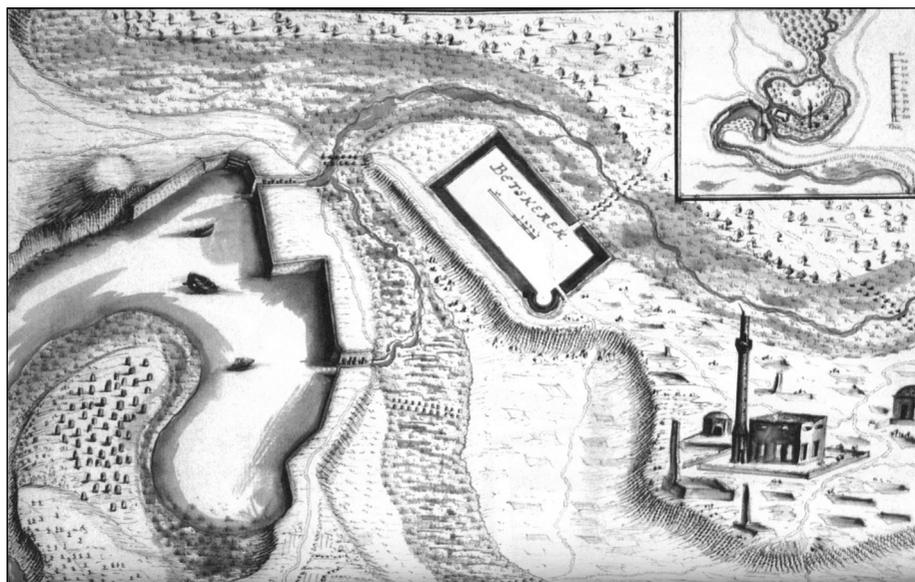
Fig. 8. The castle of Becskerek and its surroundings on the map of General Marsigli (1697) (György Kisari Balla, Marsigli térképei*, 69–70).*

On a map also drawn by Marsigli in 1702–1703 the environmental conditions are quite similar to what can be seen on his map from the preceding years (see: *Fig. 9*). The town of Becskerek – although the map is not very precise about its location – is shown situated on the bank of a small branch of the Bega River, which surrounds an island. In the supposed basin of former Lake Becskerek there is only a small marshland, not fed by a river from which it could have gotten water, but which seems to be the remnant swamp of a once-more-extensive lake.[42] In Broquière's travel account, he mentions that while he was heading to Becse from Becskerek he had to cross two rivers (or more likely two branches of the same watercourse). These two branches can be identified clearly on both maps of Marsigli, which might indicate similar water-levels in the early fifteenth and the late seventeenth century. If one accepts that the two situations are comparable it might indicate that the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century was not so wet in the region, but more like the late seventeenth century, because the lake in the seventeenth century situation was less significant than on the maps of Lazarus

---

[42] Kisari Balla, *Marsigli*, 69–70.

Fig. 9. Lake Becskerek and its surroundings on the map of General Marsigli (1702–1703)
(György Kisari Balla, Marsigli térképei*, 183)*

and his successors in the sixteenth century when the area might normally have been water-covered.

The whole Temesköz region – in spite of the occupation of a considerable part of it during the late seventeenth century military expansion of the Habsburgs – was retaken only in 1718 with the treaty of Pozsarevác (Požarevac, Serbia). Shortly after the reoccupation of the region, as early as the first third of the eighteenth century, major water regulation projects were carried out which fundamentally changed the landscape of the Temesköz. From the eighteenth century onwards, the hydrography of the region changed. Huge territories were drained to free land for agriculture and to create more regulated flooding of the water-courses. By the time of the editions of Müller's maps (1769) the lake itself had entirely vanished and although smaller marshlands are indicated they lie north of the location of the former lake; the whole region has different characteristics (see: *Fig.* 10). Like Müller's map, the maps of the second military survey in this region of the country also show an entirely different hydrographical, and in some smaller areas even orographical, situation. Based on the seventeenth century maps, however, it is worth reconsidering the statement of Gábor Timár that Lake Becskerek was a floodway area and thus, not flooded throughout the whole year. Almost all the

*Fig. 10. The dried-out basin of Lake Becskerek and its surroundings on Müller's map
(1769) (after Gábor Timár et al., "Re-appearance of an Old Wetland Area").*

maps between the mid-sixteenth and late seventeenth century depict what seems to be a major lake in the interfluve of the Bega and Temes Rivers. Even after supposedly drier decades like the 1540s the Lazius map shows either a lake (not a marshland) or the basin of a former lake.[43] It does not mean, however, that it was a natural lake. It is more likely that the water-level of this body of water was regulated by the dams shown on Marsigli's map.

The study of textual data is also crucial for an understanding of the late medieval situation. The Temesköz region in the Árpád Period was under the authority of three counties: Temes, Keve, and Krassó. The territory of late medieval Lake Becskerek marked the border between Temes and Keve counties.

The historical topography of Árpád Period Temes County has not yet been carried out although György Györffy collected written evidence from this period referring to the settlements of Keve.[44] There is no major settlement near Lake Becskerek in the Árpád Period.[45] None of the few settlements mentioned by Györffy – such as Batka, Petre, and Csorog – can be localized and these villages are only known from charters from the period of Sigismund's reign.[46] This territory is lacking in detailed perambulations from the Árpád Period. There is no evidence

---

[43] Lajos Rácz, *Magyarország éghajlattörténete az újkor idején* [Climate history of Hungary in the modern period] (Szeged: JGYF Kiadó, 2001), 297.

[44] Györffy, *Árpád-kori*, III. 305–313.

[45] Györffy, *Árpád-kori*, III. (appendicies.)

[46] On Batka and Pethe, see: DL [Collectio Diplomatica Hungarica] 8512. Both villages and, according to György Györffy, Csorog as well were at least twenty kilometers away from the castle of Becskerek. The major basin of the lake itself on the sixteenth-century maps is positioned east of the settlement, which suggests that the villages were quite distant from the wetland area. Györffy, *Árpád-kori*, III. 312.

for the existence of a lake or a marshland, although the absence of settlements in this region might indicate poor agricultural conditions which could be attributable to the wetness of this area amongst other things. However, Keve County was quite densely inhabited by the late medieval period. The region where the lake is drawn on the Lazarus map is, more or less, the territory of Becskerek almost as far as the town of Temesvár. Apparently here, because of the projection, the lake appears even larger on the map than the distance between Becskerek and Temesvár which is almost eighty kilometres. Even more importantly, the difference in height above sea level between the two towns is almost ten meters.[47] Although there might have been minor isostatic adjustments and fluvial accumulation in this region, as is the case generally in alluvial territories, the relative difference in altitude between these two towns was probably rather constant. Such a difference might reflect the presence of a deep lake although this is unlikely. There might have been a small lake closer to the town of Becskerek as early as the fourteenth century. This, however, does not necessarily coincide with the territories inundated during the flood of 2005 as suggested by Timár and his fellow authors and by György Kisari Balla.[48] This lake could have served more as a buffer area for the earthen castle of Becskerek.

The existence of a small lake around and east of Becskerek may also be confirmed by the investigation of the late medieval settlement pattern as reflected in charters. Pál Engel examined late medieval land ownership and settlements in the Carpathian Basin.[49] There is a major gap in any permanent settlement in his database in areas east of the town of Becskerek. The village of Szentmárton is very close to Becskerek and might have been situated on the shores of the supposed lake or swamp, while the closest village to the northeast is Klek (later called Begafő). To the east, Kenderes lies almost eighteen kilometres far from Becskerek. The differences in elevation within this territory of the Temesköz are not significant and could have lain within the basin of a significant lake.

---

[47] According to http://www.earthtools.org (last accessed: 12 April, 2010), the altitude of Nagybecskerek is 80 meters above sea level while Temesvár is located 88 meters above the sea level.

[48] Timár et al., "Re-appearance" and a short report on the opinion of György Kisari Balla: Zoltán Pósa, "Iszonyú károkat okozhat az ökológia lebecsülése," [The underestimation of ecology might cause serious destruction] *Magyar Nemzet*. (1st July 2005). Available online: http://www.mn.mno.hu/portal/293346 (last accessed: 12 April, 2010).

[49] Pál Engel, *Magyarország a középkor végén* [Hungary at the end of the Middle Ages] (Budapest: Térinfo BT, 2001; CD-ROM).

András Vadas

Conclusions

Many questions about the existence and the characteristics of Lake Becskerek remain to be answered, but it seems quite probable that some kind of lake or marshland already existed in this area in the Árpád Period. However, judging from the late medieval and especially the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century state of the lake, it might have been most extensive at the end of the Middle Ages. The settlement structure has been closely connected to the extensity of the lake as according to the historical geographies of the Middle Ages there were no major settlements or ecclesiastical institutions in the region.[50] However, in the modern times one finds a growing number of settlements in the flood plain of the Temes and the Bega and there is hardly any chance that these settlements were founded in highly flood-endangered areas. The creation of the fortification of Becskerek in the sixteenth century might be closely connected with the size and the hydrogeography of the lake and its surroundings, something reinforced by the artificial dam close to the fortification. But one must never forget about the role of natural factors such as the natural change in the water-regime of the rivers of the Temesköz region.

Several other aspects could have been taken into consideration to estimate the size of this wetland such as the examination of the soil structures in the region and the archaeological remains[51] in this territory, but the aim here was to discuss the possibility of tracing environmental changes on historical maps showing the Temesköz region.

---

[50] On the ecclesiastical institutions see: Beatrix F. Romhányi, *Kolostorok és társaskáptalanok a középkori Magyarországon. Katalógus* [Monasteries and chapters in medieval Hungary] (Budapest: Pytheas, 2000).
[51] Because of the borderland position of the territory between Serbia and Romania, earthworks were constructed in the region (such as major dikes). However, either no systematic archaeological investigations have been conducted or their results have not been published yet.

THE PLACE THAT LIES BETWEEN:
SLAVONIA IN THE TENTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES

Jeremy Mikecz 📥

The land between the Drava and Sava rivers during the tenth and eleventh centuries was a place that lay *between* – between cultures and kingdoms. This period was also a "time between:" between the incursions of the first Croatian king, Tomislav (910–928), into the region and its takeover by the relatively young Hungarian kingdom in the eleventh century. This period has been the source of much debate, as expressed by the stripes in the map below (*Fig. 1*).

Fig. 1. Pannonia / Slavonia in AD 1050, from: Paul R. Magocsi, Historical Atlas of East Central Europe *(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993), 13.*

Jeremy Mikecz

According to John V. A. Fine, "a confused situation" follows the death of Tomislav (AD 928) and lasts until the rule of Krešimir II (949–969).[1] In his survey of the lands surrounding his empire in the middle of the tenth century, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus described Pannonia as being occupied by the "Turks" (Hungarians), including the lands from the Danube south to the Sava.[2] This, of course, is a vague reference to a broad region: it would be difficult to draw any major conclusions from such a reference. For example, it is impossible to determine if this land – "between the Danube and Sava rivers"[3] – describes the relatively narrow region between these rivers in Syrmia or the huge expanse that stretches between the two in western Pannonia. Unfortunately, historical sources reveal little else about the region between the Sava and Drava in the tenth century.

Central to this debate is the historical region of Slavonia. The Croatian historian Nada Klaić describes tenth-century Slavonia as being distinguished by total anarchy.[4] The situation in the eleventh century is just as hotly contested. Similarly, Tomislav Raukar once described tenth- and eleventh-century Slavonia's relationship to the early Croatian kingdom as "shrouded in the fog of the unknown."[5] Adding to the confusion is the fact that "Slavonia" has meant different things at different times. Today's Slavonia consists of the eastern half of Pannonian Croatia, which is the lowland region of Croatia lying between the Sava and Drava Rivers. Only partially overlapping with modern-day Slavonia on its western edge, medieval Slavonia included parts of present-day central Croatia, northwest Bosnia, as well as the western part of northern Croatia lying between the Drava and Sava. However, the exact location of eleventh-century Slavonia

---

[1] John V. A. Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans: A Critical Survey from the Sixth to the Late Twelfth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 296–297.

[2] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins, and trans. Jenkins, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967), Ch. 42 (p. 183).

[3] Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio,* Ch. 42 (p. 183).

[4] Paraphrased by Lujo Margetić in Margetić "The Croatian State during the Era of Rulers from the Croatian National Dynasty," in *Croatia in the Early Middle Ages: a Cultural Survey*, ed. Ivan Supičić (London: Philip Wilson Publishers and Zagreb, 1999), 211.

[5] Tomislav Raukar, "Land and Society," in *Croatia and the Early Middle Ages,* 188. Likewise, Stanko Andrić described the history of tenth- and eleventh-century Slavonia as a "mystery." Andrić, *Potonuli svijet: rasprave o slavonskom i srijemskom srednjovjekovlju* [A sunken world: Discussion about the Middle Ages in Slavonia and Syrmia] (Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski Institut za Povijest, 2001), 37.

is still very much a mystery.[6] Moreover, medieval chroniclers also used the term "Slavonia" in a more general sense to refer to "the land of the Slavs."[7]

For lack of a better term, "Slavonia" in this study will be used to describe the geographic region between the Sava and Drava rivers in Croatia (similar to Raukar's presentation in the map, below left), thus combining the territory of modern Slavonia with that of its early medieval predecessor. When I want to refer to the political territories of early medieval or modern Slavonia, I will use the terms "early medieval Slavonia" and "modern Slavonia," respectively, to distinguish from my more general, geographic usage. When zooming out, beyond the boundaries of the Sava and Drava, I will use the term "southern Pannonia" in a similar general sense to refer to the southern half of the Carpathian Basin or Pannonian Plain bounded by mountains to the west, south and east, and extending north to Lake Balaton (*Fig. 3*).

In trying to lift the "fog" shrouding the history of early medieval Slavonia, historians have at times participated in a tug-of-war over who lived there (arguments of ethnicity) and who controlled the region (arguments of nationality). Since this debate is ultimately about geography, borders, and population movements,

---

[6] Some historians argue that in the eleventh century "Slavonia" referred to the region between the Drava and Sava and extending as far south as the Kapela Mountains: Márta Font, "Ugarsko Kraljevstvo i Hrvatska u srednjem vijeku" [The Hungarian Kingdom and Croatia in the Middle Ages], in *Povijesni prilozi* 28 (2005): 8; Anita Blagojević, "Zemljopisno, povijesno, upravno i pravno određenje istočne Hrvatske – korijeni suvremenog regionalizma," [Geographical, historical, administrative, and legal determination of Eastern Croatia – The roots of modern regionalism] in *Zbornik Pravnog Fakulteta Sveučilišta u Rijeci* 29, no. 2 (2008): 1162–1163; and Miljenko Pandžić , "Godina osnutka Zagrebačke biskupije (godine 1094. ili 1090?)," [The year of the foundation of the Diocese of Zagreb (in 1094 or 1090?)] in *Arhivski vjesnik* 37 (1994): 167–168. In contrast, Györffy argues that at this time, "Slavonia" signified Adriatic Croatia and its adjoining lands. György Györffy, "Die Nordwestgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches im XI. Jahrhundert und die Ausbildung des 'ducatus Sclavoniae'," in *Mélanges offerts à Szabolcs de Vajay*, edited by Pierre Brière (Braga: Livraria Cruz, 1971), 299. For a general review of the historical debates about early medieval Slavonia see: Györffy, "Die Nordwestgrenze," 295–313; Font, "Ugarsko Kraljevstvo," 7–22; Andrić, *Potonuli svijet,* 37–50; and John V. A. Fine, *When Ethnicity did not Matter in the Balkans: A Study of Identity in Pre-Nationalist Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slavonia in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 70–74.

[7] For example, in the First Crusade of 1096–1097, Raymond of Toulouse used the term "Slavonia" to describe a mountainous region that the crusaders traversed near the Adriatic. "Raymond d'Aguiliers: Raymond of Toulouse and Adhémar of Le Puy," in *Medieval Sourcebook: The Crusaders Journey to Constantinople: Collected Accounts, 1997*, ed. Paul Halsall (accessed Apr 18, 2009). Originally from August C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1921), 64–67.

Fig. 2. A map (above) showing the borders of Croatia (thick, solid line) during the first half of the tenth century (Raukar, "Land and Society," 186.) contrasted to a map implying Hungarian control (below) over the lands between the Drava and the Sava in AD 950 (Győrffy, "Die Nordwestgrenze," inset).

maps should be an indispensable component of any study. Many historical maps, unfortunately, have shown Slavonia as a peripheral zone to some historical center of interest (i.e. Croatia, Hungary, the Byzantine Empire, etc.). Illustrating the debates caused by the historical sources are the two maps below (*Fig. 2*). One map, from a historical survey of medieval Croatia, shows the borders of Croatia extending to the Drava River in the first half of the tenth century. Conversely, the second map, drawn in a study of the borders of Slavonia by a Hungarian historian, shows this region to be a part of Hungary in the year AD 950. While the time difference between the two maps is minimal, the difference in the message each is sending is tremendous.[8] Often this leads to misleading and over-simplistic representations of a much more complex phenomenon.

By removing Slavonia from the margins of national histories and placing it as the center of study, a new perspective about this region's history can emerge. After all, regions on the periphery of political and population centers often serve as centers of interactions. Furthermore, looking at political maps, like the one in *Fig. 1* with its darkened outlines along the Drava and Sava rivers, can make the land between these rivers appear like a geographically distinct region. However, as a fertile, lowland area itself, it is very much a part of the larger Pannonian Plain or Carpathian Basin. It is my hypothesis that the rivers served more as zones of contact than as natural borders. In order to understand Slavonia's status as both a unique historical and geographical region, it is important to look outside the rivers as well.

Thus, while Slavonia and the land between the Drava and Sava Rivers will remain the central object of study, to really understand its true place, data from throughout Southern Pannonia will be incorporated. Since reliable historical sources about this region during the early medieval period are scarce, archaeology holds the greatest promise for solving this mystery. However, the majority of systematic archaeological studies in this time and place have been conducted at cemeteries. Grave goods, thus, will be the focus of this study. In essence – through the examination of the spatial distribution of tenth- and eleventh-century grave goods in southern Pannonia – there are two main sets of questions to be explored here. First, what was early medieval Slavonia's relationship to its neighbors in the tenth and eleventh centuries? What did the material culture of medieval Slavonia

---

[8] See for example John V. A. Fine, Jr.'s discussion of historical maps, commonly found in Croatian historical literature, showing medieval Croatia's borders covering nearly all of modern Croatia and most of present-day Bosnia. Fine argues that such a large medieval Croatia is based largely on speculation and therefore is very misleading. Fine, *When Ethnicity did not Matter*, 177–180.

have in common with its neighbors and in what ways was it unique? Did the rivers that delineate this region serve as natural borders or conduits of exchange?

Second, just as larger regional patterns are to be analyzed, so too will I analyze smaller "sub-regional" patterns. What do distribution patterns of artifacts reveal about centers of production, as well as trade and distribution networks in Slavonia and the wider region? What factors may have caused these "sub-regional" patterns? On a material level, can Slavonia even be described as a cohesive region – in the tenth and eleventh centuries – unique from its neighbors?

Material Culture Groups of Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Southern Pannonia

Due to the common emphasis on cemeteries in archaeological studies of the early medieval period in East Central Europe, material cultures for this period are therefore naturally defined by assemblages of grave goods. In the material culture history of medieval Pannonia, the tenth through eleventh centuries represent a transition period in the region. Gone were the distinctive burials of the Avar period, yet the people of this region had not yet begun to bury their dead in traditional churchyard cemeteries. This transitional period lasted until the widespread replacement of medieval row cemeteries with churchyard burials after the Hungarian expansion into Slavonia in the late eleventh century.[9]

Within this transitional period, the archaeological record of tenth- through eleventh-century southern Pannonia is dominated by the Bijelo Brdo (alternatively "Bjelo Brdo," "Bialobrdo," or "Belo Brdo") material culture group. Thus far, the

---

[9] According to Florin Curta, these church graveyards became common in the region at the end of the eleventh and at the beginning of the twelfth century as a result of the "drastic measures" undertaken by King Ladislaus I (1077–1095) and King Coloman (1095–1116) to "force people to bury their dead next to the newly founded parish churches." Florin Curta, *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 500–1250*, Cambridge Medieval Textbooks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 252. However, this transition from row cemeteries to churchyard cemeteries in the region was most likely a gradual phenomenon. For an explanation of current theories on this transition from pagan to Christian cemeteries in Hungary see: Nora Berend, József Laszlovszky, and Béla Zsolt Szakács, "The Kingdom of Hungary," in *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c. 900–1200*, ed. Nora Berend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 338–339. Hereby I would like to express my gratitude towards Prof. József Laszlovszky for calling my attention to this. For a discussion of the chronology of cemeteries in early medieval Croatia (south of the Drava) see Maja Petrinec, *Gräberfelder aus dem 8. bis 11. Jahrhundert im Gebiet des frühmitterlalterlichen Kroatischen Staates* (Split: Muzej hrvatskih arheoloških spomenika, 2009), 9–12.

Bijelo Brdo material culture has primarily been defined through cemeteries. While these cemeteries have several common characteristics, the primary distinguishing characteristic of the culture is the presence of particular styles of jewelry, most notably S-shaped circlets and hoop-earrings, silver-wire finger-rings, and necklaces with crystal, glass, or stone beads.[10]

Archaeologists have discovered and identified Bijelo Brdo cemeteries in all corners of the Carpathian Basin. In addition to continental Croatia and Hungary, Bijelo Brdo cemeteries are known as far south as Bosnia and the Adriatic coast of Croatia, as far west as Austria and Slovenia, as far north as Slovakia, and as far east as Romania.[11] The dating and geographic extent of these distinct grave finds suggests some definite historical correlations to the migration, conquest, and expansion of the Hungarians in the region. However, debates still rage about the nature of this connection. Were the Bijelo Brdo people indeed Hungarians? Or did their expansion merely facilitate the spread of certain material items such as the S-shaped jewelry among diverse groups of people? Conversely, were Bijelo Brdo graves the final resting place of commoners?[12] These are significant debates, but in handling these questions it is important to avoid the fallacy of the culture-historical approach: which is the belief that material culture can be used as a proxy for ethnicity.[13]

---

[10] Curta, *Southeastern Europe,* 192, 253.

[11] Željko Demo, *Vukovar – Lijeva Bara* (Zagreb: Arheološki Muzej u Zagrebu, 1996), 113.

[12] According to this "social construction" theory, the Bijelo Brdo culture was the material culture of common people, while other material items from the period – often found in the same cemeteries – represent not earlier cultures or different ethnic groups but different (contemporaneous) social classes. This perspective was first advanced by Béla Szőke and has had a lasting influence on the archaeological literature of the region, particularly in Hungary. For a brief overview of the historiography of this viewpoint in Hungary see: Károly Mesterházy, "The Archaeological Research of the Conquest Period," in *Hungarian Archaeology at the Turn of the Millennium,* ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Ministry of National Cultural Heritage, 2003), 321–327.

[13] The bibliography regarding the "problem of ethnicity" in medieval archaeology is immense. I will cite just a few notable examples here: John V. A. Fine, *When Ethnicity did not Matter*; Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Walter Pohl, "Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies," in *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings,* ed. Lester K. Little and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998). Florin Curta "Some Remarks on Ethnicity in Medieval Archaeology," *Early Medieval Europe* (2007): 159–185; idem, "From Kossinna to Bromley: Ethnogenesis in Slavic Archaeology," in *On Barbarian Identity, Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages,* ed. Andrew Gillet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 201–218; Walter Pohl, "Frontiers and Ethnic Identities: Some Final

Jeremy Mikecz

Other material culture groups contemporaneous with Bijelo Brdo in Southern Pannonia are the Köttlach, "Old Croatian," and possibly for a period, the "Old Hungarian" material culture groups. As one example of the overlap of material cultures, the early medieval cemetery of Petoševci-Bagruša in Bosnia is rich with Bijelo Brdo and "Old Croatian" jewelry as well as "Old Hungarian" finds.[14] There is still much debate about the significance of "Old Hungarian" graves and their relationship to Bijelo Brdo graves, as they are often found in the same cemeteries.[15] Were the "Old Hungarian" graves contemporaneous with those of Bijelo Brdo? Or did they precede the Bijelo Brdo burials? Due to these ongoing debates and the troublesome ethnic implications of material culture terms such as "Old Hungarian" and "Old Croatian," both will be left in quotes here.[16]

Considerations," in *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis: Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages,* ed. Florin Curta (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 255–265.

[14] Zdenko Žeravica, "Ranoslavenska nekropola Bagruša u Petoševcima kod Laktaša," [The early slavic necropolis of Bagruša in Petoševci near Laktaša], *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja BiH* 40–41 (1985–1986): 129–209.

[15] In his establishment of a chronology for the Bijelo Brdo material culture, Giesler argued that the "Old Hungarian" group was a predecessor to Bijelo Brdo. Jochen Giesler, "Untersuchungen zur Chronologie der Bijelo-Brdo Kultur: Ein Beitrag zur Archäologie des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts im Karpatenbecken," *Praehistorische Zeitschrift* 56 (1981): 19–32. Others have argued that the "Old Hungarian" and Bijelo Brdo graves are contemporaneous and just represent different social classes or groups. As discussed above (fn. 12), Szőke argues for three different types of graves, those of the ruling elite, a middle class, and graves of commoners. Mesterházy, "The Archaeological Research of the Conquest Period," 323–324. In this scheme, the Bijelo Brdo graves are those of the commoners. However, there is hardly any consensus on this subject, neither on the "common" nor on the "Magyar" assumptions. Giesler in his 1981 work, as already noted, argued for a separate (but overlapping) chronology for "Old Hungarian" and Bijelo Brdo goods, while ŽeljkoTomičić – who has been researching the Bijelo Brdo culture in Slavonia for the past twenty years – agrees but drops the "Old Hungarian" altogether and simply calls it the "transitional" Bijelo Brdo phase. For example, in "Nova istraživanja bjelobrdske culture," (p. 121) Tomičić refers to this group as the "Übergangsphase," while in "Gomjenica," (p. 197) he refers to it as the "Prijelazna faza" [transitional phase]. Tomičić, "Prinos poznavanju kronologije ranosrednjovjekovnoga groblja Gomjenica kraj Prijedora" [Contributions to the chronology of the Early Medieval cemetery in Gomjenica near Prijedor], *Starohrvatska Prosvjeta* 3, no. 34 (2007): 151–197; Željko Tomičić, "Nova istraživanja bjelobrdske culture u Hrvatskoj," [New research into the Bijelo Brdo culture in Croatia], *Prilozi arheološkog institute u Zagrebu* 9 (1992): 113–130.

[16] In a recent book, Maja Petrinec argues that the term "Old Croatian" does not necessarily indicate a uniform ethnicity of the deceased buried with these items. However, the very use of such a term can be very suggestive. Petrinec, *Gräberfelder aus dem 8. bis 11. Jahrhundert*, 5.

Grave Goods

With the exception of a relatively small number of "Old Hungarian" graves – which contained objects such as knives, arrowheads and horse stirrups – the burial assemblages of the tenth and eleventh centuries in southern Pannonia are defined by certain types of jewelry.[17] However, in defining these material cultures it is easy to lose sight of the great variability of jewelry items found over both time and space. This variability is caused by the multiple influences on these funerary dress items as well as the multiple places of production.[18]

The jewelry item most commonly associated with the Bijelo Brdo material culture is the circlet with S-shaped ends. These S-shaped circlets have been found throughout the Carpathian Basin (see *Fig. 3*) and they have been found in burials dated to all periods of the Bijelo Brdo culture.[19] Furthermore, they also appear more frequently than any other Bijelo Brdo type. Of the sites analyzed in this study, S-shaped loops have been found in over 85 of them. Their actual importance in daily life is unknown, but their importance in the funerary rites of the dead is indisputable. At the Gomjenica-Baltine bare site in northern Bosnia, for example, archaeologists found 230 such circlets in only 67 graves.[20]

Along with the S-shaped circlets, grape-like (or raceme) earrings are another hallmark of the Bijelo Brdo culture in southern Pannonia. However, in contrast, the styles and distribution of grape-like earrings show great variability throughout the region. Although Jochen Giesler charted the discovery of these earrings throughout the Carpathian Basin, they seem to appear in the greatest numbers in Slavonia, particularly in the western part of this region along the upper Sava, Drava, and Mura Rivers (see *Fig. 4*).

---

[17] Giesler found the relatively low number of "Old Hungarian" grave-finds in the Drava-Sava region "remarkable." Giesler, "Untersuchungen," 23.

[18] In this study I will use the typology of tenth- through eleventh-century jewelry (particularly Bijelo Brdo), first established by Jochen Giesler for the whole Carpathian Basin and since modified by Željko Tomičić in respect to his studies in Southern Pannonia. Giesler, "Untersuchungen," 3–168 and Tomičić, "Nova istraživanja bjelobrdske culture u Hrvatskoj," 113–130.

[19] Giesler, "Untersuchungen," 104–109; Željko Tomičić, "Istraživanje kronologije ranosrednjovjekovnog groblja u Mahovljanima kraj Banja Luke," [Investigation of the chronology of the Early Medieval cemetery in Mahovljani near Banja Luka], *Prilozi arheološkog institute u Zagrebu* 17 (2000): 32.

[20] Željko Tomičić, "Prinos poznavanju kronologije ranosrednjovjekovnoga groblja Gomjenica kraj Prijedora," [Contributions to the chronology of the Early Medieval cemetery in Gomjenica near Prijedor], *Starohrvatska Prosvjeta* 3 (2007): 158.
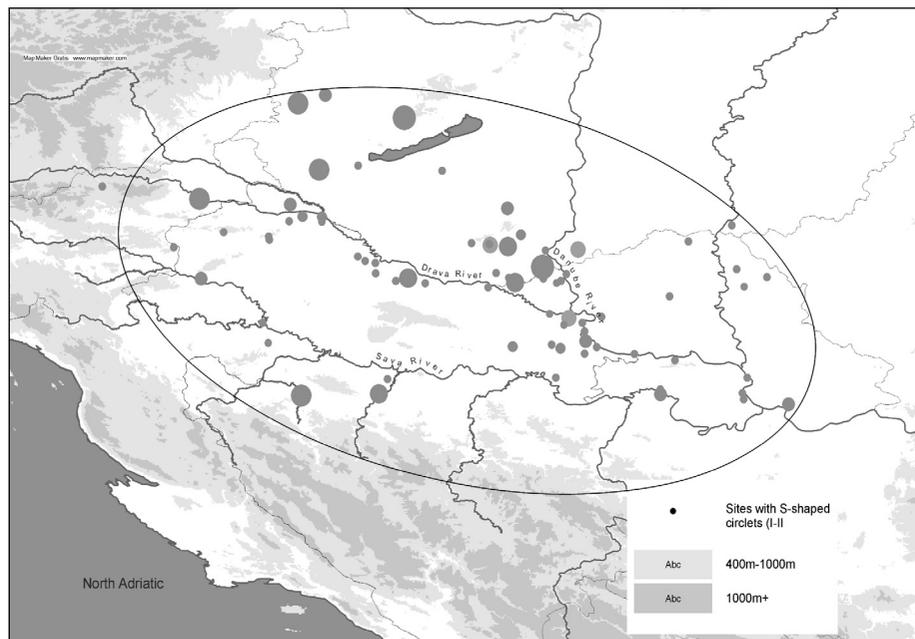
Fig. 3. Map showing the distribution of S-shaped circlets (types I and II) – the hallmark of the Bijelo Brdo Culture – in southern Pannonia. The scope of this study covers the southern half of the Carpathian Basin bounded by mountains in the west, south, and east, and stretching as far north as Lake Balaton (solid line). Note: this artifact has been found throughout East-central Europe, far beyond the limits of this study.

The primary exception to this pattern is found with Volin-type earrings (17). Jochen Giesler identified two sub-types of Volin-type earrings, finely granulated earrings (17a) and rustic cast earrings (17b). The former are believed to have been produced along the Volin River in Kievan Rus, while the latter appear to be rough imitations produced locally in Slavonia (see *Fig. 4*).[21]

The distribution of these earrings has led some archaeologists to search for historical explanations for the sub-regional patterns of these artifacts. In a 2003 article about lunar cast variant of these earrings (type 15c), Tomičić uses these earrings to argue for a connection between Dalmatia and Slavonia (see *Fig. 5*). While their appearance in both regions certainly supports the rather logical conclusion

---

[21] Zdenko Vinski, "O postojanju radionica nakita starohrvatskog doba u Sisku," [On the existence of a jewelry workshop in the Early Medieval period in Sisak], *Vjesnik arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 3 (1971): 59, 66.
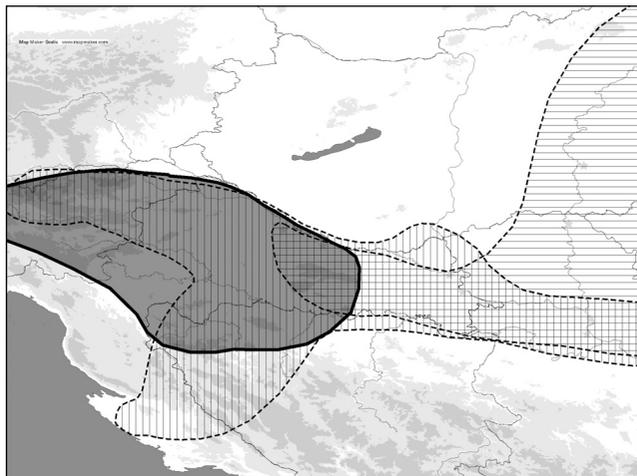
Fig. 4. Grapelike earrings (types 14–16, 17b) are found in greatest concentration in the western half of southern Pannonia (shown in dark grey). However, these artifacts are actually found, albeit in smaller numbers, throughout the Carpathian Basin. Some exceptions to this pattern are found with the Volin-type earrings (type 17a – grid pattern) which originated from the east and the cast crescent earrings (15c) found along the Adriatic and throughout the Sava-Drava interfluve (vertical lines).
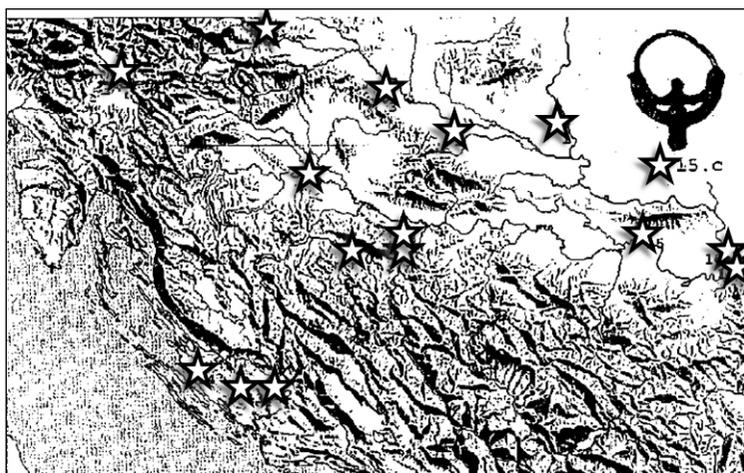
Fig. 5. Spatial distribution map of cast lunar earrings (15c) created by Željko Tomičić. Tomičić uses this distribution to argue for connections between southern and northern Croatia. Due to the poor quality of the copy of this map, I have highlighted the locations of these earrings with stars (Tomičić 2003: 140).

that trade and communication did take place between Dalmatia and Slavonia in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the suggestion of a special link between these two non-contiguous parts of modern-day Croatia may be over-stated.

To illustrate, Tomičić himself cites examples of cast lunar earrings with grape-like pendants in regions as dispersed as Greece, Albania, Romania, the Czech Republic and Serbia.[22] Yet, with the exception of northern Serbia, these regions are conspicuously absent from the map he produced to demonstrate this *special* connection between Slavonia and Dalmatia. A wider regional map, showing multiple artifacts, would show that Slavonia had "special connections" with many of its neighbors in the early medieval period (see *Fig. 6* below).[23]

Patterns

The mapping of these and other grave goods in southern Pannonia demonstrates the true complexity of the material culture of southern Pannonia (see *Fig. 6*). On one hand, the region is divided between north and south by the Old Croatian hairloops (types III and IV) found between the Sava and the Adriatic and the serpent-head bracelets (8) and luxury silver rings (38a) found to the north.[24] On the other hand – lunar earrings of the Köttlach culture, rustic-cast grapelike earrings (14–16, 17b), Volin-type earrings (17a), and eagle rings – divide the region west to east. The resulting map shows a motley of overlapping material culture zones that confound any attempts to draw borders based on material culture. Furthermore, the frequent influence of external elements – such as artifacts attributed to the Köttlach and "Old Croatian" material cultures – betrays the somewhat arbitrary nature of classifying material evidence into one group or another. The map above shows that the boundaries of these groups are fluid and overlapping rather than static and linear.

The regional differences observed in grave goods allow the identification of "sub-regional networks" which can be set apart from one another by the frequent appearance of certain grave goods. As discussed earlier, Zdenko Vinski argued for

---

[22] Željko Tomičić, "O nekim vezama ranosrednjovjekovne Slavonije i Dalmacije na primjere polumjesecolikih naušnica s privjeskom" [On some connections between Early Medieval Slavonia and Dalmatia in the example of crescent-shaped earrings with pendants], *Starohrvatska Prosvjeta* 3 (2003): 154.

[23] For a more recent examination of Bijelo Brdo grave goods found in cemeteries in coastal Croatia see Petrinec, *Gräberfelder aus dem 8. bis 11. Jahrhundert,* 316–320.

[24] For the luxury silver rings (38a), Károly Mesterházy observed this pattern in "Bizánci és balkáni eredetű tárgyak a 10–11. századi magyar sírleletekben II" [Objects of Byzantine and Balkan origins in 10th to 11th century Hungarian grave-finds II] *Folia Archaeologica* 42 (1991): 145–177.
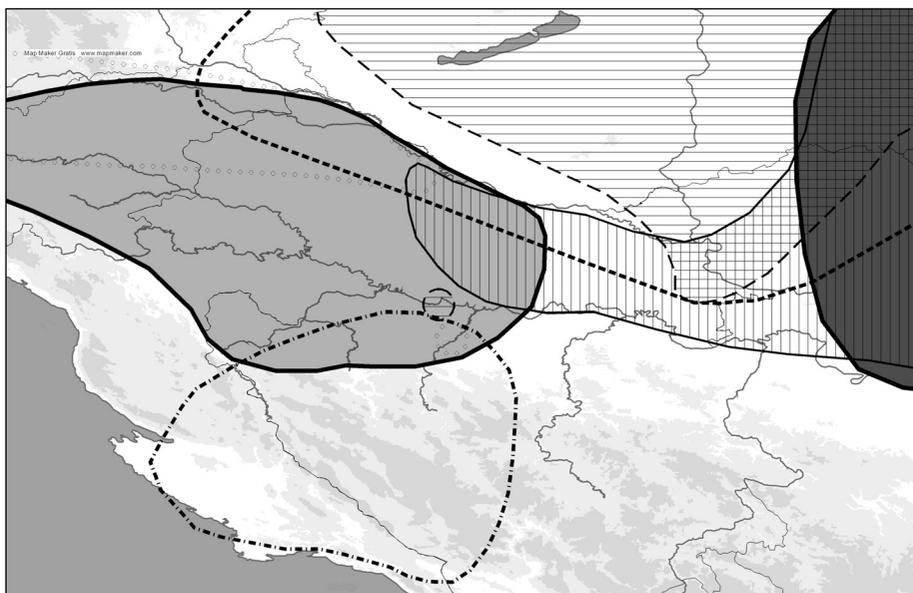
Some Notable Artifacts of Southern Pannonia

TYPE #	TYPE			TYPE #	TYPE		
14-16, 17B	GRAPE-LIKE (RACEME) EARRINGS			17A	VOLIN-TYPE EARRINGS		
III & IV	1 AND 3-BEADED HAIRLOOPS				EAGLE RINGS		
38A	LUXURY SILVER RING				LUNAR EARRINGS		
8	SERPENT-HEAD BRACELETS						

Fig. 6. Map showing the overlapping zones of grave goods in southern Pannonia and beyond.

two Bijelo Brdo cultural circles in Southern Pannonia: a western and an eastern complex.[25] My analysis of the distribution of jewelry items in the region supports

---

[25] Vinski, *O postojanju*, 73–76.

his claim, most significantly with the concentrations of grape-like earrings and certain types of two-part pendants in the west. However, a careful comparison with sites beyond the Sava and Drava Rivers shows that many other "sub-regional networks" can be identified as well on the basis of burial goods. Emphasizing one of these networks at the expense of the other could provide a misleading – and overly simplistic – view of the true complexity of medieval material culture in Southern Pannonia.
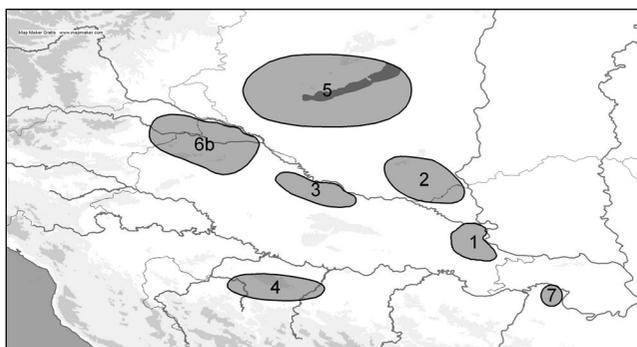
#	Region Description	Key Tenth- and Eleventh-Century Cemeteries[26]
1	Western Syrmia / eastern Slavonia	Bijelo Brdo II – Ulica venicije (Tomičić 1991, Ivaniček 1949), Vukovar – Lijeva bara (Demo 1996)
2	Baranya (Hungary/Croatia)	Majs-Udvari rétek (A. Kiss 1983)
3	Drava River Valley (middle Slavonia)	Zvonimirovo-Veliko polje (2006), Ciganka-Mesarna (Tomičić 1990)
4	Sava Valley (northern Bosnia)	Gomjenica-Baltine bare (Miletić 1967), Mahovljani (Banja luka) – kužno groblje (Tomičić 2000)
5	Lake Balaton region	Halimba-Cseres (Török 1962), Pusztaszentlászló (Szőke, Vándor, and Kiszely 1987)
6	Upper Drava / Mura	Ptuj-grad (Korošec 1950)
7	Lower Sava (Serbia)	Mačvanska Mitrovica (Ercegović-Pavlović 1980)

Fig. 7. Seven sub-regions analyzed for a comparative analysis of grave goods in southern Pannonia.

---

[26] Region 1: Tomičić, "Novi prilozi vrednovanju ostavštine srednjovjekovnog groblja Bijelo Brdo II" [New contributions to the evaluation of the remains of the medieval cemetery Bijelo Brdo II], *Prilozi Instituta za arheologiju u Zagrebu* 8, no. 1 (1991): 116; Franjo Ivaniček, "Istraživanje nekropole ranog srednjeg vijeka u Bijelom Brdo" [Investigation of the Early Medieval necropolis in Bijelo Brdo]. *Ljetopis Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 55 (1949): 111–144; Demo, *Vukovar – Lijeva Bara*. Region 2: Attila Kiss, *Baranya megye X–XI. századi sírleletei* [10th to 11th-century gravefinds in Baranya County], (Budapest,

To further identify and understand the interesting patterns revealed in the spatial analysis of the distribution of artifacts in southern Pannonia, it would be useful to conduct a comparative study of individual cemeteries. While there is not sufficient space here to allow any in-depth comparisons, I will identify some key observations that a preliminary examination allows. To do so, I identified seven areas in southern Pannonia which contain a cluster of tenth- and eleventh-century cemeteries, with each area containing at least one such cemetery that has been thoroughly excavated and documented (see *Fig. 7*). There is only one artifact that all these cemeteries have in common: that is the S-shaped circlet (types I and II).

Several significant patterns stand out (see *Fig. 8*). Although there are multiple sub-regional patterns, the easiest to observe in these tables is the contrast between the cemeteries of the west and south (regions 3, 4, and 6) and those found to the north and east (regions 1, 2, and 5). The first noticeable difference is the almost complete absence of most types of bracelets (types 2–8) from the cemeteries in regions 3, 4, and 6. In direct contrast is the pattern observed in the spatial distribution of grape-shaped earrings (see *Fig. 4*). The average of one grape-shaped earring (types 14–16 and 17b) per three to five burials in these sub-regions certainly reinforces the hypothesis that these earrings were produced locally in western Slavonia.[27] Of particular interest is the great similarity between the burial assemblages of western Syrmia (sub-region 1) and Baranya (sub-region 2), which

---

Akadémiai Kiadó, 1983), 73–236. Region 3: Tomičić, "Ranosrednjovjekovno groblje Zvonimirovo – Veliko polje, prinos poznavanju bjelobrdske kulture u podravskom dijelu Slavonije" [The early medieval cemetery of Zvonimirovo – Veliko polje, contributions to the knowledge of the Bijelo Brdo Culture in the Drava valley region of Slavonia] *Prilozi arheološkog institute u Zagrebu* 13/14, no. 1 (2006) and "Tragom novijij istraživanja bjelobrdske kulture u slavonskom dijelu Podravine" [Recent investigations of the Bijelo Brdo Culture in Slavonian Podravina (Drava Valley)] *Prilozi Instituta za arheologiju u Zagrebu* 7, no. 1 (1990): 85–106; Region 4: Nada Miletić, "Slovenska nekropola u Gomjenici kod Prijedora" [Slavic necropolis in Gomjenica near Prijedor] *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine u Sarajevu, Arheologija* 21–22 (1967): 81–154, Tables 1.I-XXXII; Tomičić, "Istraživanje kronologije," 25–56. Region 5: Gyula Török, *Die Bewohner von Halimba im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1962); Béla Szőke, László Vándor, and István Kiszely, *Pusztaszentlászló Árpád-kori temetője* [The Árpádian age cemetery at Pusztaszentlászló] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987). Region 6: Josip Korošec, *Staroslovansko grobišče na ptujskem gradu* [The old Slav burial place on the Castle Hill of Ptuj] (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, 1950). Region 7: Slavenka Ercegović-Pavlović, *Les nécropoles romaines et médiévales de Mačvanska Mitrovica* (Beograd: Arheološki institut, 1980).
[27] See, for example: Tomičić, *O nekim* 155; or Vinski, *O postojanju*, 70.

Site	Region	I-II	A-B	1	2 7	8	9	10,11	12	14-17b	14	15c	17b	19	38a	43	45	17a	Lunar	III	IV
Bijelo Brdo II																					
Vukovar-l.b.	1																				
Other Nearby Sites																					
Majs-u.r.	2																				
Other Nearby Sites																					
North-central Slavonia sites	3																				
Other Nearby Sites																					
Mahovljani																					
Gomjenica	4																				
Other Nearby Sites																					
Puszta-szentlászló																					
Halimba-Cs.	5																				
Ikervár-Virág																					
Other Nearby Sites																					
Ptuj-grad	6																				
Other Nearby Sites																					
Mačvanski Mitrovica	7																				

Ration Artifact:Grave   <1:100   1:20-100   1:10-20   1:3-10   1:3-2:3   2:3-1:1   >1:1

Fig. 8. A graphic representation of the proportion of select artifacts found in some key cemeteries in the sub-regions mapped in Fig. 7.

suggests that the Drava River served more as a place of contact than as a natural obstacle in this period. Other forms that are predominantly found in this region are certain sub-types of the two-part pendant (type 9 – sub-types 6 and 16).[28] This suggests the presence of one trade or material culture network that extended west-to-east from Slovenia to central Slavonia and south-to-north from the region south of the Sava to as far north as the Drava and even up to the Mura. Whether or not this network extended north of the Mura into southwestern Hungary is still unclear; however, the almost complete lack of grape-shaped earrings in Vas County (Hungary) and the total lack of two-part pendants characteristic of western Slavonia (sub-types 6 and 16) indicates that this network probably did not stretch too far north of the Mura.[29]

Lastly, while I have mainly discussed jewelry forms attributed to the Bijelo Brdo material culture complex, objects of other material cultures also appear frequently in these cemeteries. Objects of the so-called "Old Hungarian" culture appear most frequently in eastern Slavonia and – of course – Hungary. Likewise,

---

[28] For a study of these two-part pendants see Željko Demo, "Bjelobrdski privjesci u Jugoslaviji," [Bijelo Brdo pendants in Yugoslavia], *Podravski zbornik* 9 (1983): 271–301.

[29] Gábor Kiss recorded the discovery of two rustic Volin-type earrings (17b) in Vas County and no examples of two-part pendants sub-types 6 and 16. It is interesting to note, however, that the two Volin-type earrings he recorded were found at the cemetery of Répcelak-Várdomb, Homokbánya, which is at the far northern edge of Vas County, well north of the 47° parallel northern limit of this study. Gábor Kiss, *Vas megye 10–12. századi sír- és kincsleletei* [Tenth–twelfth century grave- and treasure-finds in Vas County], (Szombathely: Szignatúra, 2000), 135–141 and table 57.

"Old Croatian" jewelry items have been found in large numbers in cemeteries in northern Bosnia. The abundance of these forms at cemeteries in northern Bosnia suggests a link between the Adriatic and the Sava valley. But, it should be noted, the similarities between northern Bosnia and the Adriatic are no greater than those between northern Bosnia and the Lake Balaton region of Hungary, for example. Therefore, a search for differences can obscure the overall similarities of these cemeteries. The similar burial assemblages and burial patterns (i.e. graves laid out in rows, west-east orientation – head-to-toe, lack of grave architecture, etc.) reveals mortuary burial practices that were overall more similar than different. This indicates that regardless of whatever factors served to divide the region (warfare, political borders, invasions, etc.), the factors that tended to unite this region were stronger (trade and communication networks, migrations, spirituality).

Conclusion

In the past, much of the archaeological research done in Southern Pannonia has focused on the most visible evidence of the medieval past in the region: cemeteries. Besides the obvious study of burial practices, these cemeteries have primarily been used to answer the questions of *where* and *when*. However, in trying to answer the question of *where*, I believe that mapping the distribution patterns of artifacts such as grave goods can also provide some clues about the living. Not only do they tell us about the burial culture of a particular community, but these distribution patterns can at least provide some hints about the trade, communication, and even spiritual networks that existed in the Middle Ages. This means that beyond questions of *where* and *when* the dead were buried, these cemeteries can also provide answers to questions such as *what* was the nature of human interaction and activity. In seeking an answer to this question, archaeologists look for patterns.

The danger however, is in the way patterns are sought. According to Stanton Green and Stephen Perlman, establishing a typology in order to identify patterns "implicitly" carries a "closed concept of culture."[30] However, human interactions, and therefore cultural processes, do not happen in a closed system. The problem then arises when archaeologists define material culture groups and establish their geographical limits with somewhat arbitrary boundaries. This provides the perception of a closed system, when in fact, in most cases, patterns of human interaction are much more complex and fluid.

---

[30] Stanton W. Green and Stephen M. Perlman, "Frontiers, Boundaries, and Open Social Systems," in *The Archaeology of Frontiers and Boundaries,* ed. Stanton W. Green and Stephen M. Perlman (Orlando: Academic Press, 1985), 6.

Further exacerbating this tendency to create boundaries, and therefore creating a "closed view" of culture, is that the interpretation of both the historical and the archaeological evidence is often colored by modern perspectives of nation-states. I believe that this phenomenon has influenced both the research of historians as well as archaeologists. We very readily observe differences and perceive borders. Due to the nature of the sources, medieval historians are particularly perceptible to this. Historical sources, often written by the ruling strata of society expressing some facet of a struggle for power, easily lend themselves to such a view.
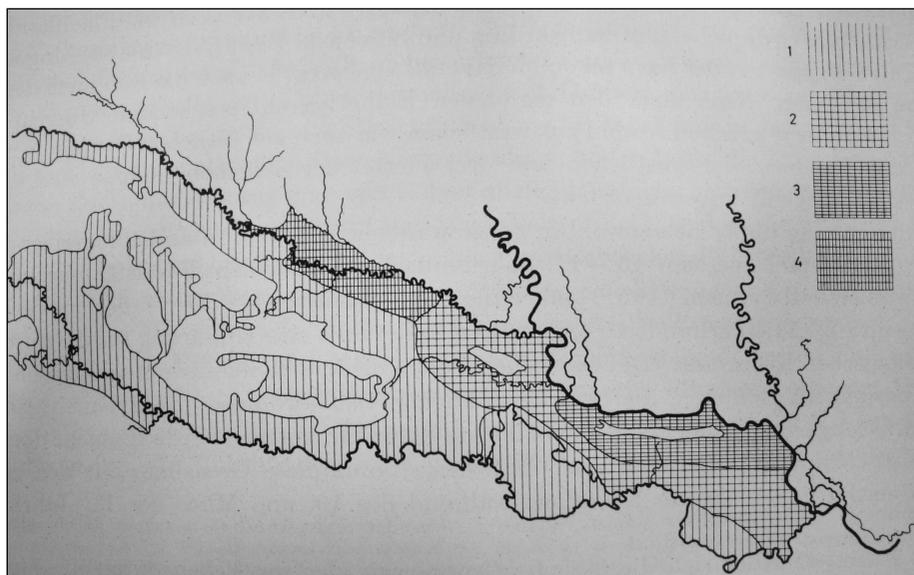
Fig. 9. A map made by Attila Kiss, allegedly showing the ethnic make-up of Slavonia and Syrmia during the tenth and eleventh centuries. (Kiss 1973: 329)[31]

Archaeologists also share the tendency to draw borders. This problem is magnified by the emphasis on classifying and delineating groups and identifying differences. It is of course fine to say that the medieval people of Baranya buried their dead with somewhat different adornments than did the people of western Slavonia. Yet it becomes a problem if these differences are exaggerated

---

[31] Attila Kiss, "Zur Frage der Bjelo Brdo Kultur: Bemerkungen zu den ethnischen Verhältnissen des heutigen Slawonien und Syrmien im 10–11. Jahrhundert," *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 25 (1973): 327–340.

while similarities are ignored. Furthermore, the tendency to divide regions into material culture zones can become a problem when material evidence is used to draw conclusions that it cannot support. In medieval archaeology, this tendency particularly manifests itself when artifacts are used as indicators of ethnicity (see *Fig. 9* above).

With these limitations and concerns in mind, I have strived to identify spatial patterns without confining myself to any pre-conceived notions of boundaries. The spatial patterns that emerged revealed that a very complex level of exchange took place in medieval Southern Pannonia. In particular, the rivers – which are often viewed as the natural borders of the region – appear to have been conduits for trade and interaction rather than barriers of separation. The role of rivers as meeting places and transportation routes can especially be seen near the confluence of the Drava and Danube. Here archaeologists have not only identified a dense concentration of sites, but also sites that lie on all three sides of the confluence (see map in *Fig. 3*). In addition, the difference in the artifacts found at sites lying on opposite sides of this confluence is often no greater than between sites on the same side of the river. For example, I have already observed greater similarities between the sites of eastern Slavonia and Baranya (sub-regions 1 and 2) than between western (3) and eastern Slavonian sites (1). Others have observed the placement of sites near strategic river-crossings indicating the importance of transfluvial trade routes.[32]

Given these observed patterns, just what was medieval Slavonia's role as a "place between"? Such places are often labeled as frontiers or borderlands. In contrast to the more linear concept of frontier, the idea of "borderlands" suggests high levels of interaction within *places that lie between.* Rather than focus on these areas as peripheral areas to centers of population and power, borderlands studies view these marginal areas as centers of interaction and exchange. Goods, ideas, and beliefs are exchanged in borderlands.

It is my conclusion that tenth- and eleventh-century Slavonia was a borderland and a place of exchange rather than a frontier or no man's land. The archaeological evidence shows that artifacts – as well as material preferences and production methods associated with these artifacts – were found in equal measure

---

[32] In regard to several sites, Tomičić has noted the importance of a nearby river crossing to the location of the site. Tomičić, *Panonski periplus: Arheološka topografija kontinentalne hrvatske* [Pannonian periplus: The archaeological topography of continental Croatia], (Zagreb: Sveučilište u Zagrebu hrvatski studiji, Studia Croatica: Institut za arheologiju, 1999), 190. See also: Tajana Sekelj Ivančan, *Catalogue of Medieval Sites in Continental Croatia,* BAR S615 (Oxford: Hadrian Books Ltd., 1995), 116.

on opposing sides of alleged borders. The medieval people of western Slavonia buried their dead with very similar grave goods as did those who lived in the Carinthian march. Likewise, the burial goods of northern Bosnia share many similarities both with Adriatic sites and Slavonian sites, and likewise with the already cited similarities between eastern Slavonian sites and Baranya. Differences between sites seem to be in direct proportion to the distances between them rather than to any possible borders.

A NEW APPROACH TO THE MOLDAVIAN EXTERIOR WALL PAINTING USING VISUAL RHETORIC

Teodora Artimon 📥

The first half of the sixteenth century represented a fulminant period for the art of Moldavia. During the two reigns of voivode Peter Rareş (1527–1538; 1541–1546), an innovative type of iconography was developed: the churches and monasteries commissioned by the ruler were fully decorated on their outer walls with ample scenes. What is intriguing about these scenes is not simply the fact that they entirely clothed the exterior walls of the monasteries, but also the message they were bearing. Given the political situation of Moldavia, when Peter Rareş was expecting an imminent Ottoman attack, the exterior wall painting received a mobilizing anti-Ottoman message. This paper will explore the main scenes which carry this message and will analyze them by using visual rhetoric which will help to better point out the specificity of this iconography.

Background

Peter Rareş, the illegitimate son of Stephen the Great, received the throne of Moldavia in 1527, being unanimously elected voivode by the Ruling Council. At this time, the Ottoman offensive was following the Belgrade–Buda–Vienna axis. In consequence, the Porte no longer saw the Romanian principalities as states protecting the empire's Danubian border, but included them in the "European policy of the Ottomans."[1] Less than a year later, a number of the boyars in the council started to disagree with his external policy and his aim of joining the anti-Ottoman league that was being created in the West. This is the point where Rareş stopped communicating with the majority of the members of the council and where he began to build-up a campaign with the purpose of persuading his subjects to join his anti-Ottoman ambitions. This campaign had a number of directions: propagating his name and legitimizing himself with the commission of the Chronicle of Macarie, bishop of Roman; using various methods of distracting

---

[1] This meant that Moldavia found itself in permanent insecurity, as an Ottoman offensive was highly possible. See: Tahsin Gemil, "În Faţa Impactului Otoman" [Facing the Ottoman impact] in *Petru Rareş*, ed. Leon Şimanschi (Bucharest: Academiei, 1978), 138.

the boyars' attention from plotting against him; and using the exterior walls of his monasteries as a tool for physically sketching his ambitions.[2]

However, the most sticking and influential method was that of exterior painting, which was meant not only to point to the ruler's aspirations, but also to defend his rights and legitimacy and to win a medieval public's opinion. Understanding why Rareș needed to employ this method brings me back to the point when the boyars started to disagree with their ruler's political views. From the beginning of his reign, Rareș was determined to continue the anti-Ottoman policy of his father, Stephen the Great. However, some of the boyars in the Ruling Council believed that the anti-Ottoman struggle was useless and that Moldavia should accept Ottoman suzerainty.[3] Thus Rareș found himself faced with a group of opposing boyars, who strongly disagreed with his external policy. In order to continue his anti-Ottoman policy, the ruler needed the support of the masses, because in case of a military clash with the Empire of Sultan Suleyman the Great, the masses would comprise the greater part of the army. Therefore, the voivode had to deal with two matters: first of all, he had to convince the lower strata to join his cause and not that of the opposing nobles; and second, he had to reinforce the belief of the ruling elites of his legitimacy and trustworthiness.

The Legacy of Visual Dialogue

Therefore, based on the difficulties he was facing, Peter Rareș started to construct a visual dialogue with his subjects, a dialogue which was comprised of scenes such as The Akathistos Hymn with the Siege of Constantinople, The Last Judgment with the Ottomans heading for hell, The Tree of Jesse and the Celestial Hierarchy. However, these scenes were not the original creation of the voivode, but had their inspiration in the art of Stephen the Great (1457–1504). The most significant period of Moldavian artistic innovation began with the reign of Stephen who erected and decorated up to thirty churches and monasteries in a period of seventeen years (1487–1504).[4] Several art historians have demonstrated the capacity of Stephen to

---

[2] For a complete description of the campaign and its outcomes, see: Teodora Artimon, "Peter Rareș and his Visual Concept: an Ambitious Sixteenth-Century PR Campaign?" MA thesis (Budapest: Central European University, 2010).

[3] Virgil Pâslariuc, *Raporturile Politice dintre Marea Boierime și Domnie în Țara Moldovei în Secolul al XVI-lea* [The political relationships between the upper nobility and the monarchy in the Moldavian Principality during the sixteenth century] (Chișinau: Pontos, 2005), 87–88.

[4] Vasile Drăguț calls this period "the glorious epoch." See: Vasile Drăguț, *Pictura Murală din Moldova. Secolele XV–XVI* [The Moldavian mural painting. Fifteenth-sixteenth centuries] (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1982), 9.

make use of painting in his own service, as Moldavian religious art also reached maturity with his commissions.[5] Being inspired by contemporary historical events, Stephen the Great used church painting not only to depict Biblical episodes, but he also used it for two other reasons which Vasile Drăguţ pointed out: expressing his royal authority and mobilizing the Moldavians against their most important rival of the time, the Ottoman Empire.[6] Some decades later, Peter Rareş took it a few steps further: he developed Stephen's visual language and took it outside the walls of monasteries and churches in a decoration that symbolized the fears of the sixteenth-century Moldavian people.

However, the legacy of Stephen the Great did not end with inspiring the political theme of the scenes, but it also inspired the placing of the scenes on the outside walls of the edifices. The reasons for the appearance of the exterior paintings have been quite thoroughly discussed by a number of scholars. The origins of this practice are, and probably will remain, at the level of theories. Different hypotheses were theorized by scholars such as Paul Henry, André Grabar[7] and Romanian art historians. Romanians such as Sorin Ulea and Gheorghe Balş argued for the exterior iconography as an original Moldavian creation, and it was Virgil Vătăşianu who pointed out that this kind of painting was a development from the exterior wall decorations that had been employed during the time of Stephen the Great and which included not only simple abstract decorations but also small-scale figural scenes.[8]

With this background, Rareş elaborated his exterior iconographic programme, his own "visual dialogue." Nathan Knobler discussed the "necessity of human beings to transform their experiences into visual symbols."[9] Rareş and his counsellors followed the same process, thus the viewers could clearly distinguish

---

[5] For more on the Byzantine iconography of Stephen the Great, see: Adela Vătişi, *Artă de Tradiţie Bizantină în România* [The Romanian art of Byzantine tradition] (Bucharest: Noi Media Print, 2008), 65–70.

[6] Drăguţ, *Pictura Murală*, 12. See also: Virgil Vătăşianu, *Pictura Murală din Nordul Moldovei* [The mural painting of Northern Moldavia] (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1974).

[7] For more on these debates, see: Paul Henry, *Monumentele din Moldova de Nord: de la Origini Până la Sfârşitul Secolului al XVI-lea* [The monuments of Northern Moldavia: From the origins to the end of the sixteenth century] (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1984) (first published: 1930); Sorin Ulea, "Originea şi Semnificaţia Ideologică a Picturii Exterioare Moldoveneşti I" [The origin and the ideological meaning of the Moldavian exterior painting I] *Studii şi Cercetări de Istoria Artei. Seria Arta Plastică* 10 (1963): 57–93.

[8] See Vătăşianu, *Pictura Murală*, 23–24.

[9] Nathan Knobler, *The Visual Dialogue: An Introduction to the Appreciation of Art* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1980), 21

some easily recognisable figures on the walls, such as the Ottomans going to have their sins weighed in the Last Judgment or the besieged Constantinople being defended by a Moldavian rider. Based on the statement of Knobler, these scenes can be interpreted as a collection of images that gave the lay mind an impulse to think further in the future: "Could I be the rider who successfully defends Constantinople/Suceava?" could have been the question to come to one's mind after viewing the exterior paintings, more precisely, the Siege of Constantinople. All the scenes together thus might have offered the viewers an experience that they might not have otherwise had, an experience that could enrich their view of certain issues related to the times they lived in.

Visual Rhetoric

In this discussion, the exterior iconographic programme will be analysed from a political-persuasive point of view and not from a religious one. From this perspective, one can distinguish two categories of scenes. The first group is composed of four mural scenes, which represent the chore of the exterior entirety and which will be discussed further on: The Last Judgment, The Akathistos Hymn, The Celestial Hierarchy, and The Tree of Jesse. These four major themes are without exception represented in each of the monasteries where the painting was commissioned by Rareş, in contrast to the second group of mural scenes, which is comprised of various themes – such as the Customs of Heaven which details the path of the soul through twenty-four customs before entering Heaven; the Parable of the Prodigal Son; a short cycle from the Genesis; and other scenes from saints' lives, most importantly of saints like George and Nicholas. The focus of the following analysis will be on the first group, as the secondary group is considered additional in political meaning, meant to rather fill in the spaces which were left blank by the primary scenes.[10]

The oldest exterior mural painting is that of Probota monastery (1532), but Rareş also commissioned those of Humor (1535), which is the best preserved, those of Moldoviţa (1537), Arbore (1541), Baia (1535–1538), Saint George of Suceava (1534) and Saint George of Hârlău (1530), Coşula (1536–1538), Râşca (1551–1552) and Voroneţ (1547).[11] Also, he might have commissioned the painting of the Dobrovăţ and Bălineşti monasteries, which are yet to be dated.

---

[10] Ulea, "Originea," 69.
[11] The Râşca and Voroneţ monasteries were painted on the exterior after the death of Peter Rareş but under the guidance of the bishops Macarie and Grigorie Roşca who continued the legacy and ideology of the late ruler.

Peter Rareş was concerned with transmitting a particular message to the masses, which meant that he needed to fulfil two crucial conditions in order that the message reached its audience: finding a visible support for the message and arranging the elements of the message in a logically-comprehensive way. Firstly, the most suitable support for the message in the sixteenth century was the church. As the choice and placement of visual elements helps modulate the viewer's experience,[12] it is important to see how Rareş chose the most visible support of all. Not only were the exterior walls of the church the first to be seen when entering the monastic courtyard, but using the entire space of the walls demonstrated a desire to use a space that could not be left out of sight. Secondly, the visual arrangement of the message needs to be considered, as the manner in which an object is presented is in direct contact with the evaluation of the image made by the viewer. This second condition implies the creation of figurative arguments, within a visual rhetoric programme.

Visual rhetoric describes the study of images as a branch of traditional rhetoric. It is a fairly new theoretical development which took off with the work of rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke, who encouraged not only the rhetorical analysis of texts, but also of all other human symbol systems, most importantly images.[13] Visual rhetoric is mostly employed in the advertising industry; however, it has been also used in art historical approaches where it has been related to Erwin Panofsky's theory of iconology. Therefore, breaking down a message into the elements prescribed by visual rhetoric can be used on images from any particular era, as all visual forms that carry meaning – from architecture to painting – have a level of organization which is rhetorical.[14]

Visual rhetoric uses figurative arguments. A figurative argument, as I will use it in this analysis, is comprised of the following elements: a figurative mode, a rhetorical operation and a rhetorical figure. The figurative mode may be of two kinds, either a scheme or a trope. The scheme is characterized by excessive order and repetition while the trope is more complex in the sense that it is marked by irregularities. Furthermore, the rhetorical operations derive from the figurative modes and are of four types: repetition, reversal, substitution, and deviation, all of which are subsequently comprised of various rhetorical figures such as

---

[12] Linda M. Scott, "Images in Advertising: The Need for a Theory of Visual Rhetoric," *The Journal of Consumer Research* 21 (1997): 266.

[13] Sonja K. Foss, "Theory of Visual Rhetoric," in *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*, ed. Kenneth Louis Smith et al. (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), 141.

[14] Stanley Meltzoff, "On the Rhetoric of Vision," *Leonardo* 3, No. 1 (1970): 27.

antithesis, hyperbole, metonym, metaphor, pun, irony and paradox. The figurative argument is marked by deviation and incongruity,[15] meaning that the familiar is presented in an unfamiliar way. The figurative argument is meant to catch the eye and make the figuration memorable. The level of incongruity is distinct in the two figurative modes, making the scheme less memorable and the trope more complex and deviating.[16]

Decryption of Religious Scenes

The Akathistos Hymn

The Akathistos Hymn (*Fig. 1*) is the visual representation of the famous hymn of the Holy Virgin. Its origin is much debated but the *Prooemium* leads many scholars believe that the hymn was written after the 626 Persian siege of Constantinople when the Byzantines withstood the attack.[17] The original hymn of the Holy
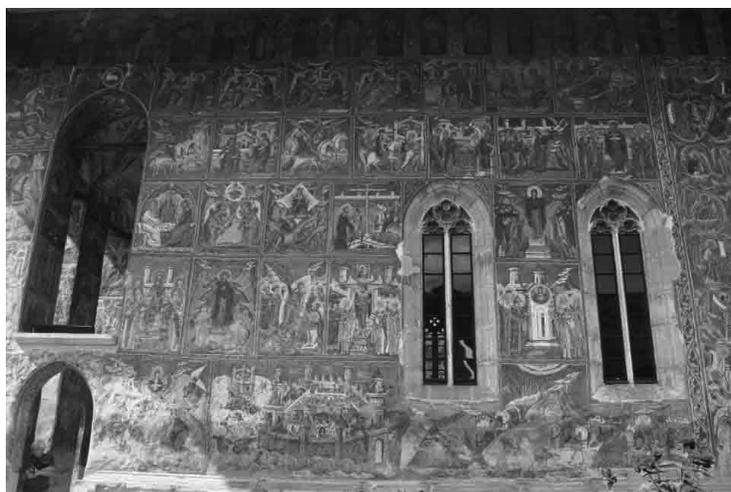
Fig. 1. Akathistos Hymn, Moldoviţa Monastery. Photo by the author.

---

[15] Edward F. McQuarrie and David G. Mick, "Figures of Rhetoric in Advertising Language," *The Journal of Consumer Research* 22 (1996): 426.

[16] Ibidem.

[17] The *Prooemium* includes the words "Our Lady of Victories" probably added after the seventh-century victory over the Persians, as it is most likely that the hymn was originally written before the siege. See: Egon Wellesz, "The Akathistos. A Study in Byzantine Hymnography," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9 (1956): 141–174.

Virgin, although a "warrior chant,"[18] does not make any reference to a siege of Constantinople. The scene of the Siege of Constantinople, as is seen on the exterior walls of the painted monasteries, was therefore a visual addition of the Moldavian painters. Based on this, the visual representation of the hymn can be seen as following: twenty-nine grids each representing a different scene, of which twenty-eight bear a spiritual message and the last one bears a political message.

Supposing that one "reads" the Hymn from the upper part going downwards, one encounters the repetitive scheme of the twenty-eight spiritual scenes representing the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of Mary, the Crucifixion and so on. Repetition (*Table 1*) here is effective as it gives redundancy to the message. Having various moments from the life of Mary repeated one after the other twenty-eight times raises the memorability and thus the impact of the message. It is a way to accentuate the power of the saint and a way to introduce

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	The life of the Holy Virgin (28 scenes of spiritual messages)
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Scheme
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Repetition (of life and miracles)
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	None
MESSAGE:	- presentation of the Holy Virgin - accent on the repetitive miracles of her life - trust in the Holy Virgin as the series of scenes emphasize her incredible life	

Table 1. Scenes of the life of the Holy Virgin.

the last and most relevant scene for the purpose of political persuasion.

Art historians have discussed the problem of the image of the Siege of Constantinople (*Fig. 2*) and have insisted on its mobilizing significance. The Siege is a mixture of metaphors which reveal Constantinople as the capital fortress of Moldavia, Suceava (*Table 2*). Metaphors are characterized not only by one target concept but by several.[19] The "reader" of the image thus has the freedom to choose his own interpretative concept. A Moldavian could have therefore chosen between a literal interpretation – a battle taking place outside the walls

---

[18] Vasile Drăguţ, *Humor* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 1973), 28.
[19] Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 108.

Fig. 2. Siege of Constantinople, Moldoviţa Monastery. Photo by the author.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	Siege of Constantinople (1 scene of political message)
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Trope
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Destabilization
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	Metaphor
MESSAGE:	- identification of the Holy Virgin as the protector of Constantinople	
	- metaphoric identification of the Ottoman army	
	- metaphoric identification of Constantinople with Suceava	
	- metaphoric identification of the Moldavian rider and defeat of the Ottoman army	

Table 2. Siege of Constantinople.

of a given fortress – or a more complex interpretation that could have taken at least two forms: a battle where the Ottomans are being defeated or a battle where the Moldavians defeat the Ottomans. Depending on the viewer's level of comprehension, one of these messages would be decoded. The most desired decoding would indeed be the last, where the Constantinopolitan rider (*Fig. 3*) would be identified, in his typical Moldavian war clothing, as a Moldavian soldier who withstands the Ottoman army.

Fig. 3. Siege of Constantinople – "Moldavian" Rider, Moldoviţa Monastery.
Photo by the author.

Taken in its entirety, the Akathistos Hymn would therefore have two stages of interpretation: a schematic one which leads to a tropic one. By its nature, the tropic figure is more complex than the schematic one,[20] inviting elaboration. The viewer must therefore include his own experiences in the interpretation in order to fully understand the content of the scene, he must recall the times he is living in in order to comprehend the situation predicted by the Siege of Constantinople depiction. Moreover, the message is even more intensified by the position of the Siege, which is located at the viewing height of an adult.

The Last Judgment

The Last Judgment (*Fig. 4*) is another major Moldavian theme which is usually depicted on the entire western wall, as at Voroneţ. The Last Judgment is first of all a scene of a social-educational programme and a warning for all the people who do not conform to the church order. Cynthia Hahn comments that it was meant as a self-assessment of the person looking at the scene, designed to "allow viewers to judge themselves when they see the Last Judgment."[21] Therefore, the anti-Ottoman interpretation of the Moldavian iconography is an additional and specific interpretation, especially as the Moldavian Last Judgments appear

---

[20] McQuarrie and Mick, "Figures," 429.
[21] Cynthia Hahn, "Vision," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 56.

Fig. 4. Last Judgment, Voroneț Monastery. Photo by the author.

in tumultuous context of the sixteenth century, dominated by the Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry which gave priority to the idea of the end of days.

The inspiration of this scene in Moldavia came through the Byzantine iconography of Mount Athos, with which the principality of Peter Rareş was in close contact. The layout of the scene is therefore similar to those of the sixteenth-century monasteries of Athos.[22] The scene is usually represented in the following way: the entire plan is vertically divided by a red river of fire into which doomed people are falling towards the open mouth of the devil. It is therefore divided in four regions: the upper layer of the Celestial Court, the second layer of the weighing of souls of the good and sinful people; both of these layers are above the river of fire. The other two sections are divided by the river: on the left side is the Heaven and on the right side, is the Earth.

The first row is therefore the Celestial Court (*Table 3*) – in its centre Christ Pantocrator sits flanked by Mary and John the Baptist and the groups of saints. The rhetorical operation present here is the repetition of almost identical characters, their similarity being enforced by their golden halos. The repetition reinforces uniformity and the glowing halos seem to shed light on the second register.

The second row takes the level of deviation a step further by introducing the rhetorical operation of reversal (*Table 4*). Reversal is a method to attract the viewer's eye more than the repetitive operation seen in the Celestial Court row.

---

[22] Ulea, "Originea," 76.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	Row 1 (The Celestial Court headed by the Pantocrator)
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Scheme
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Repetition
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	None
MESSAGE:	- the Court of Heaven, headed by Christ, awaiting the judgment of souls	
	- repetition denotes uniformity and equality, which implies righteousness and equality of judgment	

Table 3. Celestial Court.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	Row 2 (Sinners and righteous people going to have their souls weighed)
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Scheme
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Reversal
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	Antithesis
MESSAGE:	- distinction good – bad	

Table 4. Sinner and righteous antithesis.

The reversal through the antithesis present here introduces the contradicting elements of good and evil. As is characteristic of reversal, the two rows of good and evil are similar to mirror images which inversely reflect one another. It is important to notice here the great difference between the features of the good and the sinners. While the groups of the good are rather conventionally and schematically depicted, the groups of the sinful are true portraits which make them most relevant. These groups clearly outline distinct features of people of several nationalities: Ottomans – which comprise the most numerous group – Latins and sometimes Tatars. While the Latins' presence can be explained by the rivalry between Rareş and Christian rulers such as Sigismund I of Poland or János Zápolya, the group of Ottomans (*Fig. 5*) is a crucial point in understanding the Last Judgment scene. V. Drăguţ and other art historians argue that their accentuation through their clothing and physiognomy transmits the belief in victory and in the fact that eternal punishment is waiting for those who threaten the freedom of Moldavia. Furthermore, the group of the damned becomes the psychological focal point, as the analysis through visual rhetoric will demonstrate.

The third figural category is Heaven and the people heading towards Heaven (*Table 5*). This depiction on the left side of the river of fire is a figuration entirely

Fig. 5. Last Judgment – the sinners' groups, Voroneţ Monastery. Photo by the author.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	Heavens and holy people
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Scheme
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Repetition
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	None
MESSAGE:	- tranquillity of the Heavens	
	- goodness and peacefulness of the Heavens	

Table 5. Heavens.

characterized by repetition. The viewer can see an immense group of righteous people heading towards the Gates of Heaven – depicted on the lower left corner in a bright white – headed by the Apostle Peter with the key to Heaven in his hand. The people in this large group, especially in the Voroneţ version, give the impression of pushing one another in order to reach the Gates. There are multiple instances of almost identical characters, some of whose faces are not even visible except for their halos, which create a unitary block. The simple lines and light colours amplify the sensation of perfection and calm that is only to be found in Heaven and strongly contrast with the image offered by the scene on the right side of the river.

Table 6 is the rhetorical analysis of the earthly world during the last days. The scenery illustrates the land and the water. The land is represented by a human figure who opens the tombs and lets the bodies of the humans out. Similarly,

water is personified by a woman surrounded by the creatures of the sea, who also gives back the bodies of people taken by the sea. The rhetorical figure used is personification: water and earth are personified, who thus become two allegorical figures that guide the resurrection of the dead. This chaotic scenery captures the attention not only because it stimulates the imagination, but also because of the technical features used by the artist: the scene seems to scream out to the viewer as the drama unfolding in front of his eyes is embodied by vivid colours and irregular lines. The discontinuity of the lines of the hills and the contrast between

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	Earth on the last day
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Trope
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Substitution
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	Personification
MESSAGE: - Chaotic state of the last days		

Table 6. Earth.

the earthly brown and the red of the river of fire stress the energy and the fear in which the humanity meets its end.

    J. Anthony Blair discusses the communication condition of the medieval Last Judgment scenes as didactic visual arguments. He stresses how, in the context of these types of scenes, the visual argument can communicate much better than oral or written arguments as "no words can convey the horrible fate of the damned as dramatically, forcefully and realistically as do the stone carvings"[23] – referring to the tympanums of Gothic cathedrals that bear this scene. Moreover, he discusses that in order for the visual expression to succeed the power of visual imagery must evoke involuntary reactions. Thus, did the Moldavian Last Judgments evoke the same involuntary responses? Considering that the iconography was similar, the immediate reactions must have also been similar. However, the Moldavian Last Judgments seem to do something more: they centre the attention on the group of the damned. The rhetorical explanation for this is that the focal point of the entire scene is the left side of the earthly world at the end of days, which is characterized by the figurative mode of the trope. Except for the second row, which includes the Ottoman group and is also a trope, the other two divisions are schematic figures which are less attractive to the eye. The gradient of deviation is

---

[23] J. Anthony Blair, "The Rhetoric of Visual Arguments," in *Defining Visual Rhetorics,* ed. Charles A. Hill and Marguerite H. Helmers (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 53.

much more complex in the case of the earthly world division,[24] thus this becomes the focal division. However, at the top of this focal point are the already famous groups of the damned, with the accentuated Ottomans which are like a title of the division of the earthly world. Thus, the sixteenth-century person looking at the Last Judgment was meant to be captivated by the asymmetrical lines and personifications of this particular division, which was "titled" with the judgment of the Ottomans. Because the central point is the group of the damned, Peter Rareş seems to have managed to insert his political views and goals.

The Celestial Hierarchy

The third scene of vital importance in the anti-Ottoman campaign is the scene of the Celestial Hierarchy (*Fig. 6*). The Celestial Hierarchy is the largest scene of all the others as it entirely covers the surface of all three apses. This large scene represents a prayer in a series of usually five or six registers, all of which depict different groups of saints or holy people: angels, prophets, apostles, bishops, missionaries, hermits and military saints. The fact that it is a prayer is suggested

Fig. 6. Southern and Central Apses, Moldoviţa Monastery. Photo by the author.

---

[24] The gradient of deviation is measured by the level of the implication of the imagination. Therefore, as the stimulation of imagination becomes more complex, the deviation becomes more intense. For example, in the case of the Last Judgment, the personification implies the action of the imagination much more than the simple repetition of various elements does. While repetition catches the eye with its disturbing multiplications, the personification implies questioning what the personified image stands for, making it more intriguing.

by the classical prayer scene of *Deisis* placed in the middle of the axis of the central apse.

It is interesting to note that the scene, besides the natural hierarchical divisions, presents another kind of division: the "ordinary" holy characters are separated from the row of military saints. The repetition visible in the procession of the "ordinary" characters (*Table 7*) is worth emphasizing. The characters, all moving with one foot in front of the other, seem to head quietly towards the nucleus of the prayer, represented by the various instances of Christ in the central axis. This calm procession is marked by the repetitiveness of the figures, whose glowing halos create a similar effect to that in the Last Judgment. Each figure transmits the same message, that of a unified, silent prayer.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	The four (or five) upper registers
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Scheme
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Repetition
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	None
MESSAGE: - the assembly of all the saints for the purpose of a single prayer		

Table 7. All saints' prayer.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	The lower register(s)
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Trope
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Substitution
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	Metonymy
MESSAGE: - engage all military saints in a single prayer for military success		

Table 8. Military saints' prayer.

The political message of the Celestial Hierarchy can be found in the registers that are closest to the eye of the viewer, the lower registers of the military saints (*Table 8*). The repetition is similar to that present in the registers above, but the rhetorical interpretation is more complex as metonymy appears here. All the saints bear various accessories which suggest their military affiliation and are indicators of a broader concept, which is war. The attention of the viewer is thus directed towards the concept of war by using rhythmic but alluring substitute concepts. However, apart from the figure of metonymy used to suggest war, the actual

characters are also important. The presence of Saint John the New, patron saint of Moldavia, is significant from this point of view. He is a martyr saint who is even more important from the perspective of the anti-Ottoman campaign as he was killed at Cetatea Albă in Moldavia by Muslims after he refused to convert to Islam. John the New is not represented in the register of the martyrs, but in the register of the military saints, right after the first character of the register, Saint George. This placement, as S. Ulea highlights, signifies the fact that John the New is not simply participating in an everyday normal prayer, but he is taking part in a prayer with a warrior character. Moreover, another important image is that of Saint George who sometimes replaces the figure of Christ in the central axis, as happens at Voroneț monastery (*Fig. 7*). Equally important at Voroneț is the fact that John the New is represented in the most important place, on the right

*Fig. 7. Celestial Hierarchy, Central Apse – St. George in lower centre, Voroneț Monastery.
Photo by the author.*

side of Saint George, while Saint Demetrius is portrayed on the left. In a similar way, the Archangel Michael, leader of the celestial armies, replaces the image of Christ, corresponding to the hermits' register at Humor monastery, thus making the entire group of hermits pray for a military cause.

It is also fundamental to see how the significance of the military registers relates to the other registers. The churchgoer sees the representations of the characters in the lower registers not only because they are closer to the eye, but because of the specific rhetorical figure which is more captivating than the one used in the upper registers. The metonymy used with the characters of military saints is supported by the repetition used above and the viewer interprets the images correspondingly by connecting the elements that draw on war with the closest concept of war he has in hand: the Ottoman-Moldavian military conflicts. As Marguerite Helmers discusses, looking at an image is always framed by past experiences and learned ideas and "just looking is never innocent, nor is it ever final."[25]

The Tree of Jesse

The last major theme that appears on the Moldavian walls is the Tree of Jesse (*Fig. 8*). There are eighteen versions of the Tree in Europe which appear in Italy at the Orvieto Dome and in a number of monasteries in Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania, all having an unknown common provenance. The Tree, which represents the genealogy of Christ as descending from Jesse, encompasses two central points: the bottom figure of Jesse and the upper figure of the Virgin; between them appear six Old Testament kings, eighteen New and Old Testament scenes, while the prophets, ancestors and philosophers are separated on the sides. The iconography of the Tree in Moldavia is almost the same as in other foreign regions, with no intrusions that can allude to any political or national persuasive intentions. However, Michael Taylor argues that the liturgical role of the Tree is complemented by a dynastic role. Therefore, it is particularly interesting how at the Sopocani and Arilje monasteries the Tree is correlated with dynastic images of Stephen Dragutin's sons, Uroš and Vladislav, and with a dynastic procession. The most relevant development of such correlations is the creation of the genealogical tree of the Nemanjid dynasty (such as the one at Pec) which derived from the Tree of Jesse and which equates the descendants of Stephen Nemanja with those of

---

[25] Marguerite H. Helmers, "Framing the Fine Arts through Rhetoric," in *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, ed. Charles A. Hill, Marguerite H. Helmers (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 65.
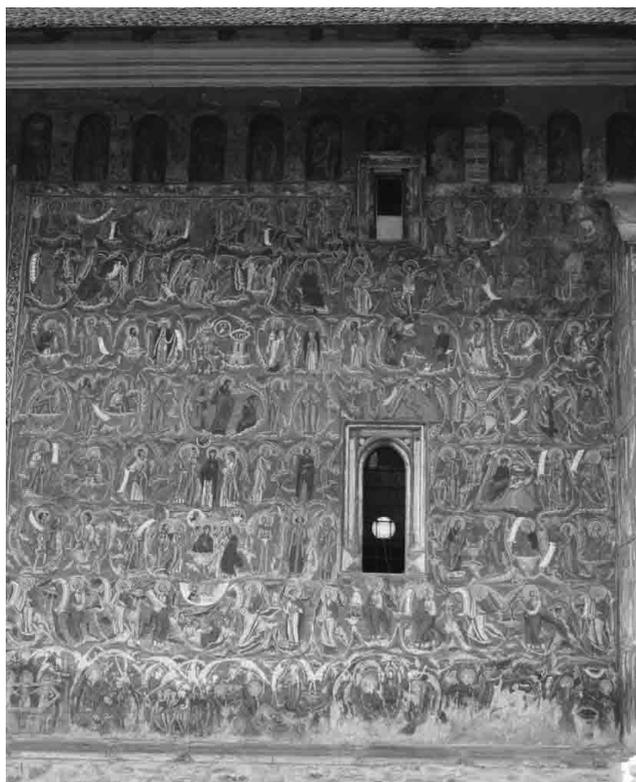
Fig. 8. Tree of Jesse, Moldoviţa Monastery. Photo by the author.

I. FIGURATION	→→→→→	The Tree of Jesse
II. FIGURATIVE MODE	→→→→→	Trope
III. RHETORICAL OPERATION	→→→→→	Destabilization
IV. RHETORICAL FIGURE	→→→→→	Metaphor
MESSAGE:	- engage all military saints in a single prayer for military success	
	- message directed towards the boyars	

Table 9. Tree of Jesse.

Jesse, implying thus a divine ordination of their rule.[26] Could it be that the same dynastic implications were suggested with the Moldavian Tree? Peter Rareş, as

---

[26] Michael D. Taylor, "A Historiated Tree of Jesse," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34 (1980–1981): 164.

an illegitimate son, found himself in a delicate situation precisely for this reason. After he was crowned, a series of pretenders to the throne proclaimed themselves the legitimate sons of Stephen the Great who could anytime try to usurp the throne. Therefore, the fact that he tried to strengthen his position by making a parallel with the genealogy of Christ is not surprising.

Therefore, the entire scene of the Tree of Jesse becomes a metaphor evoking the legitimate and divine succession of Rareş (*Table 9*), where the great number of figures linked to one another by branches of acanthus create an image difficult to ignore. Virgil Vătăşianu also refers to this scene as a social-political message and he implies that this Biblical image was meant to impose respect towards the feudal genealogical system.

Conclusion

The exciting aspect of the Moldavian exterior iconography is that, within general topics known to everyone, Peter Rareş added his own political message. The purpose of the ruler, to use the sacred space for political reasons, becomes clear when applying the modern visual rhetoric.

The painters commissioned by Rareş had, however, quite a difficult task, as convincing people to take a stand is a complex process. Although without knowing modern terminology, the sixteenth-century painter exploited the functions of visual rhetoric which made his task easier and which made him reach his viewers more easily. Charles Hill says that the effectiveness of any appeal is greatly affected by how much the appeal supports or conflicts with the beliefs, values and assumptions that the members of the audience already hold about relevant topics.[27] What else would have been more suitable for a medieval society to support its values and beliefs than the walls of a church? Moreover, Hill argues that people are greatly influenced by the tone in which an argument is expressed. Once more, what could be more suitable than a devotional tone expressed on the solemn walls of the holy monasteries?

---

[27] Charles A. Hill, "The Psychology of Rhetorical Images," in *Defining Visual Rhetorics*, ed. Charles A. Hill, Marguerite H. Helmers (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 28.

AT THE CROSSROADS OF LATE ANTIQUITY AND THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES – THE RISE AND FALL OF THE MILITARY ELITE OF BYZANTINE HISTRIA

Vedran Bileta

In 804, in an unknown location close to the Rižana River (in modern-day Slovenia) an interesting event took place. By order of the Emperor Charlemagne (800–814), the *missi imperiali* organized a plea (*placitum*) in order to resolve a difficult situation in Histria (today Istria in Croatia), a newly conquered province with strong Byzantine traditions, where the local population lamented abuses by the Frankish authorities led by *dux* John. The envoys' report survives in a document known as Placitum Risani.[1] The uniqueness of this document lies in the way it permits comparison between the Frankish and local Byzantine elites, in the way it reflects political tradition, and in the great amount of information that can be derived from this comparison. The *populus Histriae* was represented by 172 *capitanei* selected from towns and *castra* of the province, the military elite. In their grievances they expressed strong links with the centre of power situated in Constantinople, links which are now otherwise lost. It is striking that only after addressing the disruption of provincial rituals do the *capitanei* go on to complain about labor services, requisitioning of horses, ships, a new church tithe and so on. The document is full of references to the good conditions that local military elite lived under *ab antiquo tempore* (during the old times)*,* under Byzantine rule,

---

[1] This article is based on part of my MA Thesis, "On the Fringes of the Shrinking Empire: The Militarization of Administration and Society in Byzantine Histria" (Budapest: Central European University, 2010). I would like to express my gratitude to professors Volker Menze and Niels Gaul for their advice and help during my research. As T. Brown has rightly pointed out, it is ironic that the most important document for Italo-Byzantine society, the *Placitum Risani*, comes from an obscure fringe province such as Histria, and from the period immediately after imperial rule, e.g., after the Frankish takeover of the province. As such it was used as a main source in writing this article. The original document from 804 is lost; however, the text is preserved in number of transcripts. Here, I will use the edited version that can be found in Pietro Kandler, *Codice Diplomatico Istriano*, I, 54, 111–115 (Trieste: Lloyd Adriatico, 1862–1865, reprinted: Trieste: Societa di Minerva, 1986) (hereafter: CDI).

privileges that the Frankish *dux* has denied to them.[2] Moreover, at the end of their laments they proclaim the following:

> All these services and impositions which we mentioned *are made under threat of violence and were never made by our ancestors.* We have all become poor, therefore our neighbors from Venice and Dalmatia mock us, as do the Greeks who used to be our masters. If Master Charlemagne will help us, we could free ourselves, if not, *it is better for us to die than to live like this.*[3]

This striking expression by the *capitanei* clearly portrays the strong feelings against the local Frankish authorities, who behaved towards them in the way that the *Graeci* (Byzantines) never did. But the way the *capitanei* appeal to Charlemagne for help clearly reflects good relations with the *basileus*, a glimpse into a Byzantine

---

[2] From the evidence which the *Placitum* gives it can be seen that the epoch to which the *capitanei* referred while talking about past was not a distant past but rather a recent one which could be dated to the second half of the eighth century. In the tribute list, *solidi mancosi* are mentioned as a means of pay. This coin is recognized as a *mancus*, a Byzantine derivate from the Arab *manqush*, which came into use only during the late seventh century. Thus, the events described in *Placitum* can be dated to this period. The first mention of the *mancus* can be found in an document dated to 778, from Sesto in Friuli, then from a document for a monastery in Farfa in 786, and finally in the *Liber Pontificalis* for the epoch of Pope Hadrian. It is interesting that all the examples came from Italy. There is no evidence for such a coin in the provinces bordering on the caliphate, see Jadran Ferluga, "L'Istria tra Giustiniano e Carlo Magno," *Arheološki vestnik* 43 (1992): 183. For the Arab origin of *mancus* see Philip Grierson, *Medieval European Coinage:* Volume 1, *The Early Middle Ages (5th–10th Centuries)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 270. Another important point made by Ferluga is related to fishing rights, to the obligation for fishermen to give one third of their catch to the imperial treasury, a practice abolished by Byzantium at the end of eighth century. From the laments of the *capitanei* it can be seen that this obligation was reintroduced by the Franks, which implies that probably during their lifetime they had been under Byzantine rule. See: CDI, I, 54, 112*, Maria vero publica, ubi omnis populus communiter piscabant, modo ausi non sumus piscare, qui cum fustibus nos caedunt, et retia nostra concidunt.*

[3] For the source text see: CDI, I, 54, 114 *Omnes istas angarias, et superpositas quae praedictae sunt, violenter facimus, quod Parentes nostri nunquam fecerunt, unde omnes devenimus in paupertatem, et irrident nostros Parentes, et quicumque convicini nostri Venetiae et Dalmatiae, etiam Graeci sub cujus antea fuimus potestate. Si nobis succurrit Dominus Carolus Imperator, possumus evadere: sin autem melius est nobis mori, quam vivere.* Another piece of important information derived from this text is the close relation between Histrian elites and their *convicini et parentes* – Venetians and Dalmatians. This problem is well analyzed in Francesco Borri, "'Neighbours and Relatives:' The Plea of Rižana as a Source for North Adriatic Elites" *Mediterranean Studies* 17 (2008): 1–26.

period when Histria was administered from Constantinople. How did the Histrian military elite establish themselves as the leading social and political power in the province, a power which they maintained during entire Byzantine period, which they held onto even after the fall of Ravenna in 751 and a power which was in danger of being lost at Rižana? These are all issues that will be dealt with in this paper. The process by which this military aristocracy was created in a fringe province of the Byzantine Empire, known as the *provincia Histria*, had some endemic features compared with the rest of Italy. However, before attempting to analyze this process, it is important to establish its preconditions. Only then
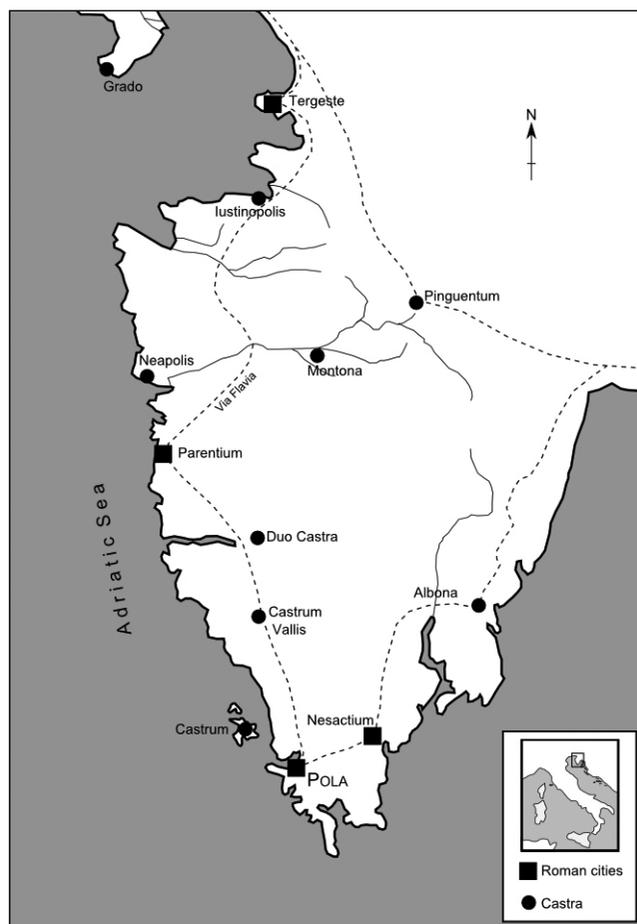

Fig. 1. Byzantine Histria from the sixth to eighth century: principal places mentioned in the text (map by the author).

it will be possible to understand the extent of this transformation from the Late Roman society led by a powerful senatorial aristocracy to the regional military elite (although closely tied to the emperor) which marked the transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.

The Waning of the Old Order

Histrian Roman society at the beginning of the sixth century retained its social hierarchy. The new Ostrogoth masters preserved existing administrative structures so that on the eve of the Justinian *reconquista* the province was still ruled by a senatorial aristocracy. The term "senatorial aristocracy" is used here to describe the late Roman elite up to the middle of the seventh century. Unlike the senatorial class from the time of the *principate*, a small and closed group predominantly of wealthy landowner families, the late antique establishment had been enormously expanded. By the fifth century, it incorporated a wide range of people from different economic classes. This resulted in the devaluation of senatorial status and consequently the establishment of new grades of higher status to compensate. In the later fourth century the ancient grade of *clarissimus*, which was hereditary, was outranked by two non-hereditary ranks – *illustris* and, below this, *spectabilis*, both tied exclusively to holding an imperial office or post in either the military or civil service. Those *homines novi* were not necessarily of similar social origins. Their social rank was closely tied to the position they held at court.[4] The proximity of Histria to the imperial capital of *pars Occidentis* and later of the Ostrogoth kingdom in Ravenna, and the ability to provide it with necessary supplies by sea suggests that the senators who held lands in this northern Adriatic province enjoyed particularly high status at the imperial court.[5]

---

[4] For a discussion of the late Roman senatorial aristocracy see: A. H. M. Jones, *The Late Roman Empire* I (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), 523–562. Also, see the most recent interpretation by John Haldon, "Social Élites, Wealth and Power," in *A Social History of Byzantium,* ed. John Haldon (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2009), 170–176.

[5] Under Gothic rule, Histria was one of major grain suppliers for Ravenna. Its importance was further increased after the outbreak of the Gothic war, as shown by the letter of the *praefectus praetorio* Cassiodorus. In AD 536/37, following the fall of the grain-producing regions of Southern Italy, he issued an order to the Ostrogoth subjects in Histria to supply Ravenna and contribute resources to the war effort. See the source text in Cassiodorus, *Uariarum libri duodecim*, ed. Åke J. Fridh (Turnhout: Brepols, 1973) (CC SL 96), XII, 22, 24. In this letter, Cassiodorus described Histria as a Campania of Ravenna, praising it for its fine oil and wine. For a translation see Cassiodorus, *Variae*, tr. Sam J. B. Barnish (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992).

As in the entire territory of the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy, the predominance of the senatorial aristocracy in the political and economic life of Histria ended with the outbreak of the Byzantine-Gothic war in AD 535. Due to its strategic position, Histria came under firm Byzantine control in AD 539 during the opening stages of the conflict. Its intact economy and infrastructure made Histria an ideal advance base for military operations in northern Italy, and the assembly point for troops that were preparing themselves for an offensive.[6] However, a thorough administrative reorganization had to wait as the protracted war continued for almost two decades, during which Histria continued in its role as a vital military foothold.

Only after the decisive victory over the Ostrogoths in AD 554 and the establishment of imperial control over the whole of Italy could administrative reform be carried out. To achieve this end, Emperor Justinian (AD 527–565) issued an imperial promulgation, known as the *Pragmatica Sanctio* in AD 554.[7] This is an interesting document, attempting to portray the new social and political order as the reimposition of the pre-war situation. The validity of the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* and the *Novellae* was extended to the peninsula, which was reorganized as the *praefectura Italiae* with its capital in Ravenna. Sardinia and Corsica were detached and included within the *praefectura Africae*, while Sicily remained a separate administrative unit under the direct jurisdiction of Constantinople. The majority of laws promulgated by the Ostrogoths were abolished; property that had changed hands during the war was restored to its original owners, given to the soldiers or included into the imperial *fiscus*.[8] A considerable amount of land

---

[6] Procopius III, *History of the Wars* book V, VII, ed. H. B. Dewing (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1919), 68. This was later elaborated on by Ramiro Udina, "Il Placito de Risano," *Archeografo Triestino* 45 (1932): 9, and Bernardo Benussi, *Nel medio evo. Pagine di storia istriana (*Trieste: Tipografia Adriatica, 2004), 3rd reprint (1897), 3–4. For an overview of the Gothic war in Northern Italy, see Antonio Carile, "Il bellum Gothicum da Isonzo a Ravenna," *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 13 (1978): 147–193.

[7] There is still no detailed study of the *Pragmatica Sanctio*. The text of *Pragmatica sanctio* can be found in "Sanctio pragmatica pro petitione Vigilii," Kap. 1–27, *Corpus Iuris Civilis III. Novellae,* ed. Rudolf Schoell and Wilhelm Kroll, Appendix constitutionum dispersarum, VII (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), 799.

[8] For more on the influence of the *Pragmatica Sanctio* in the society of Byzantine Italy see Jadran Ferluga, "L'esarcato," in *Storia di Ravenna*, II, *Dall'età bizantina all'età ottoniana*, ed. Antonio Carile, (Venice: Marsilio Ed, 1991), 354. For its influence on Histrian society in particular see Ferluga, "L'Istria," 176. For the separation of government in Histria see Giorgio Ravegnani, "L'Istria Bizantina: Le istituzioni militari ai confini dell'esarcato Ravennate," *Acta Histriae* 7 (1998): 77.

was given to the church, as a strong church was for Justinian a precondition for a united and centralized empire.[9]

The *Pragmatica Sanctio* recognized senators as important political figures in the province by giving them a number of privileges such as the possibility of travelling freely to Constantinople in order to settle things regarding their property. However, the removal of central authority from Italy meant that senators also had to remove to Constantinople also in order to maintain access to court appointments and thus retain their high status, while those who remained had to compete with a rising military establishment.[10]

The *Pragmatica Sanctio* was nominally addressed to both authorities in Italy, to the supreme military commander Narses, and to the highest civilian authority, the Prefect Antiochus, thus maintaining a neat separation between the military and civil government.[11] However, it was difficult for Justinian to turn the clock back to the pre-war situation. Thomas S. Brown has shown the pressures facing civil officials by taking the example of the praetorian prefecture, intended to be the most powerful office in Byzantine Italy. In accordance with the *Pragmatica Sanctio*, the prefect of Italy held exclusive power to issue laws and controlled taxation. However, development of the civil branch of government was stalled by a protracted war, followed by an unstable situation in post-war Italy during which the military's influence increased significantly. Thus, already during the

---

[9] Justinian particularly favored the church of Ravenna. During his reign it received extensive properties in Histria. For the extensive possessions of the Ravennate church in Histria see Thomas S. Brown, "The Church of Ravenna and the Imperial Administration in the Seventh Century," in *The English Historical Review* 94, No. 370 (1979): 17–18. Also see Ferluga, "L'Istria," 176. These lands, centered around Pola, known as the *feodum* of St. Apollinaris, remained under the ownership of the Ravennate church until the medieval period. The large basilica in Parentium and probably the one in Pola were commissioned by Maximianus, a native of Histria, who was at that time bishop of Ravenna.

[10] Many of the senators who fled to Constantinople at the outbreak of the Gothic war, never returned to Italy as a result of destruction of their estates and a fear of losing their status. See the discussion in Thomas S. Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers: Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy AD 554–800* (Rome: British School at Rome, 1984), 21–37.

[11] The *Pragmatica Sanctio* was addressed to *Narsi viro ill. praeposito sacri cubiculi*, *Antiocho viro magnifico praefecto per Italiam*. PS, c. 23, *CIC*, III, 802. Also see Francesco Borri, "Duces e magistri militum nell' Italia esarcale (VI–VIII secolo)," *Reti Medievali* 6 (2005): 7; Ferluga, "L'Istria," 176.

sixth century, a number of military officials served as praetorian prefects, with both civil and military powers.[12]

The inefficiency of civil power at the highest level was reflected in the provinces. Byzantine government restored the unity of *Venetia et Histria* and reimposed the pre-war order. Imperial interests were represented by provincial governors (*iudices provinciarum*), who were invested by the civil administration and by jurisdiction over the general populace, while military officials (*iudices militares*) led the local army and auxiliary troops.[13] However, the right to elect provincial governors, usually a prerogative of the emperor, was now granted to bishops as well as local magnates (*primates*). The same two groups were made responsible for military requisitions – a recognition that their authority was now an important element in local politics.[14] Perhaps to assure the loyalty of the impoverished local population and facilitate imperial supervision over provincial matters, Justinian tried to increase the power of the highest civil authority in the city, the *defensor civitatis*. He was given independence from the provincial governor, who could neither nominate nor depose him.[15] However, the power of the *curiales*, already insignificant in the late Roman period, never regained the importance which Justinian gave them in the *Pragmatica Sanctio*.

---

[12] The most important of these military officers was *praefect* Longinus, who assumed supreme control over Italy after the recall of Narses in AD 568. He is recorded as building fortifications, conducting negotiations, and carrying out military operations against the Lombards. See: *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (*PLRE*), ed. A. H. M. Jones, J. R. Martindale and J. Morris, I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 797. For an interpretation see T. S. Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 10–12. About the development of the prefecture see Charles Diehl, *Études sur l'administration byzantine dans l'exarchat de Ravenne* (Paris: Thorin, 1888), 157–167.

[13] The topic was first touched upon by Diehl, *Études*, 5. It was also studied by Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 29. For the most recent interpretation see Ferluga, "L'Istria," 176.

[14] Also the custom of paying *suffragium* (election tax) was abolished. See: Diehl, *Études*, 84–85. For a study on the rise of the bishop's power in the community see Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 220–224.

[15] He could be deposed only by the prefect of Italy and later by the exarch, see Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 30 –31. However, it seems that the *defensor* cared more about his class than about benefits for the empire. See in Lujo Margetić, "Italia bizantina ed Istria nel sec. VI," in *Histrica et Adriatica*, ed. Lujo Margetić (Trieste: Unione degli Italiani dell' Istria e Fiume, 1983)*,* 106. The last evidence for the existence of the *curia* comes from an inscription from Tergeste, dated to 571. This inscription mentions *Maurentius vir illustris*, where *vir illustris* indicates *decurion*. The inscription is analyzed in Diehl, *Études*, 113; Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 30.

Justinian's ambitious program for the reconquest and reorganization of Italy was based on three principal points: a strong civil administration that would restore the old Roman order, a united church that would help stabilize the empire from within, and the army that would protect it from external enemies. This was the order for which the *Pragmatica Sanctio* was devised, to bring the people of Italy back under the imperial *oikumene*. Such an approach might have worked if the reconquest had been carried out swiftly. However, what was initially supposed to be a "lighting war" raged for almost twenty bitter years, ruined the Italian economy and destroyed its urban basis, essential for renewal. In addition, not only Italy but the entire empire was ravaged by plague, which decimated the population and decreased the available manpower.[16] This meant a decrease in the tax base, which, along with already empty imperial treasury, could not provide adequate funding to pay the army. To collect the necessary money, the civil administration tried to increase taxes, which in turn caused deep resentment among local populations, still affected by the recent war. The resistance and rebellion against central government policy found its expression in the Three Chapters Controversy which seriously hindered the church's unification, causing a rift which lasted until the early eighth century.[17] And so the circle closed. With the economy in ruins and confronted by the deep resentment of the local population, the Byzantine government could not stop the Lombard invasion in AD 568. The situation was not improved by the simultaneous invasion of Persians in the East, followed by the Avaro-Slavic invasion of the Balkans, which tied up the imperial armies for decades, leaving only a few badly-manned contingents stationed in Italy. The almost unchecked Lombard advance resulted in the loss of most of the Italian territory, except for a few coastal enclaves situated along the Adriatic coast and southern Italy.

---

[16] For the extent of the Justinianic plague and the effect that it had on the empire, particularly in Italy, see Peregrine Horden "Mediterranean Plague in the Age of Justinian," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, ed. M. Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 134–161.

[17] It seems that even during the reign of Justinian, the bishops of Histria and the local population felt alienated from Constantinople, opposing the Condemnation of the Three Chapters. The internal difficulties certainly made administration even less efficient. The seriousness of the situation in Histria can be seen by the personal intervention of Exarch Smaragdus, see Ferluga, "L'esarcato," 360; Margetić, "Italia bizantina," 104–105. The schism lasted for almost a century, ending at the Synod of Pavia in 698/699. For more about the schism see Giuseppe Cuscito "Aquileia e Bisanzio nella controversia dei Tre Capitoli," *Antichità altoadriatiche* 12 (1977): 231–262; idem, "La fede calcedonese e i concili di Grado (579) e di Marano (591)" *Antichità altoadriatiche* 17 (1980): 207–230.

Given the state of emergency, with the central government unable to provide reinforcements, the provincial elites had to rely on local sources for supplies, recruits, and leaders. As a consequence, the authority and importance of military commanders grew significantly over the next decades, enlarging their sphere of action. The civil authorities fell into second place and in less than a century became subordinate to the military element. Under constant enemy pressure, the ancient civil order gradually transformed into a full-fledged military government and all of Byzantine Italy, including Histria, became a military zone.[18]

Metamorphosis of the Military and Political Power

As Brown has rightly pointed out, the ascension of the military elite and their takeover of the supreme power in Byzantine Italy was more of a gradual and uneven, perhaps even an *ad hoc*, process (varying from province to province) than a result of a centrally imposed imperial directive.[19] The rise of the military elite should be analyzed in the context of the rather chaotic socio-political situation of the late sixth century. As argued above, the unstable situation in post-war Italy and the events which followed did not permit the senatorial aristocracy to reestablish itself as the social and political leaders and regain the place which central government devised for them in *Pragmatica Sanctio*. Despite the pacification of the province, Byzantine control over impoverished and plague-ravaged Italy was tenuous to begin with and there was no real feeling of safety as the imperial field armies were repositioned to the East leaving Italy virtually defenseless. Thus, when the Lombards appeared at the Alpine passes in AD 568, the Byzantine administration could not do much to stop them, and in a period of only three years, most of Italy north of the Po River lay in Lombard hands.[20]

---

[18] Diehl, *Études*, 2. However, it seems that the institution of the *praefect* survived until the middle of the seventh century, although with diminished power. For more, see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 9–10.

[19] Brown argued that the separation between the civil and military powers still existed at the time of Gregory the Great, see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 53–54; idem, "The Interplay between Roman and Byzantine Traditions," *Settimane di studio del centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* (1988): 134–135.

[20] The Lombard conquest was described in detail 200 years after the fact in Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. L. Bethman and G. Waitz, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, *Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum*. Saec. VI–IX, vol. 1 (Hannover: Hahn 1878), 12–187. Besides the narrow coastal strip of *Venetiae*, which was probably a part of Byzantine *Histria* until 639, a similar situation can be found in Liguria. For the situation in Liguria see Neil Christie, "Byzantine Liguria: An Imperial Province against the Longobards A.D. 568–643," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 58 (1990): 229–271.

The appearance of the high ranking military officer – the exarch – at the end of the sixth century probably marked an attempt by the central government to stabilize the situation in Italy (and Africa), but it took at least half a century for the exarch to achieve supreme power.[21] Through this period, the institution of praetorian praefect continued. As the Lombard advance progressed, however, the inability of the civil administration to cope with the organization of the defense and control over these increasingly fragmented territories resulted in a military takeover. Thus, by the end of the seventh century, a new Italo-Byzantine aristocracy crystallized, suited to military needs and composed predominantly of members of the military establishment. It was this new leading class, a service elite of heterogeneous ethnic, social, and cultural origins that came to dominate the political life of the province during the Byzantine period.

This Italo-Byzantine aristocracy was subordinated to the exarch, who was the emperor's personal representative in Italy. He acted as a colonial viceroy, a foreigner sent from Constantinople to govern the remaining Byzantine possessions in Italy, in an emerging political and administrative unit known as an exarchate.[22] His eastern origin and the high position that he held at the imperial

---

[21] An official with the title of *exarchus* is mentioned for the first time in AD 584. The reference to this first official, a certain Decius, can be found in a letter sent by Pope Pelagius II to Deacon Gregory, his *apocrisarius* in Constantinople. For the source see Pelagius II., *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolarum tomus II, Gregorii papae I registrum epistolarum II*, ed. Ludwig Hartmann (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899), appendix II, 441. This is mentioned for the first time by Diehl, *Études*, 17. For prosopographical evidence on Decius, see *Prosopografia dell'Italia bizantina*, ed. Salvatore Cosentino, (Bologna: Lo Scarabeo, 1996), I, 55. However, the information available about him is vague. Also see Ferluga, "L'Istria," 178; Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 78. It is probable that Smaragdus first became exarch in 585. See Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 48–49; Salvatore Cosentino, *Storia dell'Italia bizantina* (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2008), 136, l98; Ferluga, "L'esarcato," 356–357, see also Ferluga, "L'Istria," 178; Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 78. The office of exarch was a new institution, but it was not a creation *ex novo*. His position was actually a continuation of the *strategos autokrator* of the Gothic wars, held by Belisarius and Narses. This interpretation is justified in Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 48–53, see also Borri, "Duces e magistri militum," 4; Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 76; for a traditional view see Diehl, *Études*, 17–18.

[22] The term *exarchatus*, or exarchate, as the political and administrative unit is usually called, is misleading. The first mention of *exarchatus* in the sources only dates after AD 751. Thereafter it refers only to the area around Ravenna where the exarch had direct power. The official term used by the imperial chancellery was *provincia Italiae*. The *exarchatus* was first mentioned by Diehl, *Études*, 17. However, for the sake of simplicity, I am using the term exarchate here.

court (*patricius*) assured him a predominant place in Italo-Byzantine society.[23] Following the collapse of the civil establishment in the early seventh century, it was the exarch who controlled both military and civil matters in the exarchate.

Although in theory the exarch had considerable power delegated to him from Constantinople, the reality was different. To quote P. Brown's famous "obscure law of cultural hydraulics," used here in a military context: "The streams of influence were occasionally released from the east to water lower reaches of the west."[24] The eastern front, where the empire fought against the Persians and Arabs, tied up imperial field armies and drained most of the resources, while the situation in Italy remained on the margins of imperial politics. This resulted in open confrontation with the *basilea*, with a number of exarchs rebelling from the mid-seventh century onwards. However, as Haldon argued, their main aim was not secession from the empire, but rather an attempt to seize the imperial purple in hopes of improving the situation in Italy.[25] Lacking any general imperial policy,

---

[23] Both exarchs who were active in Histria, Smaragdus and Callinicus, held the title of *patricius* at the Constantinopolitan court. Exarch Smaragdus can be dentified with a patrician of the same name who built a palace in Constantinople during reign of Emperor Tiberius. For Smaragdus see *PLRE* III, 1164–1166. For Callinicus see Cosentino, *PIB* I, 259. The importance of the exarch in the Italo-Byzantine hierarchy was reflected in the prestige of his residence in Ravenna – the palace of the Western Roman emperors and Ostrogothic kings – which can be defined as monumental in comparison with common housing from the sixth to ninth century, see: Deborah M. Deliyannis, *Ravenna in Late Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 55–58, 286–292. This recent publication is an excellent study of history of the Byzantine Ravenna in general.

[24] Due to lack of funds and with armies tied up in the East, Justinian's successors showed little or no interest in the western part of their empire. Only Emperor Maurice was able to transfer part of the eastern field army to Italy after the peace treaty with the Persians. For Maurice's plans in the West and the *divisio imperii* between his sons, see John Moorhead, "Western Approaches (500–600)," in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 219–220. For the renewal of the offensive in the Balkans, see Mark Whittow, *The Making of Orthodox Byzantium* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1996), 266. These plans were never fulfilled. Emperor Maurice was deposed and murdered by his successor, Phocas. For a discussion see Peter Brown, "Eastern and Western Christendom in Late Antiquity: a Parting of Ways," ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1976), 5.

[25] The unsuccessful rebellion of Exarch Eleutherius in AD 619 should be seen as connected more with Heraclius' declaration against the Persians, encouraging the exarch to proclaim himself emperor, perhaps in hope of more effectively opposing the enemies of the empire from a more secure base in Italy. For more about the rebellion see John Haldon, "Ideology and Social Change in the Seventh Century," *Klio* 68 (1986): 178–179; Ferluga, "L'esarcato," 362–363. One should see the expedition of Constans II in AD 661 in this context. It appears that the emperor wanted to shift the center of political

the provinces had to rely on local resources and recruitment, which increased the power of local elites but diminished that of the exarch. The local elites' passive acceptance of the empire continued as long as it did not pose a threat to local life and independence. However, once the interventions of the empire became irksome and it proved unable to repel serious threats, this acceptance crumbled rapidly. The first "real" case of separatism occurred in the revolt of 726–727, when local elites opposed the iconoclastic policy of Emperor Leo III (717–741), resulting in a takeover of political power by locally elected *duces*. Thus, when the Lombards conquered Ravenna in 571, bringing down the exarchate, exarch control was limited to the city of Ravenna and its immediate surroundings. The situation described here was reflected with particular intensity in Byzantine Histria, but in a somewhat different way, as the weakness of the central government resulted in development of the local military aristocracy.

A Local, but Byzantine Elite

As in the rest of Imperial Italy, the nominal ruler of Histria was the exarch. As the supreme commander of *exercitus Italiae* his duty was to protect the provinces he was entrusted with defending. Thus, when Avars and Slavs appeared at the northern border of Histria in 599 it was the exarch, Callinicus, who personally led the Byzantine forces and defeated the enemy.[26] Besides Callinicus' brief episode,

---

and military power from Asia Minor to the more secure Sicily, focusing on campaigns in the West. Such a perspective was undoubtedly attractive to the Italic commanders. It provided them with more resources and, what is more, gave them high positions in the imperial court. It is not a coincidence that the emperor's murder was organized within the Armenian circle. They feared that military investments would be rerouted from the East and that rebellion would be suppressed by the armies led by exarchs, which included troops from Histria. For Constans II's Italian adventure see: Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 149–150.

[26] Gregorii papae Registrum epistolarum (*MGH Epp. II*), IX, 154: *Gregorius Callinico Exarcho Italiae. Inter haec quod mihi de Sclavis victorias nuntiastis, magna me laetitia relevatum esse cognoscite, quod latores praesentium de Capritana insula unitati sanctae ecclesiae coniungi festinantes ad beatum Petrum apostolum principem ab excellentia vestra transmissi sunt.* It was probably with fresh troops sent by Maurice to Italy that Callinicus defeated the Avaro-Slavic attack in Histria. See Ferluga, "L'organizzazione militare del esarcato," in *Storia di Ravenna*, II, *Dall'età bizantina all'età ottoniana*, ed. A. Carile (Venice: Marsilio Ed. 1991), 380. Some historians argued that the victory was gained by local forces. See Margetić, *Histrica et Adriatica*, 145. However, that was the only Byzantine victory. The Slavic attacks eventually ended with their settlement and incorporation into the provincial society. For the problem of Slavic settlement see Branko Marušić, "Nekropole VII. i VIII. stoljeća u Istri" [Eighth and Seventh Century Necropoles in Istria] *Arheološki vestnik* 28 (1967): 333–347 and

however, there is no evidence of a later intervention by the exarch in Histria. It can be assumed that the post's limited resources were barely enough to defend the core regions around Rome and Ravenna, leaving the defense of an isolated province such as Histria in the hands of local forces, led by a provincial military commander – the *magister militum*. The following ten years of Slavic attacks were marked by Byzantine defeats, with Slavs eventually settling in and being incorporated into provincial society. Thus, it was the inability of the exarch to protect this isolated frontier society that resulted in the emergence of the *magister militum* as the leading political figure in the militarized provincial hierarchy followed by his takeover of the provincial administration. He appointed lower officials, controlled local administration, and dispensed judgment.[27] Moreover, he generally supervised tax collection, fixed extraordinary tributes, protected the privileges of the cities, and respected their customs.

Unlike the exarch, who was the high ranking court official of eastern origin, the provincial military commanders came from different backgrounds. In the initial period of the 'Lombard' advance those commanders were predominantly of Lombard origin, as in the case of *gloriosus magister militum* Gulfaris, who ruled over Histria in 599.[28] One can relate it to the widespread trend characteristic of the beginning of the "Lombard" invasion during which a number of renegades crossed to the Byzantine side and in return were rewarded with an office and rule over the province.[29] Of the two other *magistri militum Histriae* mentioned in

---

"Slavensko-avarski napadi na Istru u svjetlu arheološke građe," [Avaro-Slavic Attacks in Light of the Archeological Evidence] *Peristil* 2 (1957): 68–69. For the most recent work about Slavs in Histria see Maurizio Levak, *Slaveni vojvode Ivana* [The Slavic Vojvode Ivan] (Zagreb: Leykam international, 2007).

[27] For a good overview of *magistri militum* functions, see: Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 53–56; Borri, "Duces e magistri militum," 5; Ferluga, "L'organizazione," 384. In some provinces of Italy, a similar position was held by a *dux*. During the late Roman period, *magistri militum* and *duces* were appointed by the emperor by *sacra epistula*. Such customs probably continued with the Byzantine rule over Italy, with the addition of the appointment by the exarch (*ordinatio exarchi*). For more about officers' appointments, see Giorgio Ravegnani, *I Bizantini e la guerra*, (Rome: Jouvence, 2004), 77.

[28] For sources mentioning the *magistri militum* see Gregorii papae Registrum epistolarum (*MGH Epp. II*), IX, 153 (*magister militum* Basilius), IX, 161 (*magister militum* [?] Mastalo) and IX, 160 (*magister militum* Gulfaris), Gulfaris was probably a Lombard *dux* Ulfari, see *PLRE* III, 563, Ferluga, "L'Istria," 178. By this time, a further refinement of the grading system occurred, in which new titles – the aforementioned *gloriosus* and *magnificus* – replaced *illustris* at the higher levels. Thus, most key military and civil posts were of these ranks.

[29] The extent of imperial dependence on these soldiers of fortune in those initial years of the Byzantino-Lombard conflict can be seen by examining the origin of the highest

the correspondence of Pope Gregory I, Basil, and perhaps Mastalo we know nothing but their names, which imply their Eastern origins. Such a hypothesis can be broadly confirmed by evidence from other provinces of the exarchate suggesting that *magistri militum* were sent from Constantinople at least until the mid-seventh century. However, it seems that the *magister militum Histriae* arrived from Constantinople until the end of Byzantine dominance, as is reflected in the formulation in the *Placitum Risani* – *magister militum Graecorum*. The names of the *magistri militum* (who probably ruled Histria before the Frankish conquest) mentioned in this ninth-century document, Constantine, Basil and Stephanos, may testify to their eastern origin.

Unlike the senatorial aristocracy, based in the countryside on large estates, this new military elite was based in the fortified cities and fortresses – *castra* – which arose due to the *castrization* process.[30] The *magister militum* probably governed his province from Pola, while in smaller towns authority was exercised by *tribuni*. Initially the *tribunus* was an officer in charge of a *numerus*, a mobile military unit numbering between 200 and 400 men.[31] During the period of instability which permeated local society, their role in the local military command helped them

provincial officers. Of the 26 *duces* and *magistri militum* recorded between the Lombard appearance in Italy and the death of Gregory I, no less than 14 were German by birth, see: Ferluga, "L'organizazione," 383.

[30] Particularly important for the archeology of Byzantine Italy is Enrico Zanini, *Le Italie Bizantine: Territorio, insiedimenti ed economia nella provincia bizantina d'Italia* (Bari: Edipuglia, 1998). Also see Neil Christie, *From Constantine to Charlemagne: an Archeology of Italy*, AD 300–800 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). The *castra* of Histria were situated on easily defendable hilltops, islands or promontories, mostly on the places where iron-age fortifications once stood. For more about the model of a *castrum* for a fortified settlement in Byzantine Italy see Thomas S. Brown, Neil Christie, "Was there a Byzantine Model of Settlement in Italy?" *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen Âge* 101–2 (1989): 389–399. This interesting article, however, uses an incorrect historiographical notion of the fortification process, *incastellamento*. For the difference between *incastellamento* and *castrization* processes, see Maurizio Levak, "Kastrizacija u Istri" [The Process of Castrization in Istria], PhD dissertation, Zagreb, 2009. This work is the best available on *castrization* processes in Byzantine Histria.

[31] *Numerus Tergestinus*: Udina, "Il Placito del Risano," 21. Ravegnani mentions a number of around 500 soldiers. Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 31. The difference in numbers is explained by the practice of transferring soldiers from one unit to another as needed by the military. It can be assumed that the *Numerus Tergestinus* mentioned in Placitum Risani was at first a mobile defense unit which defended the most vulnerable area of Histria, the northern border (the city of Tergeste and its surroundings, hence the name) against the Lombards and Slavs. Gradually it developed into a military district. See Cosentino, *Storia dell'Italia bizantina*, 150–153; Ferluga, "L'Istria," 180; Ferluga, "L'organizazione," 383.

to strengthen the influence that they had over their communities. By the late seventh century, the *tribunus* had become the most powerful person in each urban community. He acquired authority over all administrative matters, managed the tax collection, and had judicial powers.[32] Also, a man of his status had notable financial privileges. From the *Placitum* it can be seen that every *tribunus* had the privilege of granting immunity from military requirements and taxes to five or more free men, called *excusati*, who relied on his protection and worked in his service in war and in peace.[33] Until the end of the seventh century *tribuni* were still appointed by the exarch. They had to go to Ravenna for installation. A century later, they formed a hereditary aristocracy chosen from the ranks of local potentates. The militarization of elites was a process that encompassed all levels of the provincial hierarchy. During the seventh century, the power passed from the *defensores* into the hands of junior officers – *domestici*, *vicarii*, and *lociservatores*. They assisted the *magister militum* in governing the smaller *castra* and served as officers in local army contingents.[34] As seen from the *Placitum*, all these offices were abolished by the new authorities after the Frankish takeover of the province as there was no place for them in the feudal society represented by the Franks.

From the *Placitum* it can be seen that this elite derived its wealth from three potential sources: (1) from rents derived from agriculture, pastoral farming, and fishing; (2) from service in the military and provincial administration, and (3)

---

[32] For more about the administrative function of the *tribunus* in Histria, see Diehl, *Études*, 114–116; Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 37; Gregorii papae Registrum epistolarum I, ed. Paul Ewald and Ludwig Hartmann (*MGH Epp. I*) (Berlin: Weidmann, 1891), II, 34, 130–131 and Gregorii papae Registrum epistolarum II (*MGH Epp. II*) VIII, 19, 21; Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 59.

[33] *CDI*, I, 54, 113 *Graecorum tempore omnis Tribunus habebat excusatos quinque, et amplius, et ipsos nobis abstulit.* This was further elaborated in Andre Guillou, La presenza bizantina nell'arco adriatico," *Antichita altoadriatiche* 28 (1986): 416.

[34] One may assume that these terms represented the ranks in the hierarchy of the Byzantine army, see: Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 58–60; Udina, "Il Placito di Risano," 19. Also see Ferluga, "L'Istria," 190; Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 81. The term *domesticus* can have two meanings; adjutant to a higher official or a member of the palace guard. In the case of Histria, this refers to the first, since evidence for the palace guard could only be found in the exarch's palace in Ravenna. The rank of *domesticus* could also be a reward for soldiers who had distinguished themselves during a campaign or given for their loyal service. The term *vicarius* signifies the deputy of a *tribunus* or other military commander. He was usually in charge of *castra* subordinate to the city governed by the *tribunus*; a *lociservator* was probably a junior lieutenant who was subordinate to the *tribunus*, see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 59–60; see also: Ferluga, "L'organizzazione," 384–385; S. Cosentino, *Storia dell' Italia bizantina*, 151.

from involvement in commerce and trade or production of goods.[35] It seems that in Histria, cash payment continued until the end of Byzantine rule, as the *Placitum Risani* mentions a tribute to the emperor paid in *solidi mancosi*. The *solidi* were collected from provincial *castra* and stored in the *palatium* – the *magister militum's* residence – which was probably situated in Pola, the capital of *provincia Histria*.[36] From there, the tribute would be sent to Constantinople each year. However, the most important income came from landholdings. The *magister militum Histriae,* for example, had at his disposal a large estate, located in the vicinity of Neapolis, administered by a *cancellarius*.[37] In addition, he received a *stipendium* as a constant source of income. This is further confirmed by an inscription from Torcello, dated to AD 639 which mentions the land owned by the *magister militum* Marcellus.[38]

In contrast, the wealth which the members of this elite would expect to derive from trade and commerce was, compared with that derived through landholding and administrative positions, far less significant, even if not economically negligible. Following the Lombard and Slavic invasion, the great senatorial estates vanished, and were replaced by regionalized economy. But the abundant grain production of Histria, second only to Africa and Sicily (following the loss of Egypt) permitted elites to get part of their wealth by transporting these goods to other provinces of the exarchate, particularly to its capital Ravenna. As Histria was located by an important waterway that connected Ravenna with Constantinople,

---

[35] This information is derived from laments of the *capitanei* related to the loss of their lands, see: *CDI*, I, 54, 113.

[36] The importance of Pola can be seen in the speech of the *Primas Polensis* in the *Placitum*. Among 172 *capitanei* he spoke first; see: Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 34. Ravegnani, "L'Istria bizantina," 79. For the source see Kandler, *CDI*, I, 112: *Primus omnium Primas Polensis dixit: quando Patriarcha in nostram Civitatem veniebat, et si opportunum erat propter. missos Dominorum nostrorum, aut aliquo placito cum Magistro Militum Graecorum habere.* Pola is also the only *civitas* mentioned in the tribute list: *de civitate Polensi solidi Mancosi sexaginata.*

[37] *CDI*, I, 54, *Cancellarius Civitatis novae mancosos duodecim, qui faciunt in simul mancosos.* The mention of 12 *solidi Mancosi* that should be paid not by the city but by the *cancellarius* suggests that this money was paid directly from the *magister militum's* estate, situated in the vicinity of Neapolis. It can be assumed that the *castrum* itself was too small to pay such an amount, maybe its share was paid directly to the *cancellarius*. This is confirmed in the next passage: *In nova Civitate habet Fiscum publicum, ubi commanet, intus et foras Civitatem amplius quam duos centum colonos, per bonum tempus reddunt oleo amplius quam centum modia, vino magis quam amphoras duocentum, alnona seu castaneas sufficienter.* Moreover, the information derived from this passage confirms that this was a rather large estate, particularly for a small frontier province.

[38] For a detailed study of the Torcello inscription see Agostino Pertusi, "L'iscrizione Torcellana a tempi di Eraclio," *Zbornik Vizantološkog Instituta* 8 (1964): 317–339; and Ferluga, "L'Istria," 178.

one may assume that trade was still an active element in the local economy. This is confirmed by the *limes maritimus* – a chain of forts which dotted the peaks of islands situated along eastern Adriatic coast. These forts were erected during the reign of Justinian. However, it can be assumed that most of the trade was appropriated for military needs.[39]

It seems that the elites had a strong consciousness of their role in society. Civic rituals were, at least partly, preserved. Based on evidence from the *Placitum*, Michael McCormick has shown that during the eighth century the imperial ritual of *adventus* was still performed in Italo-Byzantine provincial society. If the patriarch of Grado, the metropolitan of Histria, visited Pola to meet with a high Byzantine official – *magister militum Graecorum*, he was welcomed in an *adventus* ceremony featuring standards, candelabra, and incense. According to McCormick these standards should be identified as military banners (*signa*), paraded by flag bearers of the Histrian *numeri*. Using evidence from the *Strategikon* it can be seen that these flag bearers still held an important position in the organization of the Byzantine army. Brown has further pointed out the great importance that was attached to the standard as a symbol encouraging loyalty to the central government.[40]

The emergence over all of imperial Italy during the seventh century of provincial urban elites who held the interests of their own town, or district, to be as important as Constantinople, as the center of political and economic life, created a new element in the pattern of relations between capital and provinces. The relative apathy concerning non-fiscal provincial matters on the part of the government, however, meant that a high degree of local autonomy existed, particularly as the empire was preoccupied with the defense of the eastern frontier. Unlike Venice, which in 726 seceded from the empire and elected its own *dux*, it seems that elites of Histria remained loyal to the empire.[41]

---

[39] Contacts with the rest of the empire were maintained predominantly by the imperial navy which during this period ruled the Adriatic, see Antonio Carile, *L'Adriatico in eta Bizantina*, Atti del Convegno, Ravenna 7–8–9 giugno 2001, 463–464; see also: Guillou, *La presenza bizantina*, 418. This marks a crucial difference between Histrian elites and their western neighbor, the maritime merchant city of Venice which in the late eighth century began its rise as the main emporium of the Adriatic.

[40] For the discussion on the *adventus* see: Michael McCormick, "The Imperial Edge: Italo-Byzantine identity, Movement and Integration, A.D. 650–950," *Studies on the Internal Diaspora of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Hélène Ahrweiler and Angeliki E. Laiou (Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998), 47. For the importance of the standard see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 92–93.

[41] Ferluga supports a different idea, arguing that if the unity of Venetia and Histria had not been broken, the Histrian troops might have participated in the 726 rebellion as a part

All Roads Lead to Constantinople

The practical functions of the imperial administration, and in particular the army, created greater scope for able individuals to move upwards on the hierarchical social pyramid, especially in a predominantly military society such as the exarchate. By the eighth century in terms of the links between the military profession, the land base and political power, the Italo-Byzantine aristocracy was no different than the Lombard one. However, there was one important element that distinguished the military elite of Imperial Italy from their Lombard counterparts; the way the aristocracy linked itself with the origins of their power. For the Byzantines, Constantinople was the center of the world, the place from where the emperor, vicegerent of Christ on earth, presided over the Christian *oikumene*. It was also where imperial court was situated, the source of every legitimate transmission of political power.[42] Constantinople was the place that every Byzantine could identify, whether he lived in the capital, in Anatolia or in the Western province situated at the fringe of the empire, such as Histria. Michael McCormick has correctly pointed out how the use of *imperium* to indicate the Byzantine ruler is a translation of the Greek concept used by the Byzantine rulers to refer to themselves. The transpersonalization of the emperor in the word *imperium* used by the *capitanei* suggests that the elite gathered at the *Placitum Risani* and shared a unique version of Byzantine imperial ideology.[43]

The shrinking of imperial territory, the centralization of the fiscal administration, major shifts in urban culture, and the emergence of Constantinople as the only "true" *polis*, meant that the emperor and his court became, more than ever before, the source of social advancement. Wealthy provincials turned to Constantinople, the seat of the empire and source of wealth, status, and power. They invested their social capital there in order to become part of this system, although that often meant taking a post in their native territory accompanied by the dignity or the title by which those men assumed their place in imperial *taxis*. Persons appointed to such posts, thus, had every opportunity to further

---

of *Venetiarum exercita*. My opinion is that this cannot be the case, as the rebellion resulted in an appointment of local *duces*, including the *dux* of Venice; it can be seen from the *Placitum Risani* that eighth century Histria was still led by the *magister militum Graecorum*.

[42] For a detailed analysis of Italo-Byzantine society in the empire see André Guillou, "L'Italia bizantina, douleia e oikeiosis;" idem, *Studies on Byzantine Italy* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1970), 1–20.

[43] For more about this topic see McCormick, "The Imperial Edge," 49–50 and Borri, "Neighbors and Relatives," 15–16. He compared it with term *dominatio* as the Venetians called the emperor.

their own interests if they desired, establishing themselves as leaders of their local society. To elites of Histria, the emperor in Constantinople was source of a powerful and privileged position, and they were prepared to defend it if necessary. When Constans II was murdered in AD 668, units from the *exercitus Italie*, from Campania and Histria, rushed to Sicily to crush the rebellion. Similarly, in 778, the Histrian elite, called by Pope Hadrian the *neffandissimi Graeci*, captured and blinded Bishop Maurice, charging him with being a Frankish spy.[44] This also shows the strong sense of unity among those elites and the strong military ethos that they had possessed, their *esprit de corps*. Thus, it was the connection with the emperor in distant Constantinople, rather than with the exarch in nearby Ravenna, that guaranteed ambitious individuals in Histria a prominent place in local society. It seems that this "Byzantine connection" survived for more than thirty years after the fall of Ravenna in 751.

Again the *Placitum Risani* should help throw some light on this problem. It was already mentioned that the *tribuni* became second to *magister militum* in the provincial hierarchy in a militarized province such as Byzantine Histria by the mid-seventh century. The status of a particular *tribunus* depended on the importance of the *castrum* he controlled.[45] However, for a wealthy individual there was further opportunity to reassert his status in the provincial hierarchy. According to the *Placitum Risani*, wealthy *tribuni* traveled to the imperial court where they received (bought) the dignity of *hypatos* or *consulus* from the emperor. Thus, they entered the class of the privileged, the *ordo honorum*.[46] This title was purely honorary, without any additional power. It only indicated the grade of non-existing ancient nobility

---

[44] As there is no evidence of imperial troops acting in Italy during this period, it can be assumed that these *Graeci* were Histrian elites, who felt their position threatened. Their Byzantine character can be seen in the method of punishment of poor Maurice; they gouged his eyes out – a typical Byzantine punishment. The seriousness of the situation can be seen in the pope's urging Charlemagne to send a punitive expedition to Histria. *CDI*, I, 45, 95: *Neffandissimi Graeci, qui ibidem in praedicto territorio residebant Histriense…zelo ducti tam predicti Greci quamque de ipsis Histriensibus, eius (Mauricii episcopi) oculos eruerunt, propontes ei, ut quasi ipsum territorium Histriense vestrae sublimi excellentiae tradere debuisset.* For blinding as a Byzantine punishment see Harald Krahwinkler, *Friaul im Frühmittelalter* (Cologne – Weimar – Vienna: Böhlau, 1992), 144–145.

[45] This can be seen in a list of tribute paid to the emperor. The list is arranged hierarchically with Pola as the first to pay 66 *solidi mancosi*, Parentium 66, Ruginium 40, *numerus Tergestinus* (as a military district) 60, Albona 30, Pedena 20, Montona 20, Pinguentum 20, and *cancellarius* Civitatis novae 12 (magister militum's estate, not the town).

[46] *CDI*, I, 54, 113: The *capitanei* lamented how they had lost the privilege to be chosen as *hypatos: et qui volebat meliorem honorem habere de Tribuno, ambulabat ad Imperium, quod ordinabat illum Ypato. The Placitum* also mentions two *hypati,* Theodorus and Mauricius.

as imagined by the Byzantine court anchored in the capital. However, it was the award of dignities that kept the military elite tied to Constantinople by conferring status and defining the individual's place in the imperial hierarchy.[47] To explain this phenomenon, T. Brown used the expression of "titles being used as a big fish in smaller and smaller ponds"[48]; very appropriate, given these examples. In the case of Histria, the person who held the honor of *hypatos* had the privilege of standing next to the emperor's local representative – the *magister militum* "in omni loco", making him second in the provincial hierarchy of power.[49] In the elaborate world of imperial ceremonies the matter of where one sat at a Byzantine dinner table was not a trivial thing. Knowledge of the hierarchy of the Byzantine government from the ninth to the eleventh centuries comes directly from detailed seating order lists at imperial banquets held in the Great Palace.

Recalling their past glories in their plea in Rižana, the local elite described other striking links to Constantinople. The Byzantine tradition of gift-giving (*exenia*) is mentioned, with a gift delivered to the emperor personally, through which prominent provincials could make use of personal connections at the capital.[50] Landowners with more than one hundred sheep annually sent one animal each as a tribute to the emperor. It seems that this tribute was collected by imperial envoys who visited Histria only on that occasion.[51] This suggests that even in the eighth century, Histrian elites had the strong links with the imperial

---

[47] For an interpretation see Benussi, *Nel medio evo*, 37; Giovanni De Vergotinni, *Lineamenti storici della costituzione politica dell'Istria durante il Medio evo* (Rome: Societá Istriana di Archeologia e Storia Patria, 1924), 35; Ferluga, "L'Istria," 180. Also see Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 53–60, 205–208; idem, "Interplay," 136.

[48] Brown, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 130.

[49] See: *CDI*, I, 54, 113: …*et qui volebat meliorem honorem habere de Tribuno, ambulabat ad Imperium, quod ordinabat illum Ypato. Tunc ille qui Imperialis erat Ypatus, in omni loco secundum. illum Magistrum militum procedebat.* From this passage it is clear how the dignity system worked throughout the eighth century. By conferring a dignity on an individual, the court increased the prestige of that individual in society. On the other hand, the title of the individual could function only in the closed Byzantine society, so it was beneficial for him to protect imperial interests in the province. Thus, for example, if the *tribunus* of Parentium got (or bought) the dignity of *hypatos*, he would hold a better position than the *tribunus* of Pola, the most prominent city in Histria. One could only imagine the difficulties which the *magister militum* encountered in satisfying the needs of all those highly placed provincial aristocrats and, at the same time, not offending any of them.

[50] *CDI*, 54, 1, 114, *Colligamus exenia ad Dominum Imperatorem sicut tempore Graecorum faciebamus, et veniat Missus de Populo una mecum, et oft'erat ipsos exenios ad Dominum Imperatorem.*

[51] *CDI, Tempore Graecorum colligebamus semel in anno, si necese erat, propter Missos Imperiales: de centum capita ovium, q. habebat, unum.*

capital. They used the resources of imperial navy to get to Constantinople, and take part in the sophisticated rituals of the Imperial palace.[52] The distance from Constantinople to Pola is about thirteen hundred kilometers as the crow flies, and over hundred days by boat. This underlines the ingenuity of this elaborate mechanism of control, unique in medieval world.[53] It allowed the distant imperial administration to integrate this provincial, Latin-speaking group into a common system of titles and values, shared by all subjects of the *basilea*.

Epilogue

In this article I have tried to show the special position the military elite of Byzantine Histria enjoyed in Italo-Byzantine society. This provincial society arose from the turbulent period of the late sixth and seventh century, when it experienced dramatic social and political change. This elite found themselves at the imperial frontier, surrounded by enemies, and isolated from the rest of the empire. Yet, during all that period, the local military aristocracy preserved Byzantine traditions and at the time of the plea of Rižana, under their new Frankish masters, they still felt "Byzantine". They shared a common military tradition – a strong *esprit de corps*, an unique imperial ideology, enjoyed similar sources of wealth such as landownership and, most of all, they had strikingly similar links to Constantinople. After a major shift in urban culture as a consequence of changes in the role of cities and the huge losses in imperial territory, these links became a unique source of power and prestige. In a fringe province such as Byzantine Histria, it was the connection with Constantinople which gave these elites a powerful and privileged position in local society. They became wealthy landholders, members of the imperial household and imperial administration, the provincial representatives of the government and army commanders.

---

[52] However, it is possible that they used their own ships, at least to reach Dalmatia where Byzantine influence was stronger. The *capitanei* lamented that *dux* John forced them to sail to Venetiae, Dalmatia and Ravenna and on the river, something that they never had done before. Not only were they forced to sail for the *dux*, but for his sons and daughters too. In my opinion, the reason for their complaints was specifically sailing for the *dux*, as it seems improbable that a society which centered in coastal cities, and maintained links with Constantinople and Ravenna would have problems in sailing. The strong links of those elites to navigation, which has few parallels in the rest of contemporary Western Europe can only have connections with Late Roman and Byzantine tradition. This was rightly pointed out by Borri, "Neighbors and Relatives," 8–10.

[53] The information about the distances can be found in McCormick, "The Imperial Edge," 17–18.

Once again, the *Placitum Risani* can be used to confirm this theory. In the introduction it was noted that in 804 the Histrian elite fought for its privileges in Rižana, assuring them a privileged place in society. Strikingly, at the end of the assembly, they won the case and it was promised that all their privileges would be restored. Why did this happen? To find a solution, it is necessary to take a look at contemporary political events. The true reason for the restoration of the Byzantine system lay in the fact that – in light of the imminent and decisive battle between the Franks and Byzantines for control over the Adriatic – the Franks wanted to demonstrate their generosity with respect to the rights and local autonomy of the population of Histria and thus show the Venetians and Dalmatians the advantage of being under Frankish rule. For the Franks, control over the Adriatic was part of their twofold strategy (1) *Drang nach Osten* with the aim of conquering Central Europe, and (2) establishment of firm control over Italy. For Byzantium it was a matter of imperial prestige but also of strategic importance, not to allow this to happen. Moreover, it is possible that following the fall of Ravenna, the Histrian nobility attained considerable power as a desirable ally of both the Byzantines and the Franks. The blinding of the Bishop Maurice who was blinded by locals for being a Frankish spy probably provoked a Frankish response, perhaps the conquest of Histria. In 791 the *dux* of Histria is mentioned for the first time.[54] Comparing this with evidence from the *Placitum*, it seems that the power held by the Histrian elite reached its apex by the 780s. However, the peace of Aachen in 812, between Byzantium and Franks, resulted in the Byzantine recognition of the Frankish state and Histria became a Frankish territory. Deprived of help from Constantinople, the elite could not oppose the introduction of the feudal system. Afterwards they lost all their powers and disappeared from the records. With the disappearance of the military elite, Histrian society left Late Antiquity and entered the medieval period.

---

[54] In 791, Charlemagne, in a letter to his wife Fastrada, mentions that the *dux Histriae* distinguished himself in battle against the Avars CDI, I, 47, 101: *Ill. Dux de Histria, ut dictum est nobis, ibidem bene fecit cum suis hominibus.* Epistolae Carolini Aevi II, ed. Ernst Dümmler (*MGH Epp. IV*) (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), 20, p. 528. It is assumed that Histria came into Frankish posession around 788, after the battle for Benevento, when the Franks, after their victory over the Byzantines in Italy, obtained Histria "on the negotiating table". Besides the blinding of Maurice, no other source mentions resistance in Histria.

THE PROBLEM OF "ETHNICITY" – AN INTRODUCTION[1]

Daniel Ziemann ⬇

Models of Ethnicity in Traditional Research

The discussion about "ethnogenesis", the formation of peoples as identifiable entities, focuses mainly on the Early and High Middle Ages. Many of today's nations were mentioned for the first time as structured groups or political units in the sources during this period. Between AD 500 and AD 1200, a great part of the political landscape of Europe was shaped in a way that remained – at least roughly – quite stable throughout the following centuries. Of course, the permanent dialectics of war and peace-treaties kept changing borders and resulted in sequences of occupation and withdrawal. But nevertheless, the continuity of certain political units relying on ethnic identification processes created – at least in the eyes of later historians – an image of stability. Therefore, many modern nation states were able to perceive their early history as medieval. Thus, Portugal uses 1139 as its founding date;[2] the ceremony of Gnesen in 1000 is a crucial starting point for Poland;[3] Hungary commemorates the crowning of St. Stephen

---

[1] The following block on ethnogenesis is the outcome of a seminar in the Department of Medieval Studies of Central European University, Budapest, in the fall term 2009. I would like to thank all the participants for their lively and profound discussions. All the participants contributed to developing further reflections on the topic. For the present volume, Dóra Mérai, Kyra Lyublyanovics, Alena Kliuchnik, and Irene Barbiera present interesting approaches to the topic from different disciplines and angles.

[2] After the battle of Ourique (25 July 1139) the chancellery used the royal title for Alfonso Henriques the Conqueror (*1107/1111 – d.1185); see Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. I: *Estado, Pátria e nação* (1080–1415) (4th rev. ed., Lisbon: Editorial Verbo, 1990), 83–87.

[3] Johannes Fried, *Otto III. und Boleslaw Chrobry: Das Widmungsbild des Aachener Evangeliars, der "Akt von Gnesen" und das frühe polnische und ungarische Königtum*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 72–132; Jerzy Wyrozumski, "Der Akt von Gnesen und seine Bedeutung für die polnische Geschichte," in *Polen und Deutschland vor 1000 Jahren. Die Berliner Tagung über den "Akt von Gnesen,"* ed. Michael Borgolte (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 281–291; Jerzy Strzelczyk, "Die Piasten – Tradition und Mythos in Polen," in *Mythen in Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung aus polnischer und deutscher Sicht*, ed. Adelheid von Saldern (Münster: LIT-Verlag, 1996), 113–131.

in 1000;[4] Bulgaria celebrated its 1300th birthday in 1981;[5] and the baptism of Chlodwig between AD 498 and 507 is still commonly regarded as the birth of France.[6] Many more examples could easily be added.

---

[4] Katalin Sinkó, "Die Rezeption der ersten Jahrtausendwende im 19. und 20. Jh. in Ungarn," in *Europas Mitte um 1000/Europe's Centre around AD 1000. Beiträge zur Geschichte, Kunst und Archäologie*, vol. 1, ed. Alfried Wieczorek, Hans-Martin Hinz (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2000), 9–20; see the summary of archaeological research concerning medieval Hungary in *Hungarian Archaeology at the Turn of the Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy, Mihály Nagy (Budapest: Department of Monuments of the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage, 2003), 319–404; for Attila as a mythic figure in Hungary see István Nemeskürty, "Attila (I): Hunnen und Magyaren: Der ungarische Attila-Mythos," in *Herrscher, Helden, Heilige*, ed. Ulrich Müller, Werner Wunderlich, 2nd ed. (St. Gallen: Fachverlag für Wissenschaft und Studium, 2001), 21–27; Gyula Kristó, "Über die Hunnentradition der Ungarn," in *Varia Eurasiatica: Festschrift für Professor András Róna-Tas* (Szeged: József Attila Tudományegyetem, Altajisztika Tanszék, 1991), 117–125; for Saint Stephen see György Györffy, *King Saint Stephen of Hungary* (East European Monographs) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

[5] Bulgaria regards the peace treaty of 681 or 680 as its birth certificate, see *Bălgarija 1300. Institucii i dăržavna tradicija. Dokladi na tretija kongres na bălgarskoto istoričesko družestvo* [Bulgaria 1300. Institutions and state tradition. Papers of the third congress of the Bulgarian Historical Society], 3rd–5th October 1981, ed. Evlogi Bužaški, Velizar Velkov, Vasil Gjuzelev et al., vol. 1–3 (Sofia: Bălgarsko Istoričesko Družestvo, 1981–1983); for the historical background and the relevant Bulgarian and foreign literature see Daniel Ziemann, *Vom Wandervolk zur Großmacht. Die Entstehung Bulgariens im frühen Mittelalter* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2007), 161–179; for a dating of the events to 680, see Giuseppe De Gregorio and Otto Kresten, "Ἐφέρος – 'in diesem Jahr'. Zur Datierung des Bulgarenfeldzugs des Kaisers Konstantinos IV. (Sommer/Herbst 680)," *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici* 43 (2006): 21–56.

[6] Ivan Gobry, *Le baptême de Clovis 495* (Paris: Bernard Giovanangeli Éditeur, 2008); Helmut Castritius, "Chlodwig und der Tag von Tours 508," in *Völker, Reiche und Namen im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Matthias Becher and Stefanie Dick (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2010), 113–120; Knut Schäferdiek, "Chlodwigs Religionswechsel: Bedingungen, Ablauf und Bewegkräfte," in *Patristica et oecumenica: Festschrift für Wolfgang A. Bienert zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Peter Gemeinhardt, Uwe Kühneweg (Marburg: N. G. Elwert, 2004), 105–121; Danuta R. Shanzer, "Dating the Baptism of Clovis: The Bishop of Vienne vs. the Bishop of Tour," *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998): 29–57; Dieter Geuenich "Chlodwigs Alemannenschlacht(en) und Taufe," in *Die Franken und die Alemannen bis zur "Schlacht bei Zülpich"* ed. Dieter Geuenich (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1998), 423–437; Michel de Penfentenyo, *Les fondations de la France: de Clovis à Charlemagne* (Paris: Pierre Téqui, 1999); *Clovis, histoire et mémoire. Actes du Colloque International d'Histoire de Reims, du 19 au 25 septembre 1996*, Vol. 1–2, ed. Michel Rouche (Paris: Presses Paris Sorbonne, 1997); Uwe Ludwig, "Von Chlodwig zu Napoleon. Chlodwig in der staatlichen Auftragskunst Frankreichs im 19. Jahrhundert. Eine Bestandsaufnahme," in *Chlodwig und die "Schlacht bei Zülpich." Geschichte und Mythos 496–1996. Begleitbuch zur Ausstellung in Zülpich, 30.08.–26.10.1996*, ed. Dieter Geuenich, Thomas Grünewald, Reinhold Weitz

The discovery of this period as crucial for the process of nation building has quite a long history. As early as the period of humanism and the Renaissance, Late Antiquity and the Migration Period were discovered as having shaped the general look of Europe. German humanists looked in Tacitus for their own history,[7] the Swedish kingdom claimed the Goths as their ancestors,[8] and in French history Chlodwig and the Franks had been present throughout the Middle Ages, e.g., through the famous "Grandes Chroniques de France."[9]

But there is no doubt that the peak of the incorporation of early medieval peoples into the national identification processes of European nations took place mainly during the modern nation-building processes of the nineteenth century.[10] This was the time of the great and influential works that attempted to write history as mainly a national history. It was the time of the painstaking and famous source collections, and above all, it was the time when history became a

---

(Euskirchen: Verein der Geschichts- und Heimatfreunde des Kreises Euskirchen e.V. in Verbindung mit dem Zülpicher Geschichtsverein, 1996), 196–215.

[7] Klaus von See, *Barbar, Germane, Arier. Die Suche nach der Identität der Deutschen* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 2004), 61–68; Dieter Mertens "Die Instrumentalisierung der 'Germania' des Tacitus durch die deutschen Humanisten," in *Zur Geschichte der Gleichung "germanisch-deutsch". Sprache und Namen, Geschichte und Institutionen*, ed. Heinrich Beck, Dieter Geuenich, Heiko Steuer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 37–102; Hans Kloft, "Die Idee einer deutschen Nation zu Beginn der frühen Neuzeit: Überlegungen zur 'Germania' des Tacitus und zum 'Arminius' Ulrichs von Hutten," in *Arminius und die Varusschlacht: Geschichte, Mythos, Literatur*, ed. Rainer Wiegels, Winfried Woesler (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003), 197–210.

[8] Von See, *Barbar, Germane, Arier*, 68–73; Olaf Mörke, "Bataver, Eidgenossen und Goten: Gründungs- und Begründungsmythen in den Niederlanden, der Schweiz und Schweden in der Frühen Neuzeit," in *Mythos und Nation*, ed. Helmut Berding (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997), 104–132; Roland Steinacher and Stefan Donecker, "Der König der Schweden, Goten und Vandalen. Königstitulatur und Vandalenrezeption im frühneuzeitlichen Schweden," in *Vergangenheit und Vergegenwärtigung: frühes Mittelalter und europäische Erinnerungskultur*, ed. Helmut Reimitz and Bernhard Zeller (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2009), 169–204.

[9] Claude Carozzi, "Clovis, de Grégoire de Tours aux grandes chroniques de France: naissance d'une mémoire ambiguë," in *Faire mémoire. Souvenir et commémoration au Moyen Âge; séminaire Sociétés, Idéologies et Croyances au Moyen Âge. À la mémoire de Georges Duby*, ed. Claude Carozzi and Huguette Taviani-Carozzi (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1999), 41–61; Colette Beaune, "Clovis dans les grandes chroniques de France," in *Clovis – histoire et mémoire. Le baptême de Clovis, son écho à travers l'histoire: Actes du Colloque international d'histoire de Reims*, ed. Michel Rouche (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1997), 191–211.

[10] Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 15–40; von See, *Barbar, Germane, Arier,* 81–112, 135–150.

discipline.[11] The quality of many of the substantial works belonging to the pattern of national history is outstanding. They mostly represent the result of a thorough study of the source material and the state of the art of research in those days. The *History of the Serbs* by Konstantin Jireček is still a starting point for any kind of research on this topic;[12] Vasil Zlatarski's *History of the Bulgarian State in the Middle Ages* remains an obligatory reference for anyone who tries to enter this field.[13] The famous year books of the great German scholars that list year by year each and every single event in a positivistic way, accurately, with references to all known sources at their time are still indispensable.[14] All these works reflect a knowledge of sources that is extremely admirable, taking into account that they worked with the facilities of their times. But their high quality has its consequences. By establishing history as a discipline and by applying sophisticated methods, not only did they influence the methodological approach of future generations of scholars, but they also bequeathed their interpretative frameworks. Having written medieval history as national histories they marked the path later historians had to follow. The usage of terms such as "state" and "people" remained undisputed for a long time. According to the scientific ideals of that generation of scholars, the sources speak for themselves and if they used ethnic terms it was therefore quite natural to adopt names like Goths, Franks, Saxons, Slavs, etc. and create histories that emphasized ethnic continuity and stability. This common view still prevails in great parts of European historiography and has hardly been seriously disturbed

---

[11] See the articles in *Historisierung und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wissenskultur und gesellschaftlicher Wandel 5), ed. Ulrich Muhlack, Christian Mehr, Dagmar Stegmüller (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2003).

[12] Konstantin Josef Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben*, Vol. 1–2 (Gotha: Friedrich Andreas Perthes A.-G., 1911–1918).

[13] Vasil Zlatarski, *Istorija na bălgarskata dăržava prez srednite vekove* [The history of the Bulgarian state in the Middle Ages], vol. 1: *Părvo bălgarsko carstvo* [The first Bulgarian tsardom], 1,1: *Epoha na huno-bălgarskoto nadmoštie (679–852)* [The epoch of the Huno-Bulgarian supremacy], vol. 1, 2: *Ot slavjanizacijata na dăržavata do padaneto na Părvoto carstvo (852–1018)* [From the Slavicization of the state to the fall of the first tsardom] (Sofia: Bălgarska Akademija na Naukite, 1918/1927, reprint: Akademično izdatelstvo "Prof. Marin Drinov," 2002), vol. 2: *Bălgarija pod vizantijsko vladičestvo (1080–1187)* [Bulgaria under Byzantine rulership (1080–1187)] (Sofia: Bălgarska Akademija na Naukite, 1934, reprint: Akademično izdatelstvo "Prof. Marin Drinov," 1994), vol. 3: *Vtoro bălgarsko carstvo. Bălgarija pri Asenivci (1187–1280)* [The second Bulgarian tsardom. Bulgaria under the rule of the Asen family] (Sofia: Bălgarska Akademija na Naukite, 1940, reprint: Akademično izdatelstvo "Prof. Marin Drinov," 1994).

[14] *Jahrbücher der deutschen Geschichte*, see the link http://www.mgh.de/bibliothek/virtueller-lesesaal/jahrbuecher-der-deutschen-geschichte/ (last accessed 9 May 2011).

by the contemporary academic discussions about the invention of peoples and nations, the anachronism of the term "nation" for pre-modern times, and the distortion of medieval history when viewed through "national" lenses, since these discussions continue to be limited to mere scholarly discourse.[15]

The Question of Ethnicity in Recent Times

Nevertheless, the question of ethnogenesis has been one of the most popular and debated topics in the scholarly literature during the last few decades. Several monographs and many articles have been dedicated to mainly the deconstruction of ethnicity and the impact of national histories on historiography as such.[16] So what have been the contours of the debate and the angles from which traditional approaches began to be criticized? Previously, the discussion focused more on questions about the usage of notions like "nation" and "state" for the Early and High Middle Ages.[17] The debate on "ethnicity" emerged specifically concerning

---

[15] Geary, *The Myth of Nations*; E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[16] A small selection of the most recent publications on that topic: Walter Pohl, "Archaeology of Identity: Introduction," in *Archaeology of Identity – Archäologie der Identität*, ed. Walter Pohl and Mathias Mehofer (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 17) (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2010), 9–24; Idem, *Die ethnische Wende des Frühmittelalters und ihre Auswirkungen auf Ostmitteleuropa, Oskar-Halecki-Vorlesung – Jahresvorlesung des Geisteswissenschaftlichen Zentrums Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas 2006* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2009); Idem, "Conceptions of Ethnicity in Early Medieval Studies," in *Eastern Central Europe in the Early Middle Ages: Conflicts, Migrations and Ethnic Processes*, ed. Walter Pohl, Cristina Spinei, and Catalin Hriban (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române – Brăila: Editura Istros. Muzeul Brăilei, 2008), 17–28; Idem, "Probleme einer Sinngeschichte ethnischer Gemeinschaften – Identität und Tradition," in *Leges – Gentes – Regna. Zur Rolle von germanischen Rechtsgewohnheiten und lateinischer Schrifttradition bei der Ausbildung der frühmittelalterlichen Rechtskultur*, ed. Gerhard Dilcher and Eva-Maria Distler (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2006), 51–68; Idem, "Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity," in *From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble (London: Routledge, 2006), 120–167; Csanád Bálint, "A Contribution to Research on Ethnicity: A View from and on the East," in *Archaeology of Identity – Archäologie der Identität*, 145–182; Peter J. Heather, "Ethnicity, Group Identity, and Social Status in the Migration Period," in *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs. Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Ildar H. Garipzanov, Patrick Joseph Geary, and Przemyslaw Urbanczyk (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 17–50; see the debate between the "Vienna School" and their opponents in the papers published in *On Barbarian Identity. Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002); Geary, *The Myth of Nations*.

[17] *Aspekte der Nationenbildung im Mittelalter. Ergebnisse der Marburger Rundgespräche 1972– 1975*, ed. Helmut Beumann, Werner Schröder (Nationes. Historische und philologische

the Migration Period and the Early Middle Ages, a period that is regarded as crucial for the ethnic origin of many modern nations.

Of course, scholars are still far from any kind of consensus. While some tend to completely avoid terms that may attribute national or ethnic identities to early medieval societies,[18] others are less radical and assume the existence of ethnic consciousness as well as linguistic or cultural borderlines as possible signs of ethnic identities.[19] At the least, it is commonly accepted that the nineteenth century played a crucial role in establishing a national consciousness in the perception of history all over Europe.[20] At that time almost all European states articulated national histories that traced their origins to the Middle Ages and presented themselves as descendants of their medieval ancestors.

A convincing critic of nationalized histories from the nineteenth century had to start with the sources. Their interdependencies are complex and sometimes difficult to unravel. The term "Huns" may serve as an example. Some authors use this term for Attila and those groups under his command; others apply "Huns" as a synonym for barbarian people from north of the Black Sea including groups that appear as "Unnugundurs", "Kutrigurs" or "Bulgars" in other sources.[21] Similar observations can be made concerning the Goths, since they may be seafarers in the Black Sea in the third century as well as Roman federates after AD 376, settlers on the lower Danube region or officers at the Byzantine court, as Walter Pohl has pointed out.[22] The example of the Franks shows how the development of names could work. First, the name Franks was limited to one of many groups on the

---

Untersuchungen zur Entstehung der europäischen Nationen im Mittelalter 1) (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1978); a useful summary of the state of the art of the discussion was presented by Walter Pohl, "Staat und Herrschaft im Frühmittelalter: Überlegungen zum Forschungsstand," in *Staat im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Stuart Airlie, Walter Pohl, and Helmut Reimitz (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2006), 9–38.

[18] Sebastian Brather, *Ethnische Interpretationen in der frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie: Geschichte, Grundlagen und Alternativen* (Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde 42) (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004); Charles R. Bowlus, "Ethnogenesis: The Tyranny of a Concept," in *On Barbarian Identity*, 241–256.

[19] Volker Bierbrauer, "Zur ethnischen Interpretation in der frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie," in *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen. Von der Bedeutung des frühen Mittelalters*, ed. Walter Pohl (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2004), 45–84; Florin Curta, "Some Remarks on Ethnicity in Medieval Archaeology," *Early Medieval Europe* 15 (2007): 159–185.

[20] Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, 15–40.

[21] Ziemann, *Vom Wandervolk zur Großmacht*, 53–54.

[22] Walter Pohl: "Ethnicity, Theory and Tradition: A Response," in *On Barbarian Identity*, 221–239, here 226.

Rhine *limes*. After their establishment in the regions west of the Rhine River, the name "Franks" tended to embrace more and more groups. With the expansion of Chlodwig's power base, this tendency increased even more, covering all those who belonged to a kingdom led by a member of the Merovingian or Carolingian family.[23]

All the relevant sources for these problems have always been well known; so was the inconsistency of labeling ethnic groups by the relevant sources. Writers of national histories exerted a great deal of effort to harmonize the sources with their concepts. In the case of the Bulgarians, e.g., the solution suggested by Vasil Zlatarski was the equation of Huns with Bulgarians,[24] while similar ideas of Hunnic origins were developed in Hungary as well.[25]

Today, most scholars agree that the traditional concept of peoples and nation states is inadequate for describing the early and high medieval world. Large-scale research projects have clearly shown that the formation of ethnic identities in the Early Middle Ages was a complex process, often blurred and insufficiently reflected by the sources using their own ethnic concepts.[26] The process is then further obscured by the interpretation of modern scholars with their own concepts in mind. As a result, historiography reveals first of all the world view of modern historians while engaging to some extent with the concepts in the sources, but for the most part fails to capture the complexity of the processes it aspires to describe.

It has been suggested that instead of assuming the existence of stable ethnic identities in the Early Middle Ages we have to assume complex processes of repeated emergence and dissolution of ethnic groups. Above all, we have to be aware that ethnic units were different from linguistic groups as well as archaeological cultures. Furthermore, the nomenclature of late antique and early medieval sources may be misleading. The people authors like Procopius call "Goths" in one place in his work may be a multiethnic group of different origins that only had a "Goth" minority among them. At another point the group again

---

[23] Ulrich Nonn, *Die Franken* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2010).

[24] Zlatarski, *Istorija na bălgarskata dăržava* vol. 1/1, 21–45.

[25] Bálint Hóman, *A magyar húnhagyomány és húnmonda* [The Hungarian Hun tradition and the legend of the Huns] (Budapest: A "Studium" kiadása, 1925, reprint: Gödöllő-Máriabesnyő: Attraktor, 2010); Kristó, "Über die Hunnentradition der Ungarn."

[26] The numerous publications of the project "The Transformation of the Roman World" from 1993 to 1998 by the European Science Foundation may serve as an example. A short introduction for a broader public can be found in: *Transformation of the Roman World AD 400–900: Making Prints, Doing Art*, ed. Leslie Webster, Michelle Brown (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997).

called Goths by the same author may be completely different from the group he mentioned first.[27] Archaeological cultures associated with Goths may – at least in some cases – be interpreted simply as a fashion adopted by groups that have almost nothing in common with Goths, whatever the term "Goth" may mean.[28]

It was indeed the example of the Goths, a people none of today's societies claim as their ancestors, that even caused an emotional debate leading to general disagreements about whether and – if the answer was yes – how processes of ethnic formations should be analyzed and explained.[29]

Debates – The "Vienna School" versus the "Toronto School"

The deconstruction of the traditional concept of ethnicity is mostly ascribed to the German historian Reinhard Wenskus (1916–2002), who was professor of Medieval History at the University of Göttingen from 1963 on. Interestingly, his detailed work *Stammesbildung und Verfassung im Mittelalter*, published in 1961, does not seem to have been regarded as initiating a scientific revolution at the time of its publication.[30] Wenskus presented a detailed study of the governance structures among tribes and ethnic groups in the Early Middle Ages. The enormous impact of his work perhaps derived more power from the discourse of the so-called "Vienna School," with Herwig Wolfram and Walter Pohl as its most prominent representatives. What is generally perceived as Wenskus' main idea is the notion of a "tradition kernel" or "tradition nucleus." According to this idea, these "tradition kernels" would preserve something like a basic mythology or early history linked to the kindred or inner circle of the chieftain's – or king's – family. The "tradition kernel" is orally transmitted and preserves names and maybe key events. It serves as a means of self-identification for the ruler's family and the circle around him. It

---

[27] For this problem see Peter J. Heather, "Disappearing and Reappearing Tribes," in *Strategies of Distinction. The Construction of the Ethnic Communities 300–800*, ed. Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 95–111.

[28] For a radical position concerning archaeology see Sebastian Brather, "Ethnic Identities as Constructions of Archaeology: The Case of the 'Alamanni'," in *On Barbarian Identity*, 149–175; Idem, *Ethnische Interpretationen in der frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie: Geschichte, Grundlagen und Alternativen* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004); in favour of identifying Gothic settlements by applying archaeological methods see Volker Bierbrauer, "Zur ethnischen Interpretation in der frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie," in *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen*, 45–84.

[29] Gillet, *On Barbarian Identity*, preface; for a first orientation see also the short review by Guy Halsall in *English Historical Review* 118 (2003): 1349–1350.

[30] Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1961, 2nd ed. 1977).

may constitute the means of identification and belonging for a larger group as well. The most interesting aspect of this idea is the fact that biological continuity is no longer required. The persons being counted among an ethnic group or regarding themselves as belonging to this group may change. The "tradition kernel" is something like an idea or a belief that is able to unite people of different origins or cultural patterns. It has the ability to create a common identity and therefore generates continuity that may lead to the process called ethnogenesis, the internal or external perception of a group as an ethnically defined unit.[31] The idea of the "tradition kernels" is a milestone in the development of ethnogenesis theories because it allows for the creation of ethnicities composed of heterogeneous biological, cultural, and political units. As the main elements of these "tradition kernels," the "Vienna School" focuses on sources that allegedly preserved older, orally transmitted, traditions, like origin myths, lists of princes, accounts of previous events, mythological elements, etc. The application of the theory can be seen in various works of the "Vienna School," with the book of Herwig Wolfram about the Goths being one of the most popular and influential.[32]

The analysis appears to be the most favorable concerning the Goths, as they seemed to have their "own" historian, Jordanes, the main source for their early history, who claimed to have used extensively the – now lost – history of the Goths by Cassiodorus.[33] In addition, since large parts of the Gothic language were preserved through Wulfila's translation of the Bible,[34] Herwig Wolfram tried to use the language in order to discover social, religious, and political concepts of the Goths that would have been distorted by sources that used just Latin or Greek. The application of the theory of tradition kernels can be seen in the consistent use of the term "Origo Gothica," meaning some kind of early Gothic history,

---

[31] Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung*, 51–56, 72–81, 429–438.

[32] A short summary of some main ideas can be studied in Herwig Wolfram, "Gothic History as Historical Ethnography," in *Telling the Difference: Signs of Ethnic Identity. From Roman Provinces to Medieval Kingdoms*, ed. Thomas F. X. Noble (London: Routledge, 2006), 43–69; Wolfram has done substantial work on the topic: Idem, *Die Goten. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des sechsten Jahrhunderts*, 4th ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2001); a revised English translation of the first German edition was published in 1988: Idem, *History of the Goths*, tr. Thomas J. Dunlop (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

[33] *Iordanis de origine actibusque Getarum*, ed. Francesco Giunta and Antonio Grillone (Fonti per la storia d'Italia 117) (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo, 1991).

[34] Wilhelm Streitberg, *Die Gotische Bibel. Band 1: Der gotische Text und seine griechische Vorlage. Mit Einleitung, Lesarten und Quellennachweisen sowie den kleineren Denkmälern als Anhang*. Mit einem Nachtrag zu Speyerer u. Hácser Fragmenten von Piergiuseppe Scardigli, 7th rev. ed. (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 2000).

perhaps preserved by the king and his kinship or inner circle through centuries and later carried over by Cassiodorus in his lost history subsequently used by Jordanes.[35] Herwig Wolfram extracts this "Origo Gothica" as something like a separate element from Jordanes and suggests that it is possible to differentiate between elements of Gothic and non-Gothic origin, perhaps added by Jordanes, Cassiodorus or others. Herwig Wolfram emphasizes that a *gens* of the migration period could be a certain group or even a conglomeration of ethnically different groups. This *gens* is not a political or territorial entity but a process.[36] He ascribes the driving force of the unification process to the Gothic kings trying to prove themselves as members of a lineage of gods and heroes.[37] Gothic history, the collective memory of the Goths-, partly preserved by Jordanes, is therefore one factor in the creation of the Goths as a group. Although biologically those peoples who are called Goths may be of a completely different origin and – during their long history – may have undergone processes of composition and decomposition, it is also the "Origo Gothica" or the "tradition kernel" that made them believe they belonged together.

Of course, Wolfram does not interpret Jordanes' work as an authentically transmitted Gothic history. Instead, he claims that the kings of the Amal family succeeded in monopolizing the tradition and he is aware of the Roman background of Cassiodorus. Nevertheless, he is sure of being able to dismantle different layers of tradition and to reconstruct, at least partly, an orally transmitted pagan "tradition kernel."[38] The assumption of the existence of "tradition kernels" is based, of course, on a special way of reading and interpreting sources written centuries after the events they describe. One has to believe that historical methodology is able to differentiate between which elements of later Romanized or Hellenized authors derive from a Germanic or pagan source and which have to be excluded as products of their familiarity with antique or Christian literature and interpretative models.

While members of the Vienna school celebrated the separation of ethnogenetic processes from patterns of material culture, language, anthropology, and politics, the critics of the theory were irked by the – as they saw it – overemphasis on an elite culture. Reinhard Wenskus was critsized for establishing

---

[35] Wolfram, *Die Goten*, 15–16, 47–73; this method is criticized by Walter A. Goffart, "Jordanes's Getica and the Disputed Authenticity of the Gothic Origins from Scandinavia," *Speculum* 80 (2005): 379–398.
[36] Wolfram, *Die Goten*, 22.
[37] Wolfram, *Die Goten*, 21.
[38] Wolfram, *Die Goten*, 26–27.

a continuity of German history from contemporary times until the Ice Age, and continuing the ideas of Otto Höfler, who is regarded as a supporter of Nazi ideology with his theories of the state building power of Germanic tribes and the aristocratic character of early Germanic states.[39] Critics of the "tradition kernel" theory were especially repelled by the image of a small warrior group as the bearers of knowledge leading a great mass of unidentified people.[40]

Other critics focused on the sources, authors writing within an exclusively Christian-Roman environment and being familiar mainly with Greek and Latin literature rather than with Gothic origin myths. Therefore, it was doubted whether it is possible to reconstruct "tradition kernels" as well as ethnogenetic processes from authors who were not interested and to a certain degree were unfamiliar with what they described.[41] Recent works have questioned Jordanes' reliability in transmitting "original" Gothic content.[42] Furthermore, the production of most of these works, like the one by Jordanes, can often be linked with political motivations in the background of the authors. All the lists of princes, origins myths or early histories might have been inspired mainly by their own times and circumstances rather than by any kind of interest in pagan or Germanic peoples and cultures.

It is clear that even the older generation of the "Vienna School" would never claim that the events related in origin myths happened in the way they were presented. But at least they would argue that one could extract pieces of "real" history from within a collection of distorted information by applying a "clean" historical methodology. While the events may be legendary, names can be preserved unchanged. This would apply, for instance, to the Scandinavian origin of the Goths.[43] The "Vienna School" would agree that many aspects of Jordanes'

---

[39] Alexander Callander Murray, "Reinhard Wenskus on 'Ethnogenesis', Ethnicity, and the Origins of the Franks," in *On Barbarian Identity*, 39–68, here 54–58.

[40] Bowlus, "Ethnogenesis: The Tyranny of a Concept," here 245–246.

[41] Ibid., 246–247.

[42] Goffart, "Jordanes's Getica," 379–398; Arne Søby Christensen, *Cassiodorus Jordanes and the History of the Goths, Studies in a Migration Myth* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2002); Peter Heather, *The Goths* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1996), 27; a substantial critique of the reliability of Gothic origins as Jordanes presented them has already been formulated by Rolf Hachmann, *Die Goten und Skandinavien* (Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der germanischen Völker 158 – N. F. 34) (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970).

[43] Wolfram, *Die Goten*, 47–50, suggests that the Scandinavian origin might apply to a small group of *gutones*.

account can be considered legendary. But it would argue in favor of the factuality of the overall picture of Gothic migration.

According to the so-called "Toronto-school," Jordanes' history of the Goths should be interpreted as a work created against the background of Jordanes' own times. Some scholars have argued that it is methodologically more than doubtful to read Jordanes as a source for early Gothic history since it would be quite unlikely that the relevant information had survived for centuries.[44]

But the "Vienna school", on the other hand, is anything but a coherent block with a fixed doctrine. The approach of Herwig Wolfram differs significantly from the way Walter Pohl understands ethnogenetic processes.[45] While Wolfram sticks more closely to the idea of "tradition kernel", Pohl focuses on social dynamics. For Walter Pohl, "tradition kernels" do not represent the preservation of an early history in the first place but have to be seen as continuously produced patterns aiming to create something like a common identity.[46] In his book about the Avars he adapted a modified theory of ethnogenesis to a concrete historical topic,[47] but, of course, there are still differences, important differences; e.g., regarding the trustworthiness of later sources for reconstructing early histories. In addition, the question of reliability concerning orally transmitted histories and the dynamics of changing memory have been subject to scholarly disputes over the last decades.[48]

Perspectives

But what about the impact of these discussions on the practice of contemporary historiography? Have discussions about Goths ceased in scholarly circles? The answer is clearly no.[49] Indeed, the main question is what might serve as an

---

[44] Goffart, "Jordanes's Getica;" Idem, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[45] Pohl, "Ethnicity, Theory and Tradition: A Response," 221–239.

[46] Pohl, "Telling the Difference," 120–167.

[47] Walter Pohl, "A Non-Roman Empire in Central Europe: the Avars," in *Regna and Gentes. The Relationship Between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*, (The Transformation of the Roman World 13), ed. Hans-Werner Goetz, Jörg Jarnut, (Leiden: Brill 2002), 571–595; Idem, *Die Awaren. Ein Steppenvolk in Mitteleuropa 567–822 n. Chr.,* 2nd rev. ed. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2002).

[48] See Johannes Fried, *Der Schleier der Erinnerung. Grundzüge einer historischen Memorik* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2004).

[49] Peter J. Heather, "Goths in the Roman Balkans c. 350–500," in *The Transition to Late Antiquity, on the Danube and Beyond*, ed. Andrew Poulter (Proceedings of the British Academy 141) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 163–192; Magali Coumert, "L'identité

alternative? Should the term "Goths" be put in quotation marks, should we talk about groups without mentioning ethnic names? The discussion will go on with the main problem continuing unresolved. Disputes about ethnogenesis processes concentrate on theoretical concepts and use early medieval case studies as examples. The picture looks different when applying the results to a concrete historical situation. Recent publications on the Migration period and early medieval history have not shown any significant attempt to use a completely different terminology or to change the patterns of traditional narratives. Of course, the question of ethnicity is treated with references to the recent developments in research, but the general approach does not differ much from the traditional view, as Huns, Goths, and others are still treated as more or less stable actors of the historical scenery.

The discussion is still far from reaching a generally accepted conclusion. It is not enough to doubt traditional views without presenting attractive and applicable alternatives. Despite fierce discussions, ethnic interpretations still remain the predominant paradigm defining cultural groups in many regions of Europe. Furthermore, the source material about those groups, sometimes of doubtful provenance, often quite scarce and written from an outsider perspective, and mostly transmitted within a complex manuscript tradition containing different versions of a text with uncertain interrelations, is still often taken as simply a quarry for material supporting different hypotheses.

Nevertheless, the path for future research has already been marked out. There are several points that cannot be avoided:

– There is a difference between archaeologically, linguistically, and politically defined groups; they may coincide, but they do not have to. Coherence of material evidence does not necessarily allow conclusions about to be drawn ethnicity.
– The groups or peoples mentioned in the sources, whether they are called Goths, Vandals, Franks, Huns or whatever, are not necessarily ethnically closed units, but in many cases have to be regarded as changing, multicultural and multiethnic conglomerations, temporally united by political or military leadership.
– The sources apply concepts of ethnic categorization that may be influenced by transmitted literary models rather than by any kind of knowledge about the groups being described.

---

ethnique dans les récits d'origine: L'exemple de Goths," in *Identité et ethnicité. Concepts, débats historiographiques, exemples (IIIᵉ–XIIᵉ siècle)*, ed. Véronique Gazeau, Pierre Bauduin, Yves Modéran (Caen: Publications de Centre des Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques Médiévales, 2008), 49–73.

–   Assigning names to groups in the sources often reduces, simplifies, and hides more complex and less stable processes of identification within the groups themselves.
–   Ethnogenetic processes may be fostered by outside factors in terms of separation and distinction as well as from inside in terms of creating patterns of coherence. These factors do not necessarily have to overlap.

Keeping these, more or less, general conclusions of contemporary research on ethnicity in mind, the task is to apply them to narratives about the Migration period or the Early Middle Ages. For now, it seems advisable to leave aside prominent examples like the Goths and turn to groups less studied so far or not affected by the recent discussions on ethnicity. It is also important to reflect on the consequences of the contemporary discussions on ethnicity in current research projects, whether they are archaeological excavations of a certain region or discussions about early medieval ethnic groups and contemporary nations using them as part of a newly constructed national history.

As opposed to the deconstructive tendencies of recent scholarly research, the political developments in Central and Eastern Europe during the last decades seem to have led to a renewed interest in the concept of national histories, especially for those new nations that lack a political legacy traceable throughout the Middle Ages. A scientific denationalization has to confront the political drive for re-nationalization. The latter is often situated at the border between scientific research at the top and a bottom-up movement by specialists with or without institutional ties. This movement tends increasingly to use national and ethnic concepts and to satisfy a growing need in many countries for identification through history, especially after the political changes of the 1990s. Books emerging from this sphere tend to be quite successful and provide society with popular models of national self-consciousness. The popular and the institutional levels normally do not communicate with each other or show mutual wareness of one another.

It is therefore necessary to broaden the range of topics and research questions to which contemporary models of ethnogenesis can be applied. A discussion of ethnogenesis has to offer alternative answers for ethnogenetic processes in the Early Middle Ages. It has to confront the problem of history being used in order to satisfy the need for national identification processes, and it has to offer narrative patterns that influence the discussion even on the level of manuals and schoolbooks.

In this present block on ethnogenesis, we present different case studies that all apply the recent discussions on ethnogenesis to various topics within the fields of archaeology and history. This selection of essays aims at exploring ways of

broadening the discussion to fields where it has not played an important role so far or has been regarded as of lesser importance.

Dóra Mérai will analyse the problem of ethnicity from an archaeological perspective. Her article presents the main aspects of the discussion and shows opportunities to deal with ethnicity questions in archaeological research. Her article makes clear that the discussion among archaeologists is very different from the on-going debates among historians on this subject.

Using the example of the Cumans, Kyra Lyublyanovics analyzes how assumptions of ethnic identity have influenced research and opinions about the Cumans for centuries. Her article convincingly suggests new perspectives for understanding the construction of this mostly ethnically defined group. Many of the commonly accepted opinions have to be questioned when looking at the process of constructing Cuman identity. This refers to identification processes from outside as well as from inside.

The third article, by Irene Barbiera, is dedicated to the field of archaeology as well. It discusses problems of ethnic interpretations and the construction of masculinity in Italian cemeteries around the image of warriors. These interpretations have been used to promote the image of brave warriors or brutal enemies according to the political discourse they were meant to support.

A classical overview of how modern historiography has aimed at constructing national identity will be presented by Alena Kliuchnik in the last article about the construction of a Belarus people and nation. It will show how a model of ethnicized national history was adapted to already existing national narratives in order to construct a new history.

DIGGING FOR ETHNICITY – PERSPECTIVES IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH[1]

Dóra Mérai 📥

The deep involvement of archaeological scholarship in reconstructing the history of ethnic groups or nations is rooted in the circumstances and characteristics of the emergence of archaeology as a scholarly discipline. During the nineteenth century, a range of historical disciplines, including archaeology, came into being in the process of defining a common past as a reference point in the self-identification of emerging modern nations, first at a cultural-symbolic and later at a political level. Various modern ethnicities laid claim to the same geographical regions as the physical stages of their own past. The question of historical and territorial, and thus cultural, primacy arose, using archaeological remains of supposed ancestors as an argument, based on the assumption that archaeological observations are amenable to historical interpretation. Archaeological data were applied in national and territorial argumentation and archaeology unavoidably became entangled with nationalisms. Thus, the borders of contemporary nation states have necessarily influenced traditions of archaeological research, both in the questions posed and the orientation taken in the search for and interpretation of data when offering answers.[2]

Since archaeology emerged from general antiquarianism as a separate discipline with its own scholarly methods, it has often been presented as possessing a certain scientific objectivity both by its practitioners and the wider public, with an emphasis on its empiricism. Archaeology has been called upon to answer historically determined questions through what has been viewed as objective science. As history meant national histories, an important group of questions concerned the origins of nations. It was expected that only through archaeology would it be possible to trace back events that had contributed to protohistories

---

[1] The scope of this brief study on a topic covered by an immense literature was not to provide a complete overview of the scholarly discourse. My intention was to contribute to the block written by the participants of the 2009 fall term seminar by focusing on some issues raised during the seminar discussions.

[2] Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett, "Archaeology in the Service of the State: Theoretical Considerations," in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 3–18; Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 15–40.

and reconstructing the prehistories of present peoples on the basis of studying material remains.[3]

A fundamental question in this respect is how the theoretical possibilities of relating material culture formations and ethnic groups have been conceived within the discipline. From another, more essentialist, point of view, as archaeologists study material remains of past peoples, the question of who those people were is naturally raised. The identification – providing a certain group with a name – can happen through reference to two main sources: 1) names of groups of peoples mentioned in historical documents and 2) names of present day groups of people. These two points of reference are often interrelated. A connection is established between groups of people whose material culture is the focus of research and who are identified with groups mentioned in written sources and present ethnicities as their descendants. In this manner, a clearly historical problem is introduced that is treated in the first study of this block.

On the other side, archaeological results are often involved as references of crucial importance in the historical scholarship concerning ethnogenesis. Despite shared scopes of inquiry, however, the understanding of ethnicity and the possibilities of its identification in the past has developed along a remarkably different path within the two disciplines. It is essential to acknowledge this divergence as masking it might lead to misinterpretations within interdisciplinary discourse.

Identification of Ethnic Groups in Archaeology: Culture History

A coherent methodology of creating a link between material culture and past peoples had been formulated by the first quarter of the twentieth century, forming the basis of the first general paradigm in archaeology called culture history. The method was based on the observation that sets of archaeological remains display differences in various geographical regions. By noting material culture distributions on maps and finding regularities in the patterning, distinct sets of archaeological artifacts were identified and labeled as different archaeological cultures, supposed material traces of distinct groups of people. The groups were defined in terms of

---

[3] For the consequences of this see Siân Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present* (London: Routledge, 1997); Peter J. Ucko*,* "Introduction: Archaeological Interpretation in a World Context," in *Theory in Archaeology. A World Perspective*, ed. Peter J. Ucko (London: Routledge, 1995), 8–12, and for case studies such as archaeology in Ireland, Zimbabwe, Russia, etc., see the chapters in the same volume; also chapters on archaeological research in Portugal, the Southern European countries, China, Korea, Japan, etc. in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology.*

peoples and tribes, and were equated with those mentioned in the given region in historical sources.[4] The most frequently quoted formulation of this thesis comes from Gustaf Kossinna: "Sharply defined archaeological culture areas correspond without doubt to areas of particular peoples and tribes."[5] Changes or variation of items or traits in material culture were assumed to reflect temporal differences or "development." Thus, it seemed to be possible to trace back the history of these groups even to their nascence in times not covered by historical sources by creating typologies of artifacts and reconstructing temporal horizons based on them. This methodology became one of the basic tenets of archaeological practice and has been up to the present day.

Behind these ideas in the archaeological scholarship of the first half of the twentieth century stood the concept of ethnic groups being internally homogeneous and objectively defined by their cultural, linguistic and racial distinctiveness. Culture historical archaeology has built on and contributed to this picture, creating distinct, homogeneous cultural regions with sharp boundaries, supposedly corresponding to the settlement area of separate peoples in the past. Ethnic groups were also seen as historically continuous entities. Thus, it seemed to be possible to link past situations to the present. Archaeologists have claimed to be able to trace the origins, movements and, ultimately histories, of peoples back to the time and place of their emergence. These concepts concerning the cultural coherence within groups of peoples were rooted in nineteenth-century Romantic ideas of the common soul of a nation, which was manifest in every

---

[4] For an evaluation of the culture historical approach from the point of view of the development of the archaeology of ethnicities, see S. J. Shennan, "Introduction," in *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity,* ed. Stephen J. Shennan (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 1–32; Ian Hodder, "Archaeological Theory in Contemporary European Societies," in *Archaeological Theory in Europe*, ed. Ian Hodder (London: Routledge, 1991), 1–24; Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 15–25. On whether culture history can be evaluated as theory or methodology, see Ucko*, "Introduction: Archaeological Interpretation in a World Context," 11.

[5] Gustaf Kossinna, *Die Herkunft der Germanen* (Leipzig: Kabitzsch, 1911), 3; quoted, e. g., by Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 16. On the emergence of the culture historical approach, the evaluation of the work of Gustaf Kossinna and its contextualization in preceding and contemporary developments in scholarship, with references to further literature, see Ulrich Veit, "Ethnic Concepts in German Prehistory: A Case Study on the Relationship Between Cultural Identity and Archaeological Objectivity," in *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*, 35–56; Heinrich Härke, "'The Hun is a Methodical Chap' Reflections on the German Tradition of Pre- and Protohistory," in *Theory in Archaeology. A World Perspective*, 47–61.

single sphere of the nation's culture all through its history, and thus, in a particular way, also in their artworks and artifacts.[6]

Criticism of the Culture Historical Approach in Archaeology

Following the Second World War, because of its previous misuse in debates surrounding territorial and racial primacy, the cultural historical approach and ideological considerations concerning ethnicity in archaeology came to be handled with a general suspicion manifest in a turn towards a more descriptive character in archaeological research. This descriptive turn was symbolized by the production of typo-chronological systems of artifacts, especially in German and Central European research.[7] In the following decades, criticism directed towards the theoretical implications that lay behind the culture historical paradigm were formulated within certain segments of the discipline: 1) it became clear that culture history is not even amenable for describing the archaeological record in all its complexity, 2) it is far from providing an acceptable explanation for the formation of the archaeological record. These processes were manifest in changing shifts in the explicit primary focus of research on the one hand, and 3) in the development of new theoretical paradigms based on impulses from outside the discipline on the other hand.

1) A wide range of observations have attested that spatially defined archaeological cultures are not homogeneous. Artifact distributions display internal variability. Their formal boundaries are not sharp and fixed, but rather the differences are gradual and continuous. Elements considered characteristic for one culture turn up elsewhere as well, and it is not possible to demonstrate whether this diffusion resulted from the movement of people (migration of individuals or groups, their expansion), the movement of goods (through trade, gift exchange, booty, etc.), the diffusion of ideas or even some combination of the above. A general problem of archaeological interpretation is caused by tension between the fact that archaeologists find individual cases, and archaeology aims at drawing universally valid conclusions about past peoples and societies and their relations. (In other words, what 'amount' of data provides a valid picture of particular social phenomena.) Both individual explanation of a particular case

---

[6] Härke, "'The Hun is a Methodical Chap'," 54–55; Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 40–51; Sebastian Brather, "Ethnic Identities as Constructions of Archaeology: The Case of the 'Alamanni'," in *On Barbarian Identity. Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillett (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 149–150.
[7] See footnote 4.

and generalization of individual phenomena open up a series of problems that need to be handled. The core of this line of criticism lies in a changing concept of archaeological culture, reflecting the fact that it is no more than a scientific categorization, both in terms of spatial division and temporal periodization, as it is always possible to find both continuous and discontinuous elements in both space and time. Thus, designating the beginnings of a culture – the origins of a nation – is always a highly subjective choice.[8]

2) The former static and homogeneous culture concept was replaced by that of culture as a functioning system based on a then-new archaeological paradigm in Anglo-American historiographical tradition ("New Archaeology") that emerged in the 1960s, inspired by social anthropology and proving influential worldwide in a variety of ways. The main scope of inquiry became the explanation of cultural changes within the framework of socio-cultural systems, focusing more on environmental explanations, economic processes and subsistence strategies, and social organization. Distributions of archaeological remains were interpreted as resulting from functional variations in which ethnic differences were not seen among the most significantly contributing factors.[9]

3) In the third quarter of the twentieth century, a new understanding of ethnicity in anthropology generated fundamental changes in archaeological theory in Western Europe and North America. The assumption that a congruence existed between ethnic, material (and non-material) cultural and linguistic boundaries was seriously challenged. Ethnic groups came to be regarded as self-defining systems, held together by a *belief* in common culture and in a common descent. Ethnicity was seen as fundamentally relational, existing in self-ascription and ascription by others. The boundaries of ethnic groups – maintained despite sharing common cultural features by different ethnic groups and the transmobility of people and goods – became the critical focus of investigation, and not as previously, the cultural "stuff" they incorporated. Based on observations, "actors" in the past employed certain cultural features to signal cultural differences rather than the culture as a whole. Thus, it was realized that delineating the history of a culture

---

[8] Shennan, "Introduction," 1–32; Brather, "Ethnic Identities as Constructions of Archaeology."

[9] For a summary and interpretation, see Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley, *Reconstructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge 1992), 29–45; for an introductory text into the problem of the "New Archaeology" with an indication of the most important literature, see Matthew Johnson, *Archaeological Theory. An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 20–27. On the problem of ethnicity in the so-called "New Archaeology" see Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 5–6, 26–29.

was not all the same thing as tracing the ethnic history of a group. Thus, the task for archaeology became to identify those cultural features that should be considered when investigating ethnicity: as ethnicity is socially constructed, one must find the features that the "actors" themselves regarded as significant in this respect. Besides, variation always needs to be taken into consideration. Some of the actors display many "ethnic" characteristics while others show few such traits. This anthropological model has been refined through a variety of concepts, emphasizing aspects of situational identity construction, goal orientation, and the role of socio-cultural and political factors. As a result, a variety of theoretical approaches have evolved in archaeology, replacing the concept of a direct correspondence between language, culture, ethnicity and the archaeological record as a passive reflection of relations and distances between former groups.[10]

Ethnicity, now understood as a form of identity, has been treated within the context of exploring the possibilities of archaeological approaches to past identities, such as gender, age, social status and religion cross-cutting ethnicity as just another form of social identity. Members of ethnic groups experience their ethnicity differently depending on their age, sex, class, religion. Thus, the ethnicity of individuals is constantly redefined, very much depending on the context in which the interaction takes place.[11]

---

[10] Even though it is a summary of research in previous decades, one of the most influential texts in anthropology was Fredrik Barth's "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: the Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Oslo: Scandinavian University Press**,** 1969), 9–38. On the consequences of Barth's theories in archaeology, see Shennan, "Introduction," 11–14; Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 109–110; Siân Jones, "Historical Categories and the Praxis of Identity: The Interpretation of Ethnicity in Historical Archaeology," in *Historical Archaeology. Back from the Edge*, ed. Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Siân Jones, and Martin Hall (London: Routledge, 1999), 219–232; Eadem, "Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past," in *The Archaeology of Identities. A Reader*, ed. Timothy Insoll (London: Routledge, 2007), 44–58.

[11] See, e.g., Lynn Meskell, "Archaeologies of Identity," in *Archaeological Theory Today*, ed. Ian Hodder (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), 187–213; Chris Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood. An Anthropological Approach* (London: Routledge, 2004), especially 14–30; Margarita Diaz-Andreu and Sam Lucy, "Introduction," in Margarita Diaz-Andreu, Sam Lucy, Staša Babić, and David N. Edwards, *The Archaeology of Identity* (London: Routledge, 2005), 1–12; Sam Lucy, "Ethnic and Cultural Identities," ibid., 86–109; Timothy Insoll, "Introduction. Configuring Identities in Archaeology," in *The Archaeology of Identities*, 1–18; Carolyn L. White and Mary C. Beaudry, "Artifacts and Personal Identity," in *International Handbook of Historical Archaeology*, ed. Teresita Majewski and David Gaimster (New York: Springer, 2009), 209–225.

Dóra Mérai

Theory and Practice in the Archaeological Investigation of Ethnicities

1) The consequences of the anthropological re-definition of ethnicity on the possibilities of archaeological investigation of past peoples have been developed in the field of ethnoarchaeology. Ethnoarchaeology is defined as the study of contemporary groups of peoples living under similar conditions as those encountered in archaeological work. As the main question for archaeological research on ethnicities became how to find those material culture traits that had significance in the creation and maintenance of ethnic identities, ethnoarchaeological case studies focused on the role of artifacts in creating groups from peoples and in maintaining ethnic boundaries and the way this contributed to the spatial patterning of objects as it would appear to future archaeologists. They have pointed out that cultural traits used by a group in identifying themselves also included verbal communication and non-verbal behaviors in addition to material culture. As a conclusion, it was formulated that discontinuities in material culture resulting from its role in distinguishing between self-conscious ethnicities can *theoretically* be identified by archaeologists based on the analysis of the archaeological context, which can serve as the basis for reconstructing the former cultural context.[12] Still, the question remained of how to define those elements within the *particular* archaeological record that once had significance with respect to ethnicity. In the end, ethnoarchaeology can only provide models of behavior to explain artifact patterning.

As one possible answer, theories about material culture from the 1970s and 1980s utilized the concept of style – basically involving all sorts of characteristics of artifacts, their production and their use – to be a key concept in studying the process of transmitting personal and group identity. Style was conceptualized on the one hand as intentional symbolizing of ethnicity, and on the other hand, a consequence of the unconscious mind related to functional considerations.[13]

---

[12] The most influential study was Ian Hodder, *Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); for an overview of the historiography of ethnoarchaeology, see Nicholas David and Carol Kramer, *Ethnoarchaeology in Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 22–28.

[13] According to the so-called isochrestic model of James Sackett, style bears the imprint of ethnicity as a result of a combination of culturally determined choices within the infinite number of possible ways to do things. In this interpretation, style is viewed as a result of the unconscious. James R. Sackett, "Style and Ethnicity in Archaeology: The Case for Isochrestism," in *The Uses of Style in Archaeology*, ed. Margaret W. Conkey and Christine Hastorf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 32–43. According to the other model of style as symbolic, particularly characteristic of artifacts – e.g., clearly visible

Both the first, structuralist, theory of style and the second, functionalist, theories of style have been criticized from various points of view.[14] An important aspect of the criticism referred to the *active* role material culture plays in the mediation of social relations and – besides their expression – also in the *construction* of identities. A second important point of criticism was that the same cultural elements are not involved in the communication of ethnicity in various social contexts. The same objects or traits can have different meanings depending upon their particular social context. Though changes in social, ecological, demographic circumstances also play an important role in the formation of ethnicity, it is not possible to predict, thus, provide a general explanation, of why and how.[15] Generalization about ethnic processes came to be seen as problematic since the amount of available archaeological data is always limited in one way or the other. Thus, according to "pessimistic views," archaeology can never identify ethnic identities in the past as its sources are not amenable to that kind of interpretation. Archaeologists should rather concentrate on questions appropriate to the available data, that is, social structure, economic history, history of culture.[16]

More optimistic research views, however, did not give up hope that the dynamics of past societies in which the formation and manifestation of identities played a determining role on several levels could be more clearly understood.

---

pieces of custom and tradition – style serves to distinguish players in support of ethnicity, social status, etc. For this role of style the notion of "stylistic behavior" was introduced by Martin Wobst. See H. Martin Wobst, "Stylistic Behavior and Information Exchange," in *For the Director: Research Essays in Honor of James B. Griffin*, ed. Charles E. Cleland (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1977), 317–342. For a third concept combining the two, conscious and subconscious aspects, see the ideas of Polly Wiessner, "Style and Social Information in Kalahari San Projectile Points," *American Antiquity* 48, No. 2 (1983): 253–276.

[14] For a summary, see Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley, *Re-constructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice*, 142–146.

[15] Shennan, "Introduction," 15–20; Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*, 88–100, 117–119; referring to G. Carter Bentley's drawing on the *habitus* concept of Pierre Bourdieu: G. Carter Bentley, "Ethnicity and Practice," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29 (1987): 24–55; Jones, "Historical Categories and the Praxis of Identity;" Idem, "Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past," 72–75. The concept of style as a passive aspect possessed by the object is also criticized, building upon the *chaîne operatoire* concept, see Paul Graves-Brown, "All Things Bright and Beautiful? Species, Ethnicity and Cultural Dynamics," in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*, ed. Siân Jones, Paul Graves-Brown, and Clive Gamble (London: Routledge, 1996), 81–91; Lucy, "Ethnic and Cultural Identities," 102–105.

[16] See, e.g., Brather, "Ethnic Identities as Constructions of Archaeology."

Such views reflect the belief that archaeology is able to research past identities, but suggest that a distinction needs to be drawn between individual and collective identities. Communal similarities/differences and population mobility are the terms offered for those aspects of group identity that can be identified based directly on the archaeological record; their relation to ethnicity and other forms of identity and to the changes in them all need to be handled on different levels. Just as some items in the material culture might have had a role in constructing and signaling ethnic identities while others did not or did not always, and did not always communicate the same identities, there is no archaeological model that has universal validity. The method suggested is to employ a wide variety of independent contextual evidence, also taking into consideration the temporal (historical) aspects of ethnicity.[17] In this respect, important assistance is provided by modern technology in avoiding the traditionally static way of mental mapping in archaeology. Recent experiments in computer applications aim at visualizing uncertainty and change as inherent characteristics of the archaeological record.[18]

2) The above theoretical considerations appear to have made rethinking the possibilities of ethnic interpretation of archaeological remains unavoidable. When dealing with particular sets of sources, the firm belief that archaeological finds are amenable to direct ethnic identification and show the history or the descent of present day ethnic groups, is still, and not infrequently, manifest in archaeological scholarship. Despite anthropological inspiration, the historical perspective in archaeology – an expectation that archaeological results should contribute to history writing – has remained a dominant tendency up to now everywhere in Europe, and especially in Central Europe, for reasons rooted in the circumstances of the birth of the discipline and the interests of the wider public.[19]

---

[17] Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity*; Lucy, "Ethnic and Cultural Identities;" Jones, "Discourses of Identity in the Interpretation of the Past."

[18] See the proceedings of the annual conferences organized by CAA (Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology) on http://www.leidenuniv.nl/caa/proceedings/proceedings_contents.htm (last accessed 14 May 2011) up to 2007, and *On the Road to Reconstructing the Past*. Program and Abstracts. 36th Annual Conference on Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology, Budapest, 2–6 April 2008, ed. Erzsébet Jerem, Ferenc Redő and Vajk Szeverényi (Budapest: Archaeolingua, 2008).

[19] David Austin, "The 'Proper Study' of Medieval Archaeology," in *From the Baltic to the Black Sea. Studies in Medieval Archaeology*, ed. David Austin and Leslie Alcock (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 11–19; Sarunas Milisauskas, "People's Revolutions of 1989 and Archaeology in Eastern Europe," *Antiquity* 64 (1990): 283–285; Ian Hodder, "Preface," in *Archaeological Theory in Europe*, vii; Idem., "Archaeological Theory in Contemporary European Societies," Ibid., 4–11; Ucko, "Introduction: Archaeological Interpretation in a

The analytical framework for the archaeological record of historical periods has most often been determined by documentary history, and even prehistoric archaeology has been tied to historically inspired questions. As history has meant mostly ethnic history in Central and Eastern Europe, archaeologists also think in terms of ethnic groups – their movements, customs, territories marked by artifact style zones. The questions that cultural history was hoping to answer are still present, so cultural history as a method to identify past peoples and their development in time is still widely practiced, using artifact typologies to build chronology and distribution maps to delimit cultural boundaries.[20]

It has been formulated as a generalized observation in historiography that, in contrast to the Anglo-American tradition of theoretical endeavors briefly presented above, the concept of ethnicity that dominated scholarship in Central and southeastern Europe and the treatment of the relationship between ethnicity and material culture implied the existence of a shared understanding, without any particular attempt at theoretical definition. According to these scholarly conventions, it was self-evident that objects in some way reflect the groups who produced and used them. The assumption that material culture distributions are linked to past groups – tribes, peoples – has not been challenged by wider scholarly circles and a more extensive knowledge of the archaeological record is seen as the key to obtaining a clearer picture. [21] In this context, culture history

---

World Context," 5; for the relation between archaeological and textual sources, see Anders Andrén, *Between Artifacts and Texts. Historical Archaeology in Global Perspective* (New York: Plenum, 1998); Siân Jones, "Historical Categories and the Praxis of Identity," 219–232; John Moreland, *Archaeology and Text* (London: Duckworth, 2001); José Alberione dos Reis, "What Conditions of Existence Sustain a Tension Found in the Use of Written and Material Documents in Archaeology?" in *Global Archaeological Theory: Contextual Voices and Contemporary Thoughts*, ed. Pedro Paulo Funari, Andrés Zarankin, and Emily Stovel (New York: Kluwer Academic Plenum Publishers, 2005), 43–58.

[20] Kohl and Fawcett, "Archaeology in the Service of the State;" Timothy Kaiser, "Archaeology and Ideology in Southeast Europe," in *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, 101, 108–109; Pedro Paulo A. Funari, Siân Jones, and Martin Hall, "Introduction: Archaeology in History," in *Historical Archaeology. Back from the Edge*, 3–4. See also Dóra Mérai*, The True and Exact Dresses and Fashion: Archaeological Clothing Remains and Their Social Contexts in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Hungary* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010) analyzing the problems surrounding attempts to identify historically known ethnic groups in archaeological remains in a post-medieval period covered by an abundant number of written sources.

[21] Kaiser, "Archaeology and Ideology in Southeast Europe," 105–106; Aleksander Bursche, "Archaeological Sources as Ethnical Evidence. The Case of the Eastern Vistula Mouth," in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology. The Construction of European Communities*, 229–230; Jones,

is often perceived as no more than a set of empirical methodologies with an emphasis on collecting data.[22]

Though many elements of the methodology of culture history are still practiced, there is a basic difference in the way ethnic groups reflected in material culture formations are defined. Some groups are politically, socially or economically determined, also involving aspects of identity including ideas of group belonging and the perception of the group and its members by others. Various interpretational models based on the same "mapping" methodology of culture history have been developed with the aim of providing an explanation for regularities and irregularities in the distribution of material culture phenomena, relying on the different concepts of ethnicity that emerged in history, ethnology/anthropology, and sociology.[23]

3) Though the political implications of archaeological research into ethnicities were recognized after the Second World War, the issue has re-surfaced in a new context concerning both postcolonial archaeology and modern ethnic conflicts in Europe. There has been wide discussion of the way that treatment of ethnicity in archaeology is largely dependent on actual social and political concepts of ethnicity

---

The Archaeology of Ethnicity, 3, 15–26, 63; Siân Jones and Paul Graves-Brown, "Introduction: Archaeology and Cultural Identity in Europe," in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology*, 8–9; Ucko, "Introduction: Archaeological Interpretation in a World Context," 17–18; Pavel M. Dolukhanov, "Archaeology in Russia and its Impact on Archaeological Theory," in *Theory in Archaeology. A World Perspective*, 325; Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs. History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 14–23; Mérai, *The True and Exact Dresses and Fashion,* 45–50. On the existence of different traditions, see Matthew H. Johnson, "Rethinking Historical Archaeology," in *Historical Archaeology. Back from the Edge*, 23–36.

[22] Historiographical attempts to evaluate the archaeology in Central and Eastern Europe of the past half century have emphasized the direct and indirect influence of Marxism: the emphasis on material culture as an "objective" category of evidence by historical materialism on the one hand, and on the other hand pertaining to chronological reconstruction and empirical documentation to avoid mandatorily applicable theories in the interpretation. Dolukhanov, "Archaeology in Russia and its Impact on Archaeological Theory"; Hodder, "Archaeological Theory in Contemporary European Societies," 4–11; József Laszlovszky and Csilla Siklódi, "Archaeological Theory in Hungary since 1960: Theories without Theoretical Archaeology," in *Archaeological Theory in Europe*, 272–298; László Bartosiewicz, Dóra Mérai, and Péter Csippán, "Dig up – Dig in: Practice and Theory in Hungarian Archaeology," in *Comparative Archaeologies. A Sociological View of the Science of the Past*, ed. Ludomir R. Lozny (New York: Springer, 2011), 273–338.

[23] See, e.g., Geoff Emberling, "Ethnicity in Complex Societies: Archaeological Perspectives," *Journal of Archaeological Research* 5, No. 4 (1997): 295–344, and examples referred to in Daniel Ziemann's study in the present volume especially in footnote 28.

and how the assumptions and concepts used in archaeological analysis have been, and continue to be, influenced by discourses of identity in the present.[24]

"Realistic views" in archaeology are ready to take on the idea that it is not possible to avoid ethnically inspired archaeology, so the task is to develop an acceptable practice. According to these views, archaeologists need to be aware of the political implications of their work, and they need to maintain standards of evidence by which to evaluate the archaeological record. Each case must be examined and judged by a minimal universal standard: one group's national past should not be constructed at the expense of another. This implies a belief that such universally valid standards are possible to set up, and ultimately create a need for a common international policy for archaeology.[25]

Recognition of the influence of contemporary politics and society on archaeology, however, does not mean that it is possible to remove archaeology from this context and eliminate its biases by creating certain standards, as those would also be the products of the same political and social contexts. According to "perspectivist views" – also labeled as "relativist" by critical voices – the solution is not to neglect but to embrace this fact, as "archaeological investigation and interpretation can add a new dimension to the world's understanding of itself," presenting a way of experiencing reality from a particular perspective.[26] They see no difference in the processes of understanding the nature of human endeavors in the past and present, as archaeological research stands in the same sort of relationship with its social-political-cultural context as the phenomena from the past that lie in its focus.[27] This conundrum provides an important warning about the contextual archaeology of ethnicities as well: one needs to be aware that questions posed to the contextual evidence are always determined by our own backgrounds, which, by circular argumentation, may lead to the creation of a past in the image of our present. It is essential to formulate the underlying theoretical

---

[24] Shennan, "Introduction," 30; Michael Rowlands, "The Politics of Identity in Archaeology," in *The Archaeology of Identities*, 59–71. On the recognition of political determination in archaeology in general and some possible reactions, see also Brian Durran, "Theory, Profession, and the Political Role of Archaeology," in *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity,* 66–75.

[25] Kohl and Fawcett, "Archaeology in the Service of the State;" Norman Yoffee and Andrew Sherratt, "Introduction: the Sources of Archaeological Theory," in *Archaeological Theory: Who Sets the Agenda?*, ed. Norman Yoffee and Andrew Sherratt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1–9.

[26] Ucko*,* "Introduction: Archaeological Interpretation in a World Context," 24.

[27] Shaun Hides, "The Genealogy of Material Culture and Cultural Identities," in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology*, 25–47.

and methodological assumptions of the research as well as aspects of emotional commitment, uncertainty, and change. Incorporation of these aspects into the expectations surrounding scholarly work is also important. Archaeologists take part in the dynamics of their own culture and society, similarly to past peoples, the subjects of their studies, and they also have their own multiple and changing identities influenced by and influencing their personal social, political, and cultural hinterland; this is how they play their particular role in scholarly and public discourse on the emergence and history of past ethnicities.[28]

---

[28] See e.g. Julian Thomas, "Where Are We Now? Archaeological Theory in the 1990s," in *Theory in Archaeology: A World Perspective*, 342; Idem, "Materiality and the Social," in *Global Archaeological Theory: Contextual Voices and Contemporary Thoughts*, ed. Pedro Paulo Funari, Andrés Zarankin, and Emily Stovel (New York: Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers, 2005), 11–18.

THE CUMANS IN MEDIEVAL HUNGARY AND THE QUESTION OF ETHNICITY

Kyra Lyublyanovics 📥

Introduction

Ethnogenesis is usually defined as a process during which a group of people becomes culturally, ethnically, and linguistically distinct from a wider social environment. In this sense, ethnogenesis is about becoming different, about achieving distance from the majority. Can one speak of ethnogenesis in the case of a newly migrated population that finds itself in a minority position, opposed to a differently organized state-level society, and which has to transform and re-structure itself in order to coexist with the "indigenous" inhabitants of its new home?

The Cumans, a steppe people of Eurasian origin who have been called nomads in the literature, arrived in the Hungarian Kingdom in the thirteenth century, fleeing from the Mongols. A fragment of a tribal alliance, consisting of different clans under the leadership of one khan, arrived in a loosely organized group. This migration was quick, spontaneous, and had almost nothing in common with the long-term migration of Germanic tribes at the end of the Roman era; in this case, it was a heterogeneous but rather discrete population unit that moved into an environment very different from the lands they came from. The Cumans were baptized soon after their arrival, which – at least in the eyes of contemporaries – was the first step in their integration. With their light cavalry they served as mercenaries, and bonds with the Hungarian aristocracy were created quickly. The Cumans, who had already encountered a number of different cultures and beliefs during their journey through the Eurasian steppe, were acquainted with Christianity as well as Islam through their relations with Byzantium. The political elite saw an opportunity in conversion, since baptism was a basic condition to rise to higher positions in the Hungarian aristocracy. The Cuman elite played a crucial role in Hungarian internal affairs for several decades. Integration, and living *Christiano more*, however, also required the abandonment of their previous nomadic lifestyle (which was a key element in terms of taxation and political control by the state). This transformation not only meant giving up the mobility of the household, but also the transformation of their economic structure, which had previously depended on regular, periodic movements of

the group. As there was increasing market demand for animal products from the fifteenth century onwards, Cumans who settled in the Great Plain could fill an economic niche. They replaced an agricultural population heavily decimated by the Mongol Invasion and in two hundred years turned the Great Plain into the most important area for animal production in the region, especially in terms of breeding cattle and sheep. It is clear that the group of people who defined themselves as Cuman within the Hungarian Kingdom in the later centuries was different from the *ad hoc* group of nomadic pastoralists who entered the Carpathian Basin in the thirteenth century. But does it make any sense to speak about the "ethnogenesis of the Hungarian Cumans"?

Considering the fact that a kind of Cuman identity – which is, of course, not identical and might not even be related to the original Eastern tradition and way of life practiced by the thirteenth-century Cumans – has been detectable throughout the centuries, even today in certain parts of the Hungarian Basin, speaking about a special ethnogenesis process might be justifiable. Even on Hungarian territory Cumans tried to maintain their mobility for a relatively long period of time; forced sedentarization fully succeeded only in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Sedentarization met such opposition that at the end of the thirteenth century some Cuman groups organized a revolt and left the country after their military defeat.

Cumans mainly inhabited the areas on the Great Hungarian Plain in the central part of the kingdom that had been badly decimated by the Mongols and suffered severe population loss. The presence of villages destroyed during the Mongol invasion partly determined the settlement patterns of the Cumans, who established winter camps, or even permanent settlements in these areas. Some groups only settled permanently in the sixteenth century; some later Cuman cemeteries had components from the thirteenth to early fourteenth century, thus attesting to a certain stability of the Cuman population. The outcome of the process of settlement, however, is clear; by the first quarter of the fifteenth century the administrative system of *sedes* ("székek," seats) was established and by the early modern period, Cumans lived in villages where the structure of the dwellings resembled those in Hungarian villages.

It is rather unlikely that the Cuman groups entering Hungary were homogeneous; they were probably diverse not only in an economic, but also in a cultural or linguistic sense and in terms of material culture. They must have shared some common characteristics of the steppe cultures, but these groups, coming from different clans, did not have a long history of coexistence and were only brought together by the need to escape the Mongols. Consequently,

there is no reason to think that they had a common identity in the sense of seeing themselves as a distinct entity comprised of people of the same culture and ancestry. However, when they entered the Hungarian Kingdom, the new social and economic environment they faced was so different from the one they were used to in their previous home on the steppe that the differences among the numerous Cuman clans might have appeared unimportant compared to the differences between them and the sedentary inhabitants of their new homeland. This simple fact (which resulted in a number of conflicts due to the clash between their need for land for pasture and the sedentary population's need for land for cultivation) must have worked as an organizing force. It is tempting to say that the formation of the new Cuman institutions (the *sedes* system) and the transformation of Cuman society and economy was not only a process of integration but also a rather special and unusual form of ethnogenesis, in which a group emerged whose culture, customs, and way of life were similar to those of the other inhabitants of the kingdom, but who still retained a sense of Cuman identity which has survived even today.

This theory is appealing – but was it really so? Can one consider the early modern and modern "Cuman consciousness" (which is traceable today in the form of civil organizations, festivals, and the works of many hobby historians) as a continuation of their medieval distinctiveness, and as an important factor in the ethnogenesis of the "Hungarian Cumans"? The question is rather complex. The main problem is that there are no documentary sources about how medieval Cumans perceived themselves; there are no sources written by Cumans or even dictated by their interests. The only document that provides something of an insight into their internal matters is the so-called Codex Cumanicus, a linguistic aid prepared for Franciscan missionaries who evangelized the nomadic Cumans in the thirteenth century.[1] In fact, almost all the documents testify to the viewpoint of Christian authors, in whose eyes the Cumans were pagan strangers, and who did not have the necessary knowledge to properly describe and interpret the nomadic or semi-nomadic society and economy (Master Roger, for instance, misinterprets the movement of the nomads for aimless roaming in the plain, causing damage to the crops and pastures[2]), not to mention the political agenda they had in mind

---

[1] Peter B. Golden, "Codex Cumanicus," in *Central Asian Monuments*, ed. Hasan B. Paksoy (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1992); the book is available online: http://eurasia-research.com/erc/002cam.htm (last accessed 2 May, 2011).

[2] Master Roger, *Carmen miserabile,* chapter 2: *Cum autem rex Cumanorum cum suis nobilibus et rusticis cepit Hungariam peragrare, quia iumentorum habebant armenta infinita, in pascuis, segetibus, ortis, virgultis, vineis et aliis Hungaros graviter offendebant.* Anonymus and Master Roger: Anonymi

while writing. Consequently, there is no chance to say anything about Cuman identity and Cumans as an ethnic group in the sense of the word as Fredrik Barth[3] used it, only about how "being Cuman" was perceived and interpreted by contemporary outsiders. Even though a self-definition of Cumans in contrast to the sedentary would provide invaluable information about the process of their social transformation, it is better to leave this question aside, as it is purely speculative. Archaeological artifacts, however, when interpreted in their contexts, can provide a valuable, although completely different, set of data: grave goods, settlement patterns, faunal remains and items from the daily life of the Cuman population offer insight into the internal structures of Cuman communities and their way of life.

The Question of Ethnic Markers – Who was 'Cuman'?

The problem of ethnic identity as it was perceived, experienced, and observed in the past, or whether it existed at all in the sense we think of it today, has been the focus of ardent discussions in the historiographic literature. If one asks the question whether it is possible to speak about medieval Cumans in strictly ethnic terms, the answer is definitely no. The relation between the Cumans as an ethnic group and the name "Cuman" as it is used in the sources is not always clear, as the two do not necessarily coincide. The name "Cuman" referred to a group of people defined by outsiders; it is impossible to say whether they perceived themselves as a separate ethnic unit or rather as a loose group brought together by legal terms and the need to adapt to an entirely new environment. One can only accept the name "Cuman" as a label for a more-or-less diverse group of people who must have shared a number of steppe traditions and customs. The chiefdom-level political formations on the steppe usually consisted of various kinds of groups that preserved their own internal structures, legal systems, languages and religious beliefs.[4] From this point of view, Cumans were used to co-habiting

---

Bele regis notarii, *Gesta Hungarorum* – Anonymus, Notary of King Béla, *The Deeds of the Hungarians,* edited, translated and annotated by Martin Rady and László Veszprémy. Magistri Rogerii, *Epistola in miserabile carmen super destructione regni Hungarie per tartaros facta –* Master Roger's *Epistle to the Sorrowful Lament upon the Destruction of the Kingdom of Hungary by the Tatars*, translated and annotated by János M. Bak and Martin Rady (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 2010), 140.

[3] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*, ed. F. Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 10–11.

[4] Nóra Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom. Jews, Muslims and Pagans in Medieval Hungary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 96–97.

with populations of different cultural backgrounds without being assimilated. However, the loose military organizations of the steppe differed greatly from those of the feudal state, and in their Hungarian asylum Cumans constituted a small minority and not equal partners.

The size of the Cuman population is a crucial question, as the size of a minority and their relative ratio to the overall population impacts the types of interaction and the intensity of possible influences. According to modern estimations, the arriving Cumans constituted a small minority, up to 7% to 8%, of the kingdom's population.[5] However, this estimate is difficult, as the only surviving figure one finds in Master Roger's account speaks of about 40,000 *familiae*,[6] and it is uncertain whether the word is used as a term for a family including family members, or as a small community including servants. As this is the only piece of data in written documents on this matter it is difficult to say anything for sure, especially keeping in mind that medieval documents rarely provide precise numbers. András Pálóczi-Horváth has discarded this population number, and calculated the number of Cuman settlers on the basis of the size of their lands. He ended up with a number of 70–80,000 persons moving into the kingdom (of whom about 30% died or emigrated due to the revolt and war in the second half of the thirteenth century).[7] Nevertheless, this is nothing more than an educated guess, and the ratio of Cumans to others is hard to estimate as there are no reliable data for the overall population of thirteenth-century Hungary.

The sources hardly mention any obvious ethnic markers that differentiated the Cumans from the native inhabitants of the kingdom. King Ladislas IV, while he agreed to regulate the Cuman legal status at the request of the papal legate, asked the legate's permission to allow the Cumans to keep their traditional hairstyle.[8] Except for this, the only distinction mentioned in the available documents concerns the nomadic way of life, living in tents, killing Christians, and not respecting the rules of the feudal state. These, however, are not related to any kind of ethnic marker but to behavioral patterns which probably would have been shared by all kinds of nomadic groups in such a situation.

---

[5] Nóra Berend, "Cuman Integration in Medieval Hungary," in *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, ed. A. Khazanov and A. Wink (Richmonds, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2001), 105.

[6] Master Roger, *Carmen miserabile,* chapter 2: *preter ipsorum familias circa quadraginta milia dicebantur* (Anonymus and Master Roger, 140–141).

[7] András Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians. Steppe Peoples in Medieval Hungary* (Budapest: Hereditas, 1989), 52–53.

[8] István Gyárfás, *A jász-kunok története* [History of the Cumans and Iasians] (Kecskemét, 1873), vol. 2, 339; Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom,* 258.

Costume is an important indicator of ethnicity and social status. Cuman attire has been reconstructed on the basis of archaeological finds as well as pictorial representations. The *kamennye baby* statues, erected in the Cuman areas of today's Russia, portray both men and women, and represent details of traditional Cuman clothing. A comparison between these representations and archaeological finds can help reconstruct the changes Cuman attire underwent after their arrival in Hungary. During the thirteenth and early fourteenth century, Cumans combined the traditional attire with a limited number of new elements. Manuscript illuminations, such as those in the *Illuminated Chronicle*,[9] show Cuman men wearing long caftans fastened by belts; this is also confirmed by archaeological finds. Cuman women also seem to have retained their traditional costumes in this early period.[10] As this type of clothing differed from that of the local population, who usually wore long tight trousers and tunics, this must have been one of the obvious ethnic markers that distinguished the Cumans in the early phase of their integration process. During the fourteenth century these differences disappeared and Cumans were assimilated into the local population in their attire and ornaments.[11]

The way of wearing their hair, as mentioned above, also differed from the Hungarian custom. Cuman men had no beard, wore a narrow moustache, shaved the tops of their heads and braided their hair into one or three plaits or a pigtail, as was usual among a number of steppe peoples; such a hairstyle can also be seen on funerary statues erected by steppe Cumans.[12] It seems that the attire, especially the hairstyle, was a significant ethnic marker. King Ladislas IV himself, who had strong Cuman family ties and was severely criticized by the church for not following proper Christian customs, promised to give up Cuman clothing and the hairstyle as a symbol of returning to Christ.[13] It was only in the mid-fourteenth century that Hungarian-type jewelry and Gothic-style items appear in

---

[9] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 51. A scanned version of the Illuminated Chronicle (*Chronicon Pictum*) is available online: http://www.kepeskronika.net/en.htm (last accessed 28 May, 2011).

[10] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 255–256; András Pálóczi-Horváth, *Hagyományok, kapcsolatok és hatások a kunok régészeti emlékanyagában* [Traditions, Connections and Influences in Cuman Material Culture] (Karcag: Önkormányzat, 1994), 145–148.

[11] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 258.

[12] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Hagyományok, kapcsolatok és hatások,* 80, 177; Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 87.

[13] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 258.

Cuman graves in larger quantities; finds in fifteenth-century graves testify that by that time their hairstyle had been changed to fit in with fashions in Hungary.[14]

The Cuman language is largely unknown; only fragments are preserved in the *Codex Cumanicus*. This text was a linguistic manual designed for Franciscan and Dominican missionaries who carried out missions among the Cumans and Kipchaks of the Eurasian steppe in the thirteenth century. This is the only long and coherent source for the Cuman language as spoken in medieval Eurasia, preserved only in one (probably not the original) manuscript. The Cuman of the Codex Cumanicus, along with its Persian excerpts, represents some kind of *lingua franca* which was understood throughout Central Asia. This language, however, is not perfectly reflected in the manuscript, as it was compiled by non-Turkic-speakers (supposedly Italians and Germans) with varying levels of competence in the language.[15] Therefore, the possibilities of using the texts for reconstructing the Cuman language are limited. The Cuman spoken in medieval Hungary is completely unknown, since the only text preserved is the Lord's Prayer, which existed in almost one hundred different versions and was only written down in an apparently seemingly distorted form in the eighteenth century when the language itself was already dead.[16]

The Cuman law of 1279 speaks about Cumans in general, without specifying who is to be identified as Cuman, which suggests that the difference between the newcomers and the sedentary population was big enough to make the identification of Cuman elements easy. Even though there might have been typical anthropogenic features that made them look different, the sources are silent on this matter. The analysis of ancient DNA (aDNA) from the bones of such a group of early settlers is the only reliable means for studying the genetic affinities and relationships of the Cumans in Hungary. One such study was carried out at Szeged University by Erika Bogácsi-Szabó et al., who compared skeletons from early Cuman burials from the site of Csengele (Great Hungarian Plain) with a Hungarian sample taken from various rural sites throughout the country.[17] This study produced intriguing results despite its methodological limits.[18] It seems

---

[14] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 95.

[15] Golden, "Codex Cumanicus."

[16] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 109.

[17] Erika Bogácsi-Szabó, et al. ,"Mitochondrial DNA of Ancient Cumanians: Culturally Asian Steppe Nomadic Immigrants with Substantially More Western Eurasian Mitochondrial DNA Lineages," *Human Biology* 77, No. 5 (2005): 639–662.

[18] The examination involved only 15 skeletons from one Cuman site and 75 bone samples from Hungarian settlements. It is problematic to draw general conclusions on the basis of the outcomes derived from one site, especially keeping in mind that the Cuman minority

that the genetic distance between these two groups of people was not as large as one might expect. In fact, the results showed that the Cumans had already absorbed a large admixture of maternal genes from more westerly populations before they arrived in Hungary. Even though it might well be that this result is only characteristic for the particular clan that settled at Csengele, it is spectacular evidence (although still imperfect) that anthropological groups and cultural groups do not necessarily coincide. It seems that the Cumans still possessed elements of a Central Asian steppe culture, but at the same time they were biologically diverse; this is not so surprising if one considers the political formations on the steppe, where people of different origins were often brought together in a loose alliance or military organization. These communities were not closed, and intermarriage with other groups was common. This fact further complicates the question of ethnicity and ethnic distinctions.

Ethnic markers which are not seen immediately but are detectable in the archaeological record and must have been clearly visible in the Middle Ages, speak for a subtle but unmistakable distinctiveness of the Cuman communities. Animal remains are interesting for various reasons: not only do they reveal information on the deeper levels of everyday life (meat consumption patterns and cooking customs), but they help to reconstruct the process of transforming the most important economic occupation of the Cumans, animal husbandry, into a system that filled a niche in the agriculture of the late medieval kingdom. Faunal remains from several archaeological sites connected to the Cuman territory (Karcag-Orgondaszentmiklós, Kiskunhalas-MOL5, Karcag-Asszonyszállás, Kiskunfél-egyháza-Templomdomb, Szentkirály, Tiszagyenda-Morotva part) have been analyzed within the framework of the ongoing PhD research of the author. A clear distinctive factor for all the sites analyzed so far is the relatively high frequencies of horse and caprines (sheep and goat), and the presence of pieces of butchered horse bone, which speaks for the consumption of horsemeat. The consumption of horsemeat was, in all probability, a real steppe heritage which might have been retained for different reasons, either as a result of a more expressed nomadic identity or the weaker influence of the local church (which might have forbidden the consumption of horsemeat). The frequencies of animals kept, however, do not fully resemble steppe traditions; in some cases, swine were kept in relatively high numbers, which must have been a new element. Swine is usually considered a typical "backyard animal" that is impossible to keep and graze in large herds simply due to their natural behavior (swine are not so easy to herd), so their

---

consisted of diverse tribal fragments and people living at one site probably belonged to the same clan. Therefore, such a sample cannot be truly representative.

presence is not expected in abundance if nomadic gastronomy patterns were still being followed. Even though Cumans were definitely familiar with pigs, their use and trade (a few expressions connected to swine are listed in the Cuman wordlist of the Codex Cumanicus), the everyday practice of keeping swine was probably adopted from the locals when the Cumans arrived and settled.

In terms of food processing, again some unusual distinctive patterns can be detected. There are some cutmarks made by sharp axes on bones, typically on spots where a knife is not enough to cut up the carcass, but these tools were only used occasionally. Most of the long bones are broken spirally, and there are smaller but still visible cutmarks around (below or above) the broken surface; this means that the bones were hit several times until they broke spirally. In many cases, there are no cutmarks, but only a characteristic spiral break. This method does not really differ from the prehistoric practice of breaking up bones with a heavy object and is absolutely not typical for late medieval Hungarian settlements. This might also indicate that these smaller Cuman sites were not connected to a centralized market for meat but the inhabitants mostly relied on traditional household slaughter. The only exception so far is sixteenth-century Szentkirály, a fairly large market town, whose profile based on the faunal remains is not far from other Hungarian villages in terms of both the frequencies of animals kept and the food processing practices.[19] This exception is a warning that besides regional differences between Cuman communities, the presence or absence of market centers and large-scale merchants must have also been a factor of utmost importance in terms of the integration process and the attachment to more traditional lifeways. People at the smaller sites seem to have preferred cultural values characteristic of nomads on the level of household activities such as butchering, cooking, and meat preferences.[20] This fact is interesting since it is not likely that Cumans who were linked to the community only by legal or territorial ties would have taken up the customs of their pagan ancestors, especially when they went against church directives more or less openly, and the original meaning behind them must have faded by the fifteenth and sixteenth century.

---

[19] Éva Ágnes Nyerges, "Ethnic Traditions in Meat Consumption and Herding at a Sixteenth-Century Cuman Settlement in the Great Hungarian Plain," in *Behaviour Behind Bones*, ed. Sharyn Jones and Jones O'Day (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2005), 262–270; Éva Ágnes Nyerges and László Bartosiewicz, "Szentkirály állattartása a középkori régészeti állattani adatok tükrében" [Animal husbandry in Szentkirály in the light of medieval archaeozoological data], *Studia Caroliensia* 2006 (3–4): 331–352.

[20] It has been observed in faunal assemblages analyzed by myself (especially Karcag-Orgondaszentmiklós and Karcag-Asszonyszállás, both as yet unpublished).

A key factor in the way their contemporaries perceived the Cumans was their legal status, due to which the name "Cuman" became a legal term regardless of ethnic background. This legal regulation was not stable but rather consisted of a web of changing details. When they first arrived, Cumans came under royal protection and direct royal jurisdiction as "guests" and were exempt from the jurisdiction of Hungarian landed nobility unless they voluntarily settled on their lands and engaged themselves as servants.[21] After the Mongol invasion and their second invitation to the country, Cumans were again declared people under royal protection. The most detailed set of regulations were issued in 1279 and are known as "the Cuman laws."[22] The Cumans certainly retained a relatively large degree of internal autonomy as they were free from jurisdiction of the nobility and thus could decide on their own internal matters in accordance with their own pre-existing customs. It is striking that they reaffirmed their relation to the Hungarian king through acts of their own legal concepts. An often-cited example is the wedding ceremony of King Stephan V and Elisabeth, the daughter of a Cuman chieftain, described by Jean de Joinville:[23] during the ceremony, ten Cuman lords took an oath to serve the Hungarian king by cutting a dog into pieces. The Cumans probably saw this new alliance as similar to those they had had on the steppe, that is, as a loose bond that meant military assistance and a certain form of political unity on higher social levels, but not the assimilation of commoners into an alien cultural unit. At the same time, however, Cuman social structure was unavoidably disintegrating and reorganizing and there were no remaining contacts with outside forces or communities to counterbalance this process. The direction of influences was evidently stronger from the sedentary society towards the Cumans than the other way round.

One of the most significant turns in the history of Cumans in Hungary was the creation of their territorial organizations, the so-called *sedes* or *székek* system. This happened only in the fifteenth century, but signified an important shift in the perception of "being Cuman." In accordance with the slow transformation of Cuman society, the leaders of the newly established units were no longer

---

[21] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 88; Rogerius*, Carmen miserabile*, chapter 3.

[22] It was accepted in the secondary literature for a long time that there were two Cuman laws, of which the first one was only a draft, and the second, which regulated the boundaries of the Cumans' landed properties in more detail, was the final version. Nóra Berend has pointed out that the second version is a forgery, and its contents cannot be accepted as revealing thirteenth-century conditions, Ibid., 89–93.

[23] Jean Sire de Joinville, *Histoire de Saint Louis*, ed. Natalis de Wailly (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1874), 270–272.

chieftains but "captains." These new territorial units had their own taxation and judicial systems. This re-organization of the community signified the development of a new hierarchy; while earlier Cuman clanleaders owed their positions to their family relations or their ownership of landed estates, in the newly emerging territorial system the leaders were officials of the state.[24] Thus, the legal status was transformed into territorial privileges and during the fifteenth and sixteenth century the notion of being a Cuman must also have slowly transformed into a territory-based concept. This is already far from any kind of ethnic or culture-based self-definition; these groups were not autochtonous kinship communities but politically defined units.

Nóra Berend recognized that when Christian authors used the designation *Cumani* in parallel structures it was contrasted with a large variety of groups: *Hungari, Christiani, nobiles,* or *Tartari*. This means that the word *Cumani* was not used in an ethnic context, but was seen as an equivalent for a number of other categories, religious, and status groups.[25] Cumans were not categorized as a cultural or ethnic group and there was no special vocabulary to describe their religious standing, social position or political organization: the term *Cumani* covered all these. In the case of individual Cumans, when the designation *Cumanus* was added to their proper names it was used not as a cultural or ethnic term but as a sign of legal status; the texts where such designations appear are usually documents of trade, donation, and exchange. The use of these designations awakes some pessimism, as it shows that the medieval concept of a people and their ethnicity was quite different from the one historians try to trace.

There were clear *cultural* differences, but they were intertwined with social, economic, and regional factors and cannot really serve as a basis for ethnic distinctions. The ethnic diversity of the Hungarian kingdom itself raises serious problems. The society that embraced the Cuman newcomers was not homogeneous; Germans, Slavs, and various peoples from the Balkans were living in the kingdom in large numbers and ethnic backgrounds are not always possible to see in a settlement's material culture. Hungary was rather a political unit, and the term "Hungarian" was not necessarily connected to ethnic origins, language or customs. Factors in the local environment such as markets, power centers,

---

[24] György Györffy, *"A magyarországi kun társadalom a XIII-XIV. században: A kunok feudalizálódása"* [The society of the Hungarian Cumans in the 13th–14th century: The feudalization of Cumans], in *A magyarság keleti elemei* [The Eastern elements of the Hungarian people], ed. György Györffy (Budapest: Gondolat, 1990), 289–90; Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 264.

[25] Ibid. 193–195.

transportation possibilities, rivers, forests, the presence or absence of extensive grazing fields or previously built infrastructure probably played major roles in the ways and means by which the various groups of Cuman commoners behaved and were integrated; therefore, it is the local nexus which must be seen as a key factor instead of assimilation into an imagined, broader community of "Hungarians."

Is it possible to distinguish between ethnic, legal, cultural, and linguistic communities of the past if no distinction was made by contemporaries along these lines? It seems that, despite detectable cultural differences, the perception of who was Cuman was rather fluid and identity was constructed on various grounds. Despite all these uncertainties, there is no evidence for debates whether a person was Cuman or not; for contemporaries, the means of distinction were probably obvious. A historian, however, in order to say anything about Cuman ethnic and cultural realities, has to face a virtually non-existent self-definition and an unclear, fluid definition of outsiders.

Integration and Distinctiveness – Continuity and Discontinuity

Social, cultural, and economic integration do not necessarily happen at the same time or at the same rate.[26] There are modern examples testifying that immigrant communities retain a kind of continuity in terms of distinct social patterns even after the disappearance of their most unique cultural characteristics.[27] While Cuman economic integration may have been completed when they replaced the lost agricultural population on the Great Hungarian Plain and met the requirements of large-scale animal production, their socio-cultural integration seems to have been a slow process.

Non-Christian rituals, presumably indicating reinforcement of social ties and group identity, are sometimes perceptible in the archaeological record, especially in connection to burials and the ritualized treatment of animals. The written sources do not provide a coherent picture of the Cumans' world of beliefs. They are called pagans, a term that does not specify religious practices; written sources mention the worship of idols, which might be identified as the worship of ancestors or as the Cuman custom of erecting statues (*kamennye baby*) on burial mounds or simply as a stereotypical mental image Christian authors

---

[26] Clifford Geertz, "Rituals and Social Change: A Javanese Example," *American Anthropologist*, NS 59 (1957): 32–54.

[27] Mary C. Sengstock, "Differential Rates of Assimilation in an Ethnic Group: In Ritual, Social Interaction, and Normative Culture," *International Migration Review* 3, No. 2 (1969): 18–31.

had of non-Christians in general. It seems that on the surface Cumans easily incorporated new religious practices, as demonstrated by the wedding ceremony of Stephan V and Elisabeth, where Christian as well as pagan ritual elements were present.[28] Adoption of baptism did not mean that traditional rituals were abandoned. Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century strata of commoners' cemeteries display a mixture of the material remains of Cuman and Christian rituals, and the survival of non-Christian rites is evident throughout the fourteenth century in the archaeological record.[29] William of Rubruk also noted the preservation of pagan burial practices in the case of baptized Cumans still living on the steppe.[30] In most cases, objects, food or animals were buried with the dead; the graves were oriented towards the east and contained the remains of horses or dogs, harnesses, amulets, eggs, mirrors or weapons. In one case, the head of the deceased rested on a dog; some graves show signs of fire, perhaps linked to purification rituals; knives are also often found in Cuman mass cemeteries.[31] The spectacular burials of Cuman leaders (with a full panoply of material objects and a horse) that were rare but present until the second half of the fourteenth century also meant a way of communicating social status. The last traces of pagan customs disappeared from Cuman graves only in the sixteenth century.[32] It is important to keep in mind that Christianization was not uniform, and it did not happen at the same pace for all Cuman groups. Some Cumans moving into depopulated Hungarian villages tended to bury their dead beside the church as Christians would usually do.[33] While it is possible that they were acting under ecclesiastical orders and did not voluntarily follow Christian rules, they might also have used these pre-existing graveyards because they wanted to bury their dead in a proper Christian way.[34] In most cases, there are a number of different possible interpretations.

---

[28] Berend, "Cuman Integration," 108.

[29] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 105.

[30] William of Rubruk, *Itinerarium Willelmi de Rubruc*, ed. Anastasius von den Wyngaert, in *Sinica Franciscana*, vol. 1 (Querracchi: Collegio San Bonaventura, 1929), 187.

[31] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom,* 250.

[32] László Selmeczi, "A magyarországi kunok temetkezése a XIII–XVI. században" [Burial customs of Cumans living in Hungary in the thirteenth-sixteenth centuries], in L. Selmeczi, *Régészeti-néprajzi tanulmányiok a jászokról és a kunokról* [Archaeological and ethnographic studies on Cumans and Iasians] (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem Néprajzi Tanszék, 1992), 31–45.

[33] László Selmeczi, "A kunok nomadizmusának kérdéséhez" [On the problem of Cuman nomadism], *A Herman Ottó Múzeum Évkönyve* 25–26 (1988): 177–188, 182.

[34] Pálóczi-Horváth, *Pechenegs, Cumans, Iasians*, 105–106.

Can these pagan elements be interpreted as signs of a distinctive, more-or-less ethnic-based identity? Wenskus, Wolfram or their disciples[35] would certainly argue that these rites of passage constituted a part of the Cuman *Traditionskern* and must be taken as proof for a still-existing Cuman cultural-ethnic unity. The question is more complex, however, as practices can be kept long after they have lost their meaning. Pagan rituals (or, more precisely, archaeological phenomena that we now interpret as rituals) are sometimes similarly prevalent in Hungarian settlement materials. Unorthodox religious practices seem to have existed among the kingdom's population in a relatively high number; thus, juxtaposing the Cuman and Hungarian material is somewhat problematic. Analogies and distinctions can be demonstrated, but one cannot expect to be able to find a firm explanation for these similarities and differences. Besides, different rituals of different peoples can result in similar archaeological patterns, and connecting them to ethnic or even cultural units is often challenging. Such phenomena are always embedded in a complex web of social and cultural contexts, such as communicating status, expressing individual and family values, or following patterns of fashion; it would be superficial to take this kind of "everyday paganism" as clear evidence for the continuity of ancient Cuman traditions.

Continuity is a question that also concerns Cuman economic activities. The extensive pastoralism characteristic for the Great Hungarian Plain and especially the "Kunság" (Cumania) area from the fifteenth century onwards has often been viewed as a direct continuation of the nomadic pastoralism that Cumans were thought to have practiced before their arrival in Hungary, and as such, was perceived as a key element in their ancient heritage and identity. However, this theory does not hold. There was a rather long period when Cumans simply did not have the necessary free space and grazing areas to be able to maintain extensive pastoralism because the areas where they were settled were interspersed with the estates of other landowners. Gábor Hatházi has calculated that the territory that any Cuman group consisting of several extended families had at their disposal, would have been 40–50 km² at the maximum, which was certainly not enough to support a truly nomadic group and extensive pastoralism.[36] The

---

[35] Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen 'Gentes'* (Cologne-Graz: Böhlau, 1961), passim; Herwig Wolfram, *Die Germanen* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 3rd revised edition, 1997), 11–15.

[36] G. Hatházi, "Megjegyzések a kun településhálózat megszilárdulásának kérdéséhez" [Remarks concerning the establishment of a fixed Cuman settlement], in *Internationales Kulturhistorisches Symposion Mogersdorf 1994,* Vol. 25 (Eisenstadt: Amt der Burgenländischen Landesregierung, 1996), 27–33.

agricultural specialization in extensive animal keeping, characteristic for Cumania in the later Middle Ages, was made possible by a fifteenth- and sixteenth-century settlement-concentration process, during which a number of small settlements were abandoned and depopulated as their inhabitants moved to larger market centers. This meant that grazing areas became available in abundance, and extensive monocultural animal husbandry could flourish. This, however, even though it showed some resemblance to nomadic pastoralist practices, was a considerably different, market-oriented, "industrial" branch of agriculture, the desirable outcome of which differed from that of nomadic animal keeping. Nomads usually maintain diverse, multi-resourced, locally refined food-producing systems which function in a network of different economic structures; this has nothing to do with monocultural animal keeping. It is, thus, false to suppose any kind of direct connection between the Cuman steppe traditions and their later economic specialization, even though it is possible that there were elements in their cultural memory that helped this specialization because pastoralism was interpreted as part of their Cuman heritage.[37]

There is a striking contrast between the culturally non-homogeneous group of medieval Cumans and the way the modern "ethnic" identity of Cumans has been expressed, as the latter operates with a fixed content of ethnicity and culture. The distinctive "Cuman consciousness" that can still be seen in villages of the Great Hungarian Plain has often been interpreted as a surviving remnant of medieval ethnic or cultural identity. This interpretation, however, must be false. As Nóra Berend argues, this phenomenon is rather rooted in the early modern struggles to maintain the special legal status of Cuman territories. The so-called second Cuman law, which reinforced the territorial privileges of the Cumans, is actually an eighteenth-century forgery which had no medieval original.[38] She explains the forgery by the need for documentation of the special Cuman rights in the legal battle between the Cuman community and the state. When the

---

[37] An aspect of this false view might have been the misinterpretation of the value of livestock in an agricultural-based economy as the esteem nomads lay on their herds. The definition of pastoralism as a "livestock-centered" way of life was proposed by Robertshaw and Collett already in the 1980s; they identified peoples as pastoral in terms of their cultural values rather than their economic subsistence: P. T. Robertshaw and D. P. Collett, "The Identification of Pastoral Peoples in the Archaeological Record: An Example from East Africa," *World Archaeology* 15, No. 1 (1983): 73. From this point of view, the later specialization of the Cuman areas in animal keeping might have resulted in value patterns similar to those of nomadic peoples, and thus these were easy to directly – and falsely – connect to an imagined nomadic heritage.

[38] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 90.

kingdom became part of the Habsburg Empire, the emperor disregarded previous privileges, and in 1702 Leopold I sold the whole Ias-Cuman territory, a unit that more-or-less corresponded to the area where Cumans were settled in the Middle Ages. The inhabitants of this district fought for redemption and the restoration of their rights, collected documents to prove their rights to their past privileges, and this was the time when manuscripts of the "second Cuman law" started to surface. Interestingly, the first versions of the Cuman Lord's Prayer also arose in the 1740s (it was taught in schools in Cumania until the mid-twentieth century, and became a cornerstone of Cuman identity).[39] This was the first occasion when the concept of continuity with the Cumans of the thirteenth century must have been "officially" invented on a political basis, even though the eighteenth-century Cuman community fighting for redemption was already far from the original Cuman group that entered the kingdom fleeing from the Mongols.

In the nineteenth century, a new wave of identity-building started, which is, in fact, still in motion. A number of enthusiastic hobby folklorists collected Cuman "folklore" and even invented "ancient Cuman dances;" the notion of the "typical Cuman characteristics," such as pride, stubbornness, an ardent love of freedom and independence was created. This image, however, does not work as a separating force that would distance the Cuman population from the rest of the Hungarians, but rather as positive reinforcement. The image of the valiant Cuman ancestors was also influenced by the image of the nomadic Hungarian heritage, cherished and emphasized by nineteenth-century historians. Cumans thus became "the best Hungarians," those who were able to preserve the steppe traditions and customs in spite of the Ottoman occupation and the German dominance, who preserved a kind of noble purity (which, according to the nineteenth-century view, was common to the ancient Cumans and ancient Hungarians). This identity, however, is not a surviving or revived tradition, but rather a newly invented notion of community presented as an unbroken (and therefore valuable) continuum.

Conclusions

It is easy to express some pessimism in trying to describe past identities, ethnic formations, and ethnogenetic processes. Nevertheless, even though most of the questions cannot be answered simply due to the lack of proper sources, an educated guess can be made as to how the identity of the Cuman minority changed through the centuries and how the self-awareness of "Hungarian Cumans" emerged. The Cumans who arrived in Hungary in the thirteenth century probably lacked

---

[39] Ibid., 265.

a common identity. This only formed later as they faced a new socio-cultural environment and discovered that the differences among their tribal fragments were considerably smaller than the discrepancy between them and the sedentary population. The discovery of common cultural patterns and interests resulted in a spontaneous organization and led to the Cuman wars of the second half of the thirteenth century. After that the conflicts were settled; the Cumans who stayed in the Hungarian Kingdom had to undergo a transformation process and integrate into feudal society. This was mainly achieved by economic means, as they were able to fill an agricultural niche created by heavy population loss on the Great Plain and the increasing market demand for animal products. The territory where this economic activity was practiced largely overlapped with the area inhabited by the population enjoying the legal distinction of being Cuman, and after the fifteenth-century creation of the *sedes* system the notion of "Cumanness" was connected to territorial units with special privileges. Since being Cuman was rather a legal, and later a territorial concept than an ethnic category, and – except for the first two generations – there were probably only subtle ethnic markers which differentiated them from the rest of the population of the kingdom, their identity might have been expressed through cherishing their legal status rather than through other cultural means. This situation changed only in the eighteenth century, when they engaged in a legal battle with the state over their rights and status, which coincided with the appearance of nationalism and the romantic view of an imagined glorious past. During this short period a new type of "Cuman consciousness" was created, which was partly rooted in the misinterpretation of the agricultural specialization characteristic of the Great Plain. Thus, the community that shared the practice of market-oriented extensive animal keeping and a distinctive legal status was perceived as a group with common ancestry. This new national/ethnic consciousness, even though it used the elements of an imagined, noble common past, was by no means rooted in a medieval self-definition. Consequently, the "ethnogenesis" of the Hungarian Cumans – if one can speak about such a process – has clearly been a development of the early modern and modern periods and not of the Middle Ages.

WARLIKE MASCULINITY AND THE IMAGE OF ROMAN AND EARLY MEDIEVAL WARRIORS FROM *UNITÀ D'ITALIA* TO FASCISM[1]

Irene Barbiera

Introduction: Warrior: The Ideal Masculinity

The image of warriors in the past has been often used to create heroes and reveals a type of masculinity that appears particularly during periods of war. American twentieth-century recruiting slogans like: "The Marine Corps Builds Men" and "Join the army and feel like a man" are examples of this attitude. Images of warriors have been employed, quite universally, to personify "honor, loyalty, duty, obedience, endurance, strength, sexual potency, courage, and camaraderie" and these attributes were also synonyms for manliness.[2]

As Mosse pointed out, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the emergence of a new "myth of war experience", which meant the re-emergence of warrior values and praise of warrior heroes.[3] These images were particularly important in this phase because, unlike previous centuries when soldiers were mercenaries with little interest in the causes they fought for, from this time on wars were fought by citizen armies, initially composed of large numbers of volunteers who were committed to the cause of the war and attached to their *patria*.[4] In this context, the glorification of war and the celebration of warriors became particularly significant to justify human sacrifices. Moreover, masculinity became a political instrument and warrior virility the symbol of the nation: male

---

[1] This essay, which is the result of a research project carried out within the framework of the focus group "archaeology and imagination" held at the Collegium Budapest and coordinated by Éva Kocziszky and Gábor Klaniczay, has been published in German in the volume: *Archäologie und Einbildungskraft. Relikte der Antike in der Moderne*, ed. E. Kocziszky (Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 2010), 103–123.

[2] Sanimir Resić, "From Gilgamesh to Terminator: The Warrior as Masculine Ideal. Historical and Contemporary Perspectives," in *Warfare and Society. Archaeological and Social Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. T. Otto, H. Thrane and H. Vandkilde (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 423–431.

[3] George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers. Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[4] Licia Ryall, "Eroi maschili, virilità e forme della guerra," in *Storia d'Italia*, *Il Risorgimento*, ed. Alberto Mario Banti and Paul Ginsborg (Turin: Einaudi, 2007), 253–288.

citizens sacrificed themselves for their nations. The image of military masculinity was further strengthened during the First and, in particular, during the Second World War, when the real man was indissolubly linked to war. In fact, for the fascists "there was no difference between a real man and a warrior".[5]

The archaeological interpretations of warrior graves of the past, developed already during the first part of the nineteenth century,[6] can be better understood in this context. From this time onwards, archaeological discoveries of the past in general, and of warrior graves in particular, became more common and their interpretations most often had functional links to the present. Weapon burials and the image of ancient warriors which they generated were perceived as tangible proofs of glorious warlike pasts. However, graves could also be employed to create heroes and anti-heroes reflecting contemporary ideology and propaganda. The Italian example which I am going to consider in this study is a case in point. Here, different and contrasting attitudes were developed towards Roman and early medieval remains based on different political and historical contexts. Roman warriors became the model and the guides for the fascist soldiers fighting in the colonies and during the Second World War. In contrast to this national model, the image of the barbarian warriors was twofold. They could be presented as the anti-heroes of the nation, those who disrupted the flourishing empire. However, they could also be presented as local heroes in a regional and circumscribed context. All these contrasting myths, whether connected to barbarian migrating warriors or to "indigenous" Romans, embodied the model of a warrior as the concept of masculinity.

The Local Hero: the Warrior Gisulfo in Cividale del Friuli

On 27 May 1874, close to the evening, a marble sarcophagus was found during some restoration work in one of the main squares of Cividale del Friuli, under the direction of the town major.[7] The mayor, acting as a directing archeologist, decided to transform the opening of the sarcophagus into a public happening, for which he invited the local magistrate and the provisional administrator. Thus, on

---

[5] Resic, "From Gilgamesh to terminator", 425.
[6] See, for example, the import find from the Hungarian Conquest period grave from Benepuszta.
[7] This story has been reconstructed in Irene Barbiera, "'E ai di remoti grande pur egli il Forogiulio appare.' Longobardi, storiografia e miti delle origini a Cividale del Friuli," *Archeologia Medievale* 25 (1998): 345–357; see this article for the italian versions of the quotations.

the morning of 29 May, the archaeological operation was carried out in front of a great public audience. As an article appeared on the *Gazette of Venice* tells us:

> At nine in the morning, the lid of the grave was opened in the presence of the mayor, four local councilors, the local magistrate, the provisional administrator, the director of the archaeological museum, the local civil engineer, the local doctor and a great crowd pushing around the pit. People were also seen in the windows of the houses surrounding the square and even on the roofs.[8]

After opening the lid "a putrefied cadaver in a disturbed state appeared to all these people", together with rich grave goods, including: golden stirrups, a decorated shield, a knife, a decorated gold cross, a decorated gold plaquette, and belt elements, all of which can be dated back to the beginning of the seventh century AD. "All very nice objects, but no evidence was found to recognize to whom the grave belonged, so the people who went to visit the find, which lay exposed to public view for several hours, went away unhappy, since no one could name those bones"[9] and "To whom that grave belonged? Everyone asked which Lombard duke might have been buried in that pit."[10] From the articles it is clear that having excavated a very wealthy warrior grave interred in one of the main squares of the town was not sufficiently satisfying. People needed a precise name for the buried person, since he must have been an important man.

In the meantime, the finds were taken to the museum, where the marble coffin started to be cleaned. At this point:

> the stone cutter Cesare Zanetti found a strange inscription on the lid of the sarcophagus, which no one could read, not even the mayor. Thus, the work of cleaning was interrupted and the mayor invited Mr. Tomadini, an expert of ancient writing, to examine the inscription. Tomadini using the method of the wet paper, that is, pushing watered paper down into the letters, found that the engraved letters formed the word CISUL. It was therefore concluded that the name of the wealthy warrior buried in the grave must have been Gisulfo.[11]

Gisulfo was the first Lombard duke of Friuli. Paul the Deacon, in his *Historia Langobardorum*, written in the second half of the eight century AD, narrated how

---

[8] "Archaeologia," in *Gazzetta di Venezia*, 1 June, 1874, 1–2. The article was not signed.

[9] L. Archinti, "La tomba di Gisulfo," *Illustrazione Universale*, 1st November (1874): 13–16.

[10] *Gisulfo primo duca longobardo in Friuli (568–612). Cenni sulla recente scoperta della tomba con notizie ed episodi storici* (Cividale, 1874). The author of this pamphlet is not mentioned.

[11] Angelo Arboit, *La tomba di Gisolfo e il Dr P. A. De Bizzarro* (Udine: Tipografia Gio. Batt. Doretti e Soci, 1874), 12.

the Lombards, led by Alboin, moved from Pannonia and first conquered the Friuli region in AD 568. Alboin continued his conquest towards northwest Italy and nominated Gisulfo, one of his followers, to be the head of Cividale.[12]

"Finally the public curiosity could be satisfied since the word CISUL, engraved in a Lombard style font, made it clear that the buried man was the first duke of Friuli, Gisulfo, nephew of the famous King Alboin."[13]

> The inhabitants of Cividale are now very proud of themselves, walking on the streets with dignity. They look very snooty, and are not touched by contemporary problems, but prefer talking about the Middle Ages. When they talk they start with the matters of the day and finish inevitably with the Lombards. The first duke of Friuli, reappearing into the light of the day after thirteen centuries of deep sleep, has confused their brains. The history of Gisulfo, and his wife Romilda is the common topic of each conversation.[14]

Many articles, pamphlets, books, public readings and performances started narrating the heroic story of Gisulfo, who fought against the Avars, quoting as the authoritative source the *Historia Langobardorum* by Paul the Deacon. According to the version which was divulged during the reign of Gisulfo the Avars attacked Cividale. Gisulfo's witch wife, Romilda, fell in love with the Avar king and opened the doors of the town to the enemy.[15] The Lombards were defeated and Gisulfo died in a heroic fight against the Avars. His body was found and buried in a splendid manner within the walls of the town and his remains were finally discovered in 1874. This story recalls the Italian Romantic literature of the first half of the nineteenth century, which emphasized the heroism of single individuals fighting for the honor of the Italians, "threatened by individual betrayal and/or foreign oppression."[16] Within this framework, the sacrifice of the warrior Gisulfo can clearly be situated with the nineteenth-century national master narrative, where, as Mario Banti has pointed out, male heroes' sacrifices occurred exclusively within a warlike context. "Since the late eighteenth century, this aspect of national discourse, nourished by the rhetoric of the nation-in-arms and the reality of compulsory military conscription, ensured that the warrior heroes of national

---

[12] Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, liber II, 9, ed. Ludwig Bethmann and Georg Waitz (Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in ususm scholarum 48) (Hannover: Hahn, 1878), 91.

[13] Archinti, *La tomba di Gisulfo*, 13–16.

[14] Angelo Arboit, "Cose Cividalesi," *Giornale di Udine*, 16 June (1975): 1–2.

[15] Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, IV, 37, ed. Bethmann, Waitz, 161–162.

[16] Ryall, *Eroi maschili*, 261.

mythology were no longer considered to be the expression of a restricted fighting elite, but were dreamt of as the quintessence of national masculinity.[17]"

However, the story of Gisulfo as presented in Cividale, aiming to boost local pride was based more on fantasy than historical facts. First, Paul the Deacon indeed describes the defeat of Cividale by the Avars as the result of Romilda's betrayal, but dates this occurrence to AD 610. Considering that Gisulfo became duke of Friuli in AD 568, which could hardly have happened before he turned 18 years of age, by AD 610, if he was still alive, he would surely have been in his sixties at the very least. Thus, he could really not be described as a strong young hero any longer. Secondly, scholars agree that Romilda was not the wife of Gisulfo, the first duke of Friuli.

Newspapers testify also to the great echoes the discovery generated in the whole region. The *podestà* (head of the church in the region) and the ex-imperial governor, Cronini of Cronenberg, (who governed Friuli before Italy annexed it in 1866) went to visit the grave. As an article testifies:

> The pilgrimage to the grave of Gisulfo is every day more and more significant, to such an extent that all other pilgrimages, including that of Lourdes, will be eclipsed. In two weeks more than a thousand people came to visit the museum and the pool of dust into which the Lombard duke of Friuli was transformed. Our neighbors come in great numbers, from Cormons, Gorizia and even Trieste.... It will not even be a surprise if one of these days the Prussian army will come here to see the remains of this ancient son of the Elbe River.[18]

In fact, according to Paul the Deacon, the Lombards originated from Scandinavia and from there moved to the Elbe River, where they settled for some time before continuing their migration towards the Roman Empire.[19]

However, these glorious weeks were upset by scholars who revealed their doubts about the authenticity of the inscription. De Bizzarro, a scholar from Gorizia, wrote a pamphlet, published a few months after the excavation, claiming that: "...the inspection of those shapeless scribbles, hardly visible on the lid of the sarcophagus, engraved by a shy and inexpert hand, led me to the conclusion that

---

[17] Mario Banti, "Conclusions: Performative Effects and "Deep Images" in National Discourse," in *Different Paths to the Nation. Regional and National Identities in Central Europe and Italy, 1830–70*, ed. Laurence Cole (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 220–229.

[18] Angelo Arboit, "Cose Cividalesi," *Giornale di Udine*, 24th June (1975).

[19] Paulus Diaconus, *Historia Langobardorum*, I, 1, ed. Bethmann, Waitz, 53.

they are surely forged."[20] Having listed the different reasons why he believed the inscription was false, De Bizzarro concluded:

> The conviction of the inhabitants of Cividale that the buried person is Gisulfo is so strong that they see his name everywhere. It was not difficult to transform the engravings produced by the chisel of a stone cutter while cleaning the coffin into the dreamed-of name: a tailor could have easily made it using his scissors.[21]

This publication provoked a lively debate among those who thought the inscription was false and those defending its authenticity.

Responses to De Bizzarro's critiques came soon. On 16 June, Angelo Arboit defended the authenticity of the inscription in an article which appeared in the *Giornale di Udine*: "If the furrows of the letters look recent, this does not mean that they cannot be ancient. In fact, the concrete which covered the coffin kept them incredibly fresh, just as the furrows on the lid of the sarcophagus look freshly made,"[22] and: "The letters are considered fakes, since signs of a pencil have been observed on them. Those critics must be very ingenuous! How can they imagine that a forger would have be so incautious as to not erase the traces of his pencil which would clearly uncover the fraud?"[23] The arguments to defend the authenticity of the inscription are clearly weak, however, in the following years the debate ended and the inscription was taken to be authentic. Even today, the grave is called "grave of the so-called Gisulfo" and no one mentions the story of its discovery and the faked inscription.

It was, however, only in 1974, a hundred years after the discovery, that Luigi Bront, at that time director of the museum, published the oral testimony that the previous director had transmitted to him in 1926. According to the reconstruction proposed by Bront, at the moment of the discovery and the cleaning of the coffin some scars were found which were later transformed into the name of the first Lombard duke of Friuli.[24] It was only in 1974 that two scholars were officially called in to analyze the inscription: Joachim Werner and Bernhard Bischoff. Both of them agreed that it was a forgery. Their reports, however, were never published.

---

[20] Arboit, *La tomba di Gisolfo*, 21.

[21] Arboit, *La tomba di Gisolfo*, 21.

[22] Angelo Arboit, "Cose Cividalesi," *Giornale di Udine*, 16th June (1974): 3–4.

[23] Arboit, "Cose Cividalesi," 3–4.

[24] Luigi Bront, "Gisulfo. Piccola storia di una polemica non ancora esaurita," *Quaderni Cividalesi* 3 (1974): 7–23.

This grave in itself represents an interesting find because of its location within the Roman walls of the town and because of the very valuable artifacts it contained. But why did its discovery become so popular and why was it so important to show that it belonged to Gisulfo? To better answer this question I need to step back a little bit earlier in time.

The Struggle for Identity on the Eastern Frontier: Roman versus the Early Medieval Past During the Italian-Austrian Wars

An excursus into the historical writings published in Friuli between the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries shows that there was an on-going conflict between the settlements of Udine and Cividale over the question of which of them was the ancient Roman fort of *Forum Iulii*, founded by Julius Caesar in about 50 BC. To support their respective arguments, ancient inscriptions and archaeological finds were used, some of which were faked, produced by the citizens of Udine. As Liruti, who composed a local history in five volumes, writes at the end of the eighteenth century:

> Now that we are in a more illuminated century, freed from prejudices, having seen that the proofs of the inhabitants of Cividale were more persuasive, it seems that the conflict has now calmed down. The citizens of Udine, if not totally convinced, are at least silent, being happy with their actual status, in fact, they can be proud of living in the capital and metropolis of the region.[25]

The conflict about the origins of the two towns and the fight over the history of the ancient *Forum Iulii*, masked a long-term conflict over political control in the region. During Early Modern times wars were fought between Udine and Cividale for supremacy in the area. Finally, under Venetian and Austrian rule, Udine emerged as a regional center and the axis of cultural and economic investments. However, the cultural competition between the two centers lingered on; it was a powerful tool used by local elites to reinforce their prestige.[26]

Between 1817 and 1826, great archeological excavations were carried out in Cividale and its surroundings to prove that Cividale had the same topography and thus the same splendor as the capital of the Roman Empire, Rome itself. These excavations were financed by the Austrians, who ruled the region. The enterprise was carried out by a priest, Michele Della Torre. In his history of the

---

[25] Gian Giuseppe Liruti, *Notizie delle cose del Friuli* (Udine: Fratelli Gallici alla Fontana, 1770), 216.
[26] Barbiera, "*E ai dì remoti*," 2–3.

archeological excavation, Della Torre made absolutely clear what the purpose and results of his research were: "Cividale," he writes, "must have been built, during Roman times, in the same way as Rome, based on the principles of Plutarch and Varro. Therefore, I started the archaeological excavations in each quarter, each garden and field of Cividale, to see whether any trace of the Roman settlement of *Forum Iulii* could be recognized."[27] The absurdity of his ideas, I think, does not need further comment. As he himself writes, he succeeded in this endeavor: he managed to equate the topography of Cividale with that of Rome. In Della Torre's treatment each archaeological find demonstrated that Cividale mirrored Rome. For example, he writes:

> I knew that the Romans used to practice their military skills at a camp called *Astiludio*, located near the Circus and the temple of Ebe [in Rome]. I started therefore exploring this area [he refers to some fields near Cividale] where I found iron slabs in great numbers, bones and teeth of horses, as well as horse bits and brooches. What could better show that what I have discovered is the *Astiludio* camp of Cividale?[28]

Not only were archaeological finds used in his research, but also the landscape itself: "I wanted to verify whether the Viminale hill in Rome, which is divided by a valley, could be found in the northeastern part of Cividale, on the way to Madonna del Monte". Since the Viminale is in the northeast part of Rome, the "Viminale" of Cividale must also have been located similarly. Thus, he began to investigate the Colle San Rocco. In this area, he found a marble male head, "which," he writes, "has all the characteristics of the Iuppiter of *Viminale*. And since I have learned from my studies that on the *Viminale* of Rome there was a temple dedicated to the Viminean Iuppiter, the hill of San Rocco must correspond to the *Viminale* of Rome."[29] In the conclusions of his *History of the Archaeological Excavations*, Della Torre writes:

> In this way, I concluded the archeological excavations, financed by the sovereign: I tried to resolve the debate on the location of the Forum Iulii, and I finally could show that it was located in Cividale, since it is a town which was built following the topography of Rome, according to the principles of Plutarch and Varro.[30]

---

[27] Michele Della Torre, "Storia degli Scavi," Prospetto Storico I, capitolo II. Unpublished material preserved in the Archivio del Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Cividale, Fondo Della Torre.

[28] Della Torre, "Storia degli Scavi," Prospetto Storico III, capitolo V.

[29] Della Torre, "Storia degli Scavi," Prospetto Storico V, capitolo III.

[30] Della Torre, "Storia degli Scavi," Prospetto Storico VIII, capitolo XV.

Della Torre was a descendent of a wealthy family. He studied in Milan and from 1802 he lived in Cividale, acting as a diplomat and curator of antiquities. In 1817, he founded the archaeological museum in Cividale, where all his finds were collected. When he died in 1844, a funeral oration was delivered, which was later published in 1853:

> Glory to Della Torre, who, sustained by the magnificent ruler of Austria of blessed memory, wanted to show what some people doubted. Therefore, penetrating into the bowels of the earth and working with wisdom, being inspired by place names and topographical insights, he found so many coins, urns, pots and mosaics that he could finally demonstrate with tangible proof that the ancient Roman settlement was there and not somewhere else.[31]

During his lifetime, Della Torre dug up several vast early medieval cemeteries although he never recognized that they dated to the Lombard period. It was only later, during the 1850s that the finds from the Lombard period were studied and appreciated thanks to the work of Austrian scholars. Although this region, together with Lombardy, Veneto and Tyrol, become part of the Austrian Empire in 1815, it was only from the 1850s on that Viennese scholars started publishing articles and studies dedicated to the History of Friuli. It was particularly in the *Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichtsquellen* that articles dedicated to the medieval history of this area became common.[32] It seems quite clear that the Austrians started promoting the study of the Lombard period in this area as a way of legitimating their power as Italian pretensions over this region gradually grew stronger, culminating in the Italian-Austrian war of 1866, during which Italy annexed the region. During this phase, the Austrian monarchy tried to fight against the disintegration of its empire using ethnographic and cultural studies aimed at describing the richness of the monarchy from a centralized perspective and with a paternalistic attitude.[33]

"Wenige Städte der Venetianischen terra ferma haben ein so grosses historisches Interesse als Cividale,"[34] writes Prof. Eitelberger von Edelberg in his

---

[31] Lorenzo D'Orlandi, *Discorsi funebri in elogio di tre benemeriti cittadini di Cividale del Friuli* (Udine: Pei Fratelli Mattiuzzi, 1853).

[32] Giuseppe Valentinelli, *Bibliografia del Friuli*. (Venice: Tipografia del Commercio, 1861).

[33] Nancy M. Wingfield, "Introduction," in *Creating the Other. Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe*, ed. Nancy M. Wingfield (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 1–16; Karl Kaser, "Peoples of the Mountains, Peoples of the Plains. Space and Ethnographic Representation," in *Creating the Other. Ethnic conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe*, ed. Nancy M. Wingfield (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 216–230.

[34] Eitelberger von Edelberg, "Cividale in Friaul," 235.

Cividale in Friaul und seine Monumente, published in Vienna 1857, entirely dedicated to the Lombard-period monuments and finds from Cividale. The intention of his article was clearly expressed in the introduction: "Und doch sind diese Monumente als die ersten Versuche deutscher Stämme auf dem Gebiete der bildenden Kunst für uns und die Geschichte unseres Volkes von eben so grosser Bedeutung…."[35] The author was willing to stress the importance of Lombard monuments discovered in the town in contrast to the Roman ones to which more attention had been paid in previous decades. Rudolf Eitelberger von Edelberger founded the Vienna School of Arts and published a series which appeared in eighteen volumes between 1871 and 1882 (entitled: *Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttechnik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit)*. It was thanks to the Vienna school, and in particular to the contributions of Riegel, that from the 1880s early medieval art started to be reevaluated. Riegel wanted to demonstrate that early medieval art had not declined from Roman times, as had been claimed by earlier scholars, but exemplifies a continuously progressive development of form. He stressed the fact that the style of medieval art should not be judged by Classical canons. Moreover, medieval art was also reconsidered as the art of Christianity, and within this framework some scholars from Germany, Georg Gottfield Dehio (1850–1932) and Adolph Goldschmidt (1863–1944), started concentrating on church buildings.[36] Thus, the early medieval monuments of Cividale also started to be studied and praised by Austrian scholars.

In contrast to Eitelberger's book, another volume dedicated to the history of eastern Friuli, the disputed area between Austria and Italy, was published by Prospero Antonini in Milan in 1865. The author emphasized how the unity of Italy had always been justified by cultural unity and geographical conformation. In particular, he perceived the Alps as a natural border dividing the peninsula from the rest of Europe. The unity of Italy, created by the Romans and lasting for several centuries, "was violently broken when numerous troops of violent predators burst into Italy from the Alps, destroying the most flourishing towns, dividing out the booty stolen from the subjected and sharing out the lands…"[37] Antonini's history of Friuli is clearly in line with Alessandro Manzoni's interpretation of the Lombard

---

[35] Rudolph Eitelberger von Edelberg, "Cividale in Friaul und Seine Monumente," in *Jahrbuch der kaiserlich königlichen Centralkommission zur Erforschung und Erhaltung der Baudenkmale* (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1857), 233–258, here 236–237.
[36] *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline*, ed. Helen Damico, Vol. 2: Literature and Philology (Garland Reference Library of the Humanities, vol. 2071) (New York: Garland, 1998).
[37] Prospero Antonini, *Il Friuli Orientale* (Milan: Vallardi Editore, 1865), 5.

period. According to him and other historians of the period, the Lombards, whom he called the "barbarian invaders", defeated the Romans. He defined the Romans as "overwhelmed early medieval Italians".[38] The Lombards represented an external intrusion, equated with Habsburg control over the peninsula, while the Roman tradition was inherited by the papacy and the Church, which could finally control the peninsula thanks to the Carolingian intervention.[39] The tension between the Roman past, advocated by supporters of *Risorgimento,* and the early medieval one, diffused by the Austrians, clearly masked claims for control of these Alpine regions.

However, in spite of the fact that Friuli become part of Italy in 1866, when the grave of Gisulfo was discovered in 1874 the connection of Friuli with the Austrian past was still strong, as testified by the claim that: "The Habsburg monarchy should be happy with this find, since we have discovered their ancestors."[40] After Italy's unification, municipal rivalry, which had characterized Italian history for centuries, was still a deciding factor in political relations and thinking. This rivalry resulted in the promotion of a competitive local past.[41] The fight between Udine and Cividale over their origins and the discovery and falsification of the grave of Gisulfo can be clearly understood in this context. At this time, the promotion of these municipal pasts became an important agenda for local elites, both to affirm their importance and to counter their fear of centralized control.

A common national history was still missing in newly unified Italy. Different regions or towns promoted different epochs – pre-Roman, Roman or late medieval – for their historical past. The enthusiasm for the early medieval past, however, was quite an exception in Italy. In fact, the time of the great migrations was perceived in the rest of the country as a time of "national tragedy", when

---

[38] These terms were used in Alessandro Manzoni, *Discorso sopra alcuni punti della storia longobardica in Italia* (Milan, 1822), see the recent edition by Isabella Becherucci (Rome: Biblioteca Italiana, 2008); see also: Manzonis' poem "Adelchi", third act, where Italians are defined as "volgo che nome non ha", which means the people without a name. See Alberto Mario Banti, "Le invasioni barbariche e le origini delle nazioni," in *Immagini della nazione nell'Italia del Risorgimento*, ed. Alberto Mario Banti and Roberto Bizzocchi (Rome: Carocci, 2002), 21–44.

[39] Stefano Gasparri, *Prima delle Nazioni. Popoli, etnie e regni fra Antichità e Medioevo* (Rome: Carocci, 2003), 33–134.

[40] Archinti, *La tomba di Gisulfo, p.* 16.

[41] Simona Troilo, *La patria e la memoria. Tutela e patrimonio culturale nell'Italia unita* (Milan: Electa, 2005).

"brutal and primitive barbarians"[42] oppressed the poor Italians. It was only later, from the twentieth century on, and in particular during fascism, that a common national past, sought in the Roman imperial period started to be promoted.

National Heroes: Roman Soldiers

Promotion of the Roman heritage developed from the beginning of the twentieth century. It functioned, on the one hand, to give authenticity to the unified peninsula, and, on the other, to justify colonial conquests in Libya, enhancing the prestige of Italy in the Mediterranean region by strengthening the link between the Roman and Italian civilizations.

Italian archaeological campaigns began in Tripoli and Cyrene from 1911 and 1913, respectively. [43] They were meant to bring to light the Roman phases, destroying the Phoenician, Late Antique, and Islamic finds and documentation, with the objective of demonstrating that it was thanks to the Romans and their colonies that the economy of those regions came to flourish.[44]

The rhetoric of *romanità* was taken up and further emphasized by fascists. The glory of imperial Rome was associated with Mussolini's power, and at the same time, it also functioned to create a shared Italian identity against regional and local particularism and free from foreign inspiration. Ancient Roman symbols, such as the *saluto romano* or the *fasci littori*, the Roman insigna of public office, were used to connect fascism with Imperial Rome.[45] Art and architecture were directly inspired by Roman art. This ideological perspective on Roman history

---

[42] Giuseppe Cortesi, *La zona e la basilica di S. Severo nel territorio di Classe* (Ravenna 1964), 38. These terms and tones were frequently used in archaeological reports until the 1970s to define the barbarians, see Irene Barbiera, "The Valorous Barbarian, the Migrating Slav and the Indigenous Peoples of the Mountains. Archeological Research and the Changing Faces of Italian Identity in the 20th Century," in *Archäologie der Identität,* ed. Walter Pohl and Mathias Mehofer (Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 16) (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2010), 183–202.

[43] Massimilaino Munzi, "Italian Archaeology in Libya. From Colonial Romanità to Decolonization of the Past," in *Archaoelogy under Ditatorship,* ed. Michael L. Galaty and Charles Watkinson (New York: Kluwer Academic Plenum Publishers, 2006), 73–107.

[44] This was not true, since no Roman colonies were ever founded in Tripolitania, and the economic development there was based on agriculture developed by the Punic-Libyan irrigation system, see: Stefan Altekamp, "Italian Colonial Archaeology in Libya 1912–1942," in *Archaeology under Dictatorship*, 55–71.

[45] Andrea Giardina and André Vauchez, *Il mito di Roma. Da Carlo Magno a Mussolini* (Rome: Laterza, 2000).

required knowledge of Classical culture and history involving intellectuals, and in particular, scholars of Classical Antiquity.[46]

The government itself promoted archaeological events. Within this framework, extensive archaeological excavations were carried out in the Roman Forum, but only buildings of the Imperial period were brought to light; all the medieval layers were totally destroyed.[47] Archaeological excavations of Roman monuments started to be carried out all over Italy, and in Cividale as well, promoting the Roman past in contrast to the early medieval one.[48] In 1927, the Museum of the Roman Empire was opened. In a letter addressed to the Governor of Rome asking for permission and financial support for the opening of the museum, Giglioli, a leading figure among fascist archaeologists,[49] clearly underlined the reason for promoting the Roman past as legitimating the militaristic orientation of the regime. He writes:

> The resort of national consciuousness, the enthusiasm that fascism has injected into Italians, had as a natural consequence the emergence of an enthusiastic cult of *romanità*. As the new military formations were organized according to the Duce's wishes, following the methods and the names of ancient legions, in the same way, the study of monuments and ancient history, not only of a few specialists, some souls or dreamers, but the whole population is passionate with new ardour.[50]

---

[46] Romke Viesser, "Fascist Doctrine and Romanità," *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (1992): 5–22. See also Mariella Cagnetta, *Antichisti e Impero fascista* (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1979); Giovanni Belardelli, *Il Ventennio degli intellettuali. Cultura, politica, ideologia nell'Italia fascista* (Rome: Laterza, 2005).

[47] Alessandro Guidi, "Nationalism without a Nation: the Italian Case," in *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe*, ed. Margarita Dìaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1996), 108–118.

[48] See, for instance, the articles in *Il popolo del Friuli*, on 24 and 25 from June, 1938.

[49] For an analyses of the figure of Giglioli as a militant fascist and archaeologist, see Daniele Manacorda, "Per un'indagine sull'archeologia italiana durante il ventennio fascista," *Archeologia Medievale* 9 (1982): 443–470.

[50] "La risorta coscienza nazionale, lo spirito che il fascismo ha infuso negli italiani, hanno portato come naturale conseguenza un ritorno entusiasta al culto della romanità. Come le nuove schiere della Milizia si sono ordinate per volere del Duce con metodi e nomi degli antichi legionari, così lo studio dei monumenti e della storia antica appassiona con rinnovato ardore non solo pochi specialisti, qualche animo di sognatore, ma la totalità della popolazione." Giulio Q. Giglioli, "Origine e sviluppo del Museo dell'Impero Romano," *Capitolium* 4, No. 6 (1928): 306.

The museum exhibited reproductions and photographs of statues, sculptures and funerary monuments from all over the Late Roman provinces. Many pieces were dedicated to the victorious legions conquering new lands, so that "we can see again its [of Rome] best sons carrying the words of justice and equality to faraway lands."[51] Funerary monuments, medallions of soldiers and portraits of victorious commander all prove: "the majestic posture, the severe tracts of the dominating race."[52] Ancient Roman propaganda, embodied by self-portraits, was resumed and used for promoting and justifying fascist wars. The image of the Roman soldier became the emblem of conquest and the model for the superb virility of fascist soldiers. Mussolini himself was described as the "reincarnation of a Roman legionary", since he possessed a "broad Roman breast and the concise lucidity of the Latin mind" and represented all the power of the *maschia romanità* (manly Romanitas) [53].

At the same time, many articles dedicated to the discoveries of inscribed stone monuments, such as epigraphs, funerary and civil monuments excavated in different regions of Italy, appeared on the *Notizie degli scavi di Antichità,* edited by the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome.[54] These monuments, described using the adjectives like "ours" and "new,"[55] represented the presence of the Romans all over Italy, and offered an opportunity for local pride within the framework of national ideology. Moreover, they become a model for contemporary art, particularly within the *stile littorio* that spread during the late fascist period. In particular, after the proclamation of empire in 1936, the regime further encouraged a rich

---

[51] "Noi rivediamo i suoi figli migliori portare in paesi lontani la parola della giustizia e dell'equità", Giulio Q. Giglioli, "Il Museo dell'Impero Romano*," Capitolium,* 3/1 (1927): 14.

[52] "…mostra il portamento maestoso, i tratti severi della razza dominatrice." Giulio Q. Giglioli, "Il Museo," 14.

[53] "La reincarnazione del vecchio legionario romano…"largo respiro di petto romano e sintetica lucidezza di mente latina," Margherita G. Sarfatti, *Dux* (Milano: Mondadori, 1926), 10.

[54] See *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* particularly from the years 1930 to 1940, when the finds from many Roman cemeteries have been published.

[55] These are the adjective most frequently used to describe the finds, see for instance: A. Minto, "Fiesole, Sistemazione della zona archeologica tra il teatro e il Tempio," *Notizie degli scavi di Antichità* (1930): 503–506 where the described inscription is always defined as "ours", or A. Taramelli, "Austis (Nuoro). Nuovo titolo funerario rinvenuto nella necropoli romana in regione Preda Litterada," *Notizie degli scavi di Antichità* (1930): 269–270, or A. Minto, "Scansano. Iscrizioni e rilievi funerari romani in travertino scoperti a Pomonte nel 'lasco dei Tori'," *Notizie degli scavi di Antichità* (1930): 298; here the Roman soldier to which the discovered altar was dedicated is described as "our individual".

iconography of *romanità*, which was tied to an increase in a racial and militaristic aesthetic. This lead to a shift of inspiration in official culture away from the European avant-garde, promoted at the beginning of the thirties, to "the art of the Caesars."[56] Late fascist culture "elevated bombastic historical and national categories to produce a kitsch 'Roman' style known as the *stile littorio*."[57]

The "Roman soldier propaganda" fit well in the idea of masculinity which fascists were eager to promote as a national symbol. As Mosse pointed out, "Mussolini's new man was to be inspired by the war experience and indeed he lived in a state of permanent war."[58] The attributes of fascist virility were heroism, bravery and courage, to be demonstrated not in ordinary circumstances and everyday life but in time of war. Propagandistic postcards were distributed, depicting a Roman soldier guiding an Italian soldier on the path of victory, or representing a Roman soldier in the background of an Italian soldier. Several of these postcards linking the Italian soldier with the Roman soldier were printed for propaganda purposes surrounding colonial wars. As Andrea Giardina pointed out[59], the myth of *Romanitas* was particularly suitable for justifying colonial wars in Africa, while it turned out to be less appropriate to justify wars in Europe and even became uncomfortable with respect to the Italian-German alliance.

In official propaganda, *obesus etruscus*[60] (the fat Etruscan) is contrasted with the Roman hero and the savage barbarian. The former was presented as a flabby man, from a decadent and sick race annihilated by the Romans. The defeat of the Etruscans was an important step towards the unification of the peninsula under Roman power, dismantling the local autonomies which characterized ancient Italy. The second anti-hero, the barbarian, was more problematic because, on the one hand, barbarian invasions meant, according to German historians, the end of the Roman Empire. On the other hand, they were the heroes of the Germans, allies of Mussolini during the Second World War. For this reason, although archaeological finds of the Early Middle Ages were described in negative terms compared to Roman ones during the first decades of the twentieth century, from the 1930s on a diplomatic silence fell over barbarian history and archaeology.

---

[56] Marla Susan Stone, *The Patron State. Culture and Politics in fascist Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 228; see also: Marla Susan Stone, "The Patron State. Making Official Culture in Fascist Italy," in *Fascist Visions, Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, ed. M. Affron, M. Antilff (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 205–238.

[57] Marla Susan Stone, *The Patron State,* 194.

[58] George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man. The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 160.

[59] Giardina and Vauchez, *Il mito di Roma.*

[60] Manacorda, "Per un'indagine," 467.

Ambiguous Anti-heroes: Barbarian Soldiers

The archaeology of the early medieval period developed in Italy starting in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was mainly cemeteries dated to the Early Middle Ages that were found in this period. These burial grounds were interpreted from an ethnic perspective, in agreement with the orientation of research in other European countries. Comparing the Italian artifacts with foreign finds, archaeologists sought to discover the ethnicity of the buried persons. They could be identified as Romans or barbarians. This last term was employed to indicate ancient Germans in general and not a particular group. In this period archaeologists were still discussing to which ruling group in Italy (Goths, Lombards or Carolingians) the finds belonged. In this first phase of its history the archaeology of the Early Middle Ages was linked to historical interpretations. For archaeologists as well as historians, the term "barbarian" also had a negative connotation, used to indicate the pagan "invaders" versus the Christian Romans, the ancestors of the Italians.

In a series of articles published in the *Notizie degli scavi di Antiquità* between the beginning of the century and the 1930s, early medieval graves are described as having "such a scanty interest, that we did not take them into consideration."[61] In these studies the graves of barbarians are described as made of bricks, covered by marble, and often characterized by simple and poor artifact types: "The poverty of such a grave can be attributed to barbarian times."[62] "The absence of any archaeological proof does not allow us to date these finds, but the fact that the burial pits are so roughly and imprecisely made suggests they were dug during the post-Roman period, probably during Byzantine times."[63] Barbarian art was described as "decadent,"[64] "childish," "schematic" and "numb."[65] Along with

---

[61] Antonio Cappelli, "Roccastrada. Scoperta di tombe dell'epoca barbarica," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* 11 (1933): 64–66.

[62] "la povertà del seppellimento trova riscontro nell'epoca barbarica," Pirro Marconi, "Castelvetrano (Trapani). Scoperta di tombe post-romane," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* 8 (1930): 416–417.

[63] "La mancanza di qualsiasi più piccolo documento di scavo ci impedisce di esprimere netti giudizi: ma, sia la forma dei loculi, sia l'opera loro così rude e incerta, ci inducono a proporre una loro attribuzione all'età post romana, e probabilmente alla bizantina", Pirro Marconi, "Castelvetrano. Scoperta di tombe post-romane," *Notizie degli scavi di Antichità* 8 (1930): 416–417, in particular 417.

[64] Gherardo Ghirardini, "Verona. Tomba di età barbarica scoperta alla 'cortalta'," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* 5 (1908): 121–124.

[65] Pericle Ducati, "Marzaglia (Frazione del comune di Modena). Tomba barbarica," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* 9 (1913): 321–325.

poor graves, weapons and jewelry were also attributed to barbarians as a sign of violence and barbarism. Weapons belonged to the "fierce dominators of Italy", "pagan and crudely savage".[66] Moreover, their weaponry was not developed enough, in fact: "From these poor finds we can deduce that barbarians did not use the helmet at the time of the invasions."[67]

The image of barbarian soldiers depicted in Germany was much different than the one presented in Italy.[68] Here, in fact, ancient Germans were perceived as the ancestors of modern Germans. Their migrations in Southern Europe were presented as a phase of rupture with the weak Roman Empire which brought about the foundation of the nation states of modern Europe.[69] Within this context, warrior graves of the ancient Germans were perceived as proof of the warlike and enterprising spirit inherited by modern Germans. As Hans Günther wrote "Nordic man has always been, and always will be, led by his lust for competition, for culture, for leadership, and for distinction."[70] He also wrote that: "The Nordic race seems to show special aptitude in the domain of military science owing to its warlike spirit."[71] Barbarian invasions were the results of an "inexorable urge

---

[66] "i nuovi feroci dominatori d'Italia," "pagani e rozzamente selvaggi" in Raniero Paribeni, *La necropoli barbarica di Nocera Umbra* (Rome: 1928), 351.

[67] Giuseppe Moretti, "Torricella Peligna (Chieti). Elmo barbarico in rame dorato," *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* 6 (1928): 478.

[68] Many studies have been dedicated to the myth of the ancient Germans and its relation to nationalistic propaganda, see, for instance: Bettina Arnold, "The Past as Propaganda: Totalitarian Archeology in Nazi Germany," *Antiquity* 64 (1990): 464–478; Ingo Wiwjorra, "German archaeology and its Relation to Nationalism and Racism," in *Nationalism and Archaeology in Europe,* ed. Margarita Díaz-Andreu and Timothy Champion (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1996), 164–188; Henning Haßmann, "Archaeology in the 'Third Reich'" in *Archaeology, Ideology and Society. The German experience*, ed. Heinrich Härke (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), 67–140; Wiebke Rohrer, "Politics, Propaganda and Polemics: Prehistoric Archeology in Upper Silesia 1918 to 1933," *Archaeologia Polona* 42 (2004): 155–196; Hubert Fehr, "Prehistoric Archeology and German *Ostforschung*. The Case of the Excavation at Zantoch," *Archaeologia Polona* 42 (2004): 197–228; Hubert Fehr, "*Volkstum* as Paradigm: Germanic People and Gallo-Romans in Early Medieval Archeology since the 1930s," in *On Barbarian Identity. Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Andrew Gillett (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 177–200.

[69] It should be emphasized here that the promotion of the German past started towards the end of the 19th century, particularly after the unification of Germany. See Suzanne L. Marchand, *Down from Olympus. Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750–1970* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[70] Hans Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History* (London: Methuen and Company, 1927), 51.

[71] Günther, *The Racial Elements*, 51.

for adventure and action", a character inherited by the Germans, since "we need space, freedom and action!"[72]

Not only did barbarian warriors serve as models for masculinity in Germany, in the same way as Romans soldiers did in Italy, but their graves also became an efficient tool for mapping the expansions of ancient Germans in the past and justifying the territorial claims of the present. It was particularly the region of the Loire, where early medieval cemeteries with lavish grave goods were found in great numbers, which offered grounds for reconstructing the national costume of ancient Germans. In particular, wealthy graves were attributed to Germans, with the males buried with weapons, typical warrior attributes, and the females with jewelry, in particular, richly decorated brooches.[73] In contrast, Roman graves were poorly furnished, with no particular ethnic attributes nor gendered traits. Their graves were identified in the negative, that is, they were those burials lacking typical "German" goods. Using grave goods it was possible to reconstruct the German male and female costumes *Tracht* and that of the Romans, identifying two groups of people characterized by opposing cultural models as expressed by their different "national costumes".[74] By using cemeteries and their grave goods in this way, it was possible to trace the areas where Germans had settled. It was not deemed possible that weapons or brooches could also have been used by Romans. These studies served the Nazis' expansionism well, since they could be used to prove that the lands which barbarians occupied in the past "… are old German lands which were stolen from us and which we can rightfully demand to be given back to us," as Hitler claimed in May, 1942, after reading archeological reports.[75] The idea that warrior graves reflected the ethnicity and the warlike spirit of German males remained so deeply rooted in archaeological interpretations that even in the 1950s weapon graves were defined as "*Nationales*

---

[72] Karl Theodor Strasser, *Deutschlands Urgeschichte* (Frankfurt: Diesterweg, 1933), 113. For an analyses of the meaning of Strasser's works and its implications for archaeological research see: Heinrich Härke, "Archaeologists and Migrations: A Problem of Attitude?" *Current Anthropology* 39, No. 1 (1998): 19–45.

[73] Recently the meaning of these cemeteries has been completely reviewed. Their grave goods as well as the types of graves are considered to derive from a local late antique culture rather than being an expression of the Germans. Also, grave goods are associated with social change rather than with ethnic identity; for a detailed study of these issues, see: Guy Halsall, "The Origins of the *Reihengräberzivilisation*: Forty Years On," in *Fifth-century Gaul: a Crisis of Identity?*, ed. John Drinkwater and Hugh Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 196–207.

[74] Fehr, *Volkstum*, 187–188.

[75] Fehr, *Volkstum,* 190.

Inditium."[76] Moreover, this interpretation led to the idea, still supported today by archaeologists, that weapon burials were a novelty introduced in the Roman Empire by ancient German warriors during their invasions, without taking into account the fact that weapon burials were spread throughout the Mediterranean region as well as Northern Europe from prehistory onwards.

Comparing the interpretations attached to Roman and barbarian warrior graves developed in Germany and Italy during the Second World War, the way they could be employed alternatively to create the images of heroes and antiheroes clearly emerges. As Wailes and Zoll have noted, ethnic archeology contains potential for re-playing or inventing competition between ethnic groups of the past, presenting some of them as "retarded" or "primitive", and others as "progressive" or "advanced".[77] This paradigm of "bad guys versus good guys"[78] was very clearly adopted in Italian and German archeological research, although the actors changed according to the context.

The myth of Rome, which functioned very well in the promotion of wars, became problematic when the Germans, with whom Mussolini was willing to keep up good diplomatic relations, initiated a research program dedicated to the archeology of Ostrogoths and Lombards in Italy from 1935 through the German Archaeological Institute of Rome (DAI).[79] It was Siegried Fuchs, a young scholar working for the DAI in Rome, who was appointed to carry on the archaeological research on early medieval finds in Italy. In his volume dedicated to Lombard gold crosses in Italy, he wrote: "Germanic objects found in Italy are of primary importance. Compared to other finds they represent extraordinary evidence for the high cultural level reached by the immigrant races and their crucial contribution to the birth of early medieval art."[80] This text explicitly shows the purposes of

---

[76] Joachim Werner, "Zur Entstehung der Reihengräberzivilisation: Ein Beitrag zur Methode der frühgeschichtlichen Archäologie, " *Archaeologia Geographica* 1 (1950): 23–32.

[77] Bernard Wailes and Amy L. Zoll, "Civilization, Barbarism, and Nationalism in European Archaeology," in *Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology*, ed. Philip L. Kohl and Clare Fawcett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 21–38.

[78] Wailes and Zoll, "Civilization," 25.

[79] For the reconstruction of the DAI activities in this period and the relationship with the Italian Ministry see the very interesting article by Thomas Fröhlich, "The Study of the Lombards and the Ostrogoths at the German Archaeological Institute of Rome, 1937–1943," *Fragmenta* 2 (2008): 183–214.

[80] "…zumal der germanische Fundstoff in Italien von ganz besonderer Wichtigkeit und wie nichts anderes geeingnet ist, die überragende Kulturhöhe der eingewanderten Stämme und ihren entscheidenden Anteil am Aufbau der frühmittelalterlichen Kunst zu erweisen": Siegried Fuchs, *Die langobardischen Goldblattkreuze aus der Zone südwärts der Alpen* (Berlin: Mann, 1938), 7.

the research on barbarian archeology as promoted by the Nazis in the Italian peninsula. Although this research plan was in contrast with the promotion of the imperial period in Italy, the Italian ministry allowed the Germans to carry on with archaeological excavations in Galeata, where, according to written sources, Theoderic possessed a hunting estate. This was a rather indulgent concession from the Italian Cultural Ministry, since at that time the laws did not allow foreigners to carry out archaeological excavations in Italy. This permission arose from an agreement established in 1941 between the Italian Minister of Education Bottai and the German Minister of Science Education and National Culture Trust concerning a bilateral exchange in archaeological campaigns.[81] While German archaeologists were allowed to investigate some sites dated to the Lombard period, Italian archaeologists could carry out research on Roman monuments in Germany. However, the Galeata fields where Germans were allowed to dig were not particularly promising, and as von Gerkant, the director of the German archaeological institute in Rome, wrote to one of his friends: "Finally, we came to a slope where some corn and greenery grew, and this was the place … however strictly between you and me I am not very happy about the situation, as I hope to find at least some walls still in place. … We risk a big fiasco."[82] Finally, the excavations carried out in 1942 brought to light some remains of late antique walls which were interpreted as Theoderic's hunting palace. The reconstruction of how it looked was meant to stress the German character of the building.[83]

It may not be by chance that the *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* became silent about barbarian finds from this period on. The attitudes of Italian archaeologists towards early medieval finds also became more indulgent and the negative adjectives used to describe barbarian finds were abandoned. In 1938, Carlo Calise wrote:

> The barbaric peoples, who had invaded the provinces of the empire, were the first to benefit from this circumstance; in fact from their primitive customs, they gradually moved towards better forms of civilization, both in their spirit and in their social institutions.[84]

But even more significant is a speech given by Amadeo Maurigi, on 23 November 1941 at the opening for the XIIth year of the Accademia d'Italia:

---

[81] Fröhlich, *The Study of the Lombards,* 199.

[82] Fröhlich, *The Study of the Lombards,* 199.

[83] Fröhlich, *The Study of the Lombards,* 197–198.

[84] Carlo Calisse, "La funzione dell'Impero Romano nell'età di mezzo," in *La missione dell'Impero di Roma nelle storia della civiltà:* Atti del V congresso nazionale di Studi Romani. ed. Carlo Galassi (Rome: Istituto di Studi Romani, 1938), 61. See also Fröhlich, *The Study of the Lombards,* for a comment on this paper.

Destiny had in store that this battle had to be fought by the two populations that had emerged ethnically and culturally uncontaminated from the bloody purification of the migrations. And destiny had in store that they would also be flanked by nations in which the faith of Rome was born again in their blood and culture. Today the Roman spirit and the German spirit have united to defend their common civilizations and no foe will ever defeat their joint forces.[85]

Conclusions

Weapon graves and the image of warriors attached to them came to be of particular interest in Italy from the second half of the nineteenth century. They could be employed to evoke the image of either brave warriors or brutal enemies, and labeling them was essential to allow them to be understood in this perspective. The early medieval warrior of Cividale needed a name that could be linked with a hero fighting to his death for his *Patria*. The same attitude was later attached to Roman soldiers, the model for Fascist militias. In contrast to the positive symbol of a heroic masculinity are the deficient anti-males, who could be the barbarians, the ancient Romans, or even female deserters. Their positive or negative roles could change according to the political discourse they were meant to support. These oversimplified categorizations of archaeological finds functioned to promote an image of warlike masculinity which could be clearly understood by the masses. However, these interpretations, masking strategic or political tensions, turned out to be ambiguous. Such is the case of the image of the Roman versus German soldier, which at a certain point turned out to be unsuitable with respect to the Italian – German alliance during the Second World War.

---

[85] "Il destino ha fatto in modo che questa battaglia dovesse essere combattuta da due popoli che sono emersi incontaminati dal processo di purificazione operato dalle migrazioni. E il destino aveva in serbo che questi popoli fossero fiancheggiati da nazioni nelle quali la fede di Roma era rinata nel loro sangue e nella loro cultura. Oggi lo spirito di Roma e quello degli antichi Germani si sono uniti per difendere le loro comuni civilizzazioni, e nessun avversario sconfiggerà le loro forze unite" in Daniele Manacorda and Renato Tamassia, *Il Piccone del Regime* (Rome: Armando Curcio Editore, 1985), 25.

ETHNOGENESIS THEORIES CONCERNING THE BELORUSSIANS

Alena Kliuchnik

Introduction

The process of ethnogenesis is one of the most difficult aspects in the history of any people and the Belorussians are no exception. Until now no common opinion has evolved among researchers concerning this matter. First, there is an on-going discussion concerning the time this ethnicity appeared. Some specialists such as archaeologist G. Shtyhov,[1] the historian and ethnographer M. Ermalovich,[2] and the archaeologist M. Tkachow[3] all claim that Belorussians as an ethnicity already existed in the thirteenth century with the formation processes starting in the seventh and eighth centuries. Others, such as Russian archaeologist and Slavist V. Sedov,[4] say that the Belorussian ethnic entity formed in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. The Belorussian historian and ethnographer M. Grynblat[5] believes that the Belorussians as a concrete entity appeared in the fourteenth – sixteenth centuries. There is also no common opinion concerning who the ancestors of the Belorussians were.

In this paper the main ethnogenesis ideas surrounding the Belorussians will be discussed. The questions to be addressed are:

– What are the main early and contemporary ethnogenesis notions concerning the Belorussians?

---

[1] [Georgy Stykhov] Георгий Штыхов, *Археологическая карта Белоруссии* [Archaeological map of Belarus] (Minsk: Polymja, 1968).

[2] [Mikola Ermalovich] Мікола Ермаловіч, *Па слядах аднаго міфа* [Tracing One Myth] (Minsk: Navuka i Tekhnika, 1989).

[3] [Mikhail Tkachow] Міхаіл Ткачоў, *Абарончыя збудаванні заходніх зямель Беларусі XIII– XVIII стст* [Fortification buildings of the western regions of Belarus] (Minsk: Navuka i Tekhnika, 1978), or [Mikhail Tkachev] Михаил Ткачев, *Замки Белоруссии* [Castles of Belarus] (Minsk: Polymja, 1987).

[4] [Valentin Sedov] Валентин Седов, *Восточные славяне в VI–XIII веках* [Eastern Slavs in the 6th–13th centuries] (Moscow: Nauka, 1982); Idem, *Славяне верхнего Поднепровья и Подвинья* [The Slavs of the Upper Dnieper and Dvina regions] (Moscow: Nauka, 1970).

[5] [Moisey Grinblat] Моисей Гринблат, *Белорусы. Очерки происхождения и этнической истории* [The Belorussians. Sketches on their Origins and Ethnic History] (Minsk: Navuka i Tekhnika, 1968).

Alena Kliuchnik

–　　What factors inspired interest in the origins of the Belorussian people and influenced the formation of ethnogenesis theories in later periods?

Early Interests and Ideas

Interest in the ethnic origins of the Belorussians appeared at the end of the eighteenth – beginning of the nineteenth centuries. Together with the contemporary general historical "trend" in this field, there were some local factors that inspired interest in the ethnic history of these people. In that period, ethnic Belorussian territories represented a borderland between two powers: Poland and the Russian Empire. Thus, political events in the region such as the three partitions of Poland that saw ethnic Belorussian territories cut off from Poland and attached to the Russian Empire, the rebellion of the 1830–1831s as well as other events sharpened the confrontation between Russia and Poland in the region, but also inspired interest in the ethnic origins of the Belorussians. Under these conditions, two early theories concerning the ethnogenesis of the Belorussian people formed in this period: the "Polish" and the "Great Russian."

Neither theory incorporated the idea of the Belorussians as an independent ethnicity based on the idea that the Belorussians did not have their own language. The founders and the followers of the Polish theory, such as A. Rypiński,[6] considered the Belorussian language to be a dialect of Polish and the Belorussians a part of the Polish ethnicity. The founders of the "Great Russian" concept, such as the Russian linguist, palaeographer, literary historian and Slavist A. Sobolevskiy[7], believed that Belorussian was a dialect of Russian and the Belorussians were a part of the Russian ethnicity.

The above-mentioned theories appeared in the absence of contemporary scientific research on the ethnic origins of the local people and under the influence of political and ideological factors. Both theories reflected the political and ideological contradictions between the two states, Poland and the Russian Empire, as well as their territorial claims. This situation favored conditions in which investigations into the origins of the Belorussians as a separate ethnicity did not develop intensively.

---

[6]　Alexandr Rypiński, *Białoruś. Kilka słów o poezji prostego ludu tej naszej polskiej prowincji, o jego muzyce, śpiewach, tancach etc.* [Belarus. Some words about the poetry of the common people in our Polish province, about their music, songs, dances etc.] (Paris/ Paryż: w Księgarni i Drukarni J. Marylskiego, 1840).
[7]　[Alexey Sobolevskiy] Алексей Соболевский, *Очерки русской диалектологии* [Essays on Russian dialectology] (St. Petersburg, 1892).

Nevertheless, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the initial investigations into the ethnography, history, ethnic territory, language and oral traditions of the Belorussians began. First, book editions of the folklore, pieces of oral and poetic tradition, and collections of songs were published during this period. Attempts to analyze the language and the folklore of the region scientifically lead some researchers to begin talking about the Belorussian language as something separate from Russian and Polish and mark the Belorussian nation as an entity apart from its neighbors. Mostly because of the political tendencies in the region from the time the lands of Belarus became part of the Russian Empire, such conclusions and opinions remained in the realm of personal scientific opinions in the first half of the nineteenth century. Comparatively poor source bases, narrow topics of research, an absence of systematic scientific research in the field of general and comparative linguistics, a non-existent Belorussian national movement and the particularities of political life on the border regions of the Russian Empire contributed to the preservation and consolidation of the "Polish" and the "Great Russian" concepts of Belorussian ethnogeneis.

The search for other ethnic criteria or indicators showed that it is impossible to connect the Belorussians to this or that ethnicity based on religion, for example. A majority of the Belorussians followed and still follow Eastern Orthodoxy. Some however, followed the Roman-Catholic rite as well as other Christian traditions. From the middle of the nineteenth century, scholars came to believe that in case of the Belorussians, the language of the people should be considered the main criterion of membership in this ethnicity. As a result, research into the contemporary spoken as well as Old-Belorussian language of the Middle Ages came into being in the second half of the nineteenth century. At the same time, more detailed investigations into the history and ethnography of the region got under way. The tradition of calling Belorussians and Ukrainians "Russians" continued. Nevertheless, if previously researchers understood these cultural entities to be a single nation, together with the features they shared in common, the three groups were also now described as having certain differences. At the end of the nineteenth – beginning of the twentieth century, "Russians" as a group started to be understood by some researchers as a triumvirate of the Great Russians, Belorussians and Ukrainians. These circles developed a theory about the Old-Russian ethnicity within the borders of the Kievan Rus. This Old-Russian ethnicity gave birth to the Russians, Belorussians and Ukrainians.[8] This theory was popular in Soviet historiography in the first half of the twentieth

---

[8] [Alexey Shakhmatov] Алексей Шахматов, *Древнейшие судьбы русского племени* [The oldest destinies of the Russian tribe] (Petrograd: Rus. Istor. Journ., 1919).

century even though the existence of a homogeneous Old-Russian ethnicity was not substantiated.

Studies of the Belorussian language continued to be developed in terms of its origins, main etymological characteristics and the territorial boundaries of its use. Special attention was paid to how it was related to the languages spoken by its neighbours. Ethnic maps of the Belorussian people were first based on the territorial distribution of the language. Such definitive ethnic criteria such as a common historical past, a common folklore tradition, a common ethnographic heritage, and self-awareness were added to the language criterion by the end of the nineteenth – beginning of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, even at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Belorussians remained a little known ethnic entity even in scientific circles, mainly because of the ideological program of the Russian authorities, aiming at "Russification" of the Belorussians.

Twentieth-Century Concepts

Through the second part of the nineteenth century, together with the development of studies in linguistics, ethnography, folklore, the history of Belarus, the first anthropological and archaeological investigations got under way. It was in that period that the Belorussian national movement appeared and became stronger. By the beginning of the twentieth century, more and more investigations demonstrating the independence of the Belorussian ethnicity began to appear.

The development of the "Great Russian" theory had its local variant in Belarus, namely, the so-called "Western Russianism." The chief proponent of "Western Russianism" M.O. Koyalovich and his followers came out in opposition to the Polish element in the region of Belarus.[9] They supported this position by depicting the Belorussians as a branch of the Russian (or Great Russian) nation. At the same time, their works demonstrated the existence of deeper ethnic differences between the Belorussians and the Russians. M.O. Koyalovich defined the tribes of Dregovichy and Krivichy as representing the ethnic foundations of the Belorussians, an idea that comes close to more recent scientific theories. Modern theories also add the Slavic Radimichy tribe to this group together with the hypothesis that a non-Slavic element participated in the ethnogenesis of the Belorussians. Koyalovich defined the eleventh century as the time when the first identifiable ethnic features of the Belorussians appeared.

---

[9] [Mikhail Koyalovich] Михаил Кояловичъ, *Лекции по истории западной России* [Lectures on the History of Western Russia] (Moscow: Typ. Bakhmeteva, 1864).

The ideology of "Western Russianism" on the one hand favored the spread of the Great Russian theory. On the other hand, it inspired further scientific investigations. As a result, "Western Russianism" contributed to the development of a third main theory concerning the ethnogenesis of the Belorussian people, the so-called concept developed by E. Karskiy.

In his fundamental three volume work "The Belorussians"[10] based on the analysis of the lexical structure, syntax, phonetics and morphology of the Belorussian language, E. Karskiy demonstrated that Belorussian is an independent Slavic language. Karskiy thought the Belorussians should be recognized as one of the three independent eastern-Slavic ethnicities that formed in the thirteenth century: the Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians. In his theory, three Slavic tribes, the Krivichy, Dregovichy and Radimichy, were recognized as forming the basis of the Belorussian ethnicity. The influence of the non-Slavic element from the Baltic was also analyzed as well as the influence of another neighboring eastern-Slavic substratum.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the views and arguments of Karskiy were further developed in investigations lead by M. Dovnar-Zapolskiy. Starting from a series of articles[11] and in later works[12] he presented his argument for the Belorussians as an independent ethnicity. These two intellectual figures may be considered the founders of the modern ethnogenesis concepts of the Belorussians. Karskiy's ideas were mainly based on the research and analysis of the Belorussian language. Dovnar-Zapolskiy underpinned these results with an analysis of facts from political history and the influences of geographical and natural factors.

Thus, the main achievements in the field by the beginning of the twentieth century were:
– The collecting and publishing of folklore, ethnographic and archive materials;
– The beginning of archaeological and cultural anthropological research in the region;

---

[10] [Evfimiy Karskiy] Евфимий Карский, *Белорусы* [The Belorussians] (Warsaw: Typ. Warshav. ucheb. okruga, 1903).

[11] [Mitrofan Dovnar-Zapolskiy] Митрофан Довнар-Запольский, *Белорусское прошлое* [The Belorussian past] (Kiev, 1888).

[12] Idem, *IIсследования и статьи. Т. 1. Этнография и социология, обычное право, статистика, белорусская письменность* [Investigations and essays. Vol.1. Ethnography and sociology, common law, statistics, the Belorussian written language] (Kiev: Typ. 1-oj Kiev. arteli pech. dela, 1909).

- The identification of the ethnic foundations of the Belorussians (interactions between the three eastern-Slavic tribes of the Radimichy, Dregovichy and Krivichy together with some neighboring eastern Slavic groups as well as with a non-Slavic Baltic element);
- The defining of the main elements of the ethnicity such as a common language, a community of material culture, a community of territory, a community of historical past and ethnic consciousness;
- The defining of the territorial boundaries of a Belorussian ethnicity;
- The defining of the period when the Belorussian ethnic features emerged;
- The defining and analyzing of the political, geographical, and natural factors which influenced the process of ethnogenesis among the Belorussians.

The three main notions, the Polish, the "Great Russian" and Karskiy's are still alive and being discussed, developed and argued in Belarus, Poland, Russia and Lithuania. The authors accept one or another position mainly based on their personal ethnic origin. The ideas of Karskiy and Dovnar-Zapolskiy, the first ones in which Belorussians were treated as an independent ethnicity, gave birth to a number of modern theories emphasizing, for example, the importance of the Baltic element in the process of ethnogenesis of the Belorussians[13] or the importance of other ethnic elements.

The idea which is the most widespread in Belarus nowadays was developed by M. Pilipenko.[14] His work marks an attempt to consider all possible elements which could have led to the formation of the Belorussian ethnicity. According to him, the first stage in the process lies in the fifth and the eighth centuries when the Slavs entered the region of the upper Dnieper and Dvina and began to settle there. They assimilated the Baltic tribes they found inhabiting these lands. As a result, the Krivichy, Dregovichy and Rdimichy tribes appeared on the ethnic landscape. In the second stage, during the tenth-eleventh centuries, consolidation of these populations within a common ethnic entity followed. Mixing processes with the western Slavs, Baltic and Tartar-Mongol elements marked the third stage of development and, by the sixteenth century, an entity called the Belorussians

---

[13] [Valentin Sedov] Валентин Седов, *Восточные славяне в VI–XIII веках* [Eastern Slavs in the 6th–13th centuries] (Moscow: Nauka, 1982); Idem, *Славяне верхнего Поднепровья и Подвинья* [The Slavs of the Upper Dnieper and Dvina regions] (Moscow: Nauka, 1970), [Georgy Stykhov] Георгий Штыхов, *Археологическая карта Белоруссии* [Archaeological map of Belarus] (Minsk: Polymja, 1968).

[14] [Mikhail Pilipenko] Михаил Пилипенко, *Возникновение Белоруссии: новая концепция* [Emergence of Belorussia: A New Concept] (Minsk: Belarus, 1991).

came into being. The toponym "Belaya Rus" or "White Russia" appeared during this period.

I mentioned the main limitations of previous ideas about the ethnogenesis of the Belorussians. Modern ideas about Belorussian ethnogenesis have their own deficiencies too. Some will be described here. Concerning the colonization of the territories where the Belorussians were later to appear, the Slavs continued colonizing the northern regions even later than Pilipenko asserts, namely in the ninth century. It also does not explain why the three different tribes of the Radimichy, Krivichy and Dregovichy were formed after the Slavs arrived and assimilated with the local Baltic tribes. And why was it those three tribes finally appeared and not one, or two or more than three? In addition, the toponym of "Belaya Rus" or "White Russia" was used for naming a number of different areas throughout the sixteenth to the twentieth century.

Finally, I would say that nations appear, exist and develop, and that ethnogenesis itself is a continuous process. Each case study demonstrates that the methodological and theoretical approaches to research on ethnogenesis have their own limitations. In this kind of investigation there are no strict criteria for describing ethnicity. The case of the Belorussians is quite interesting in many respects. Archaeologists do not agree on the period when features of the Belorussian ethnicity appeared. Linguists argue about the influences which led to the formation of particularities in the Belorussian language and its dialects. The language alone should also not be considered the sole criterion for defining the Belorussian people. It is hard to find a period when all those who considered themselves Belorussian actually spoke the same language or its dialects. There were always groups of Belorussians speaking Polish or Russian. Nowadays, Belarus is officially a bilingual state. Belorussian and Russian are the official languages, although in fact, Russian is far more widely used and spoken both in daily life and at official levels. As for religion – there has never been a period when the Belorussians followed the same religion. And yet, in spite of all contradictions and research difficulties the Belorussians separated and separate themselves from other groups and are also seen as a separate ethnic entity by others.

Conclusions

The present outline of the history of writing dedicated to the problem of the ethnogenesis of the Belorussians permits the following conclusions to be drawn:

–   Three main ideas about Belorussian ethnogenesis may be defined through the period investigated in this paper. In the "Great Russian" and Polish

notions, the Belorussians were not considered an independent ethnicity while the theoretical notions developed by E. Karskiy and M.V. Dovnar-Zapolskiy argued for the Belorussians representing a separate ethnic unit;

– The first two theories appeared as a result of political and ideological processes in the region in the first half of the nineteenth century;

– The theory put forward by E. Karskiy was formed as the result of ideological and political pressures that aimed at the "russification" of the Belorussians who already lived within the borders of the Russian Empire, but also within the context of a growing Belorussian movement and developing scientific investigations within the region;

– The three theoretical concepts were discussed, argued and developed throughout the twentieth century and none of them, including the above-mentioned modern idea ever satisfied the expectations of the academic or general audience;

– The methods used to investigate the ethnogenesis of the Belorussians do not meet the requirements of modern research. One reason is probably the multi-dimensional nature and structure of this kind of investigation. Secondly, it appears there are no universal "criteria" for describing ethnicity. It was demonstrated that "criteria" such as language, or religion, or territory have their limitations when talking about ethnicities and their formation processes. Thirdly, ethnogenesis is itself an on-going process. Thus, every time somebody touches upon this topic it is always yields new research, new approaches, and new results even if one and the same ethnicity is being analyzed.

LIVED SPACE IN PAST AND PRESENT:
COURSE REPORT AND SAMPLE STUDIES

Katalin Szende

For a week between 21 and 28 June 2010, the city of Budapest became the classroom for twenty-five young scholars including historians, architects, archaeologists, and sociologists. They were participants in a summer university course entitled *Lived Space in Past and Present: Challenges in the research and management of townscape and cultural heritage*, strolling the streets and squares of Buda, Pest and Óbuda under expert guidance in quest of the modern uses or disguises of Roman and medieval remains, and discussing issues of physical and social topography upon their return to the Nádor Street campus. The course was organized by CEU SUN in co-operation with the Department of Medieval Studies, under the leadership of the author of this short introduction. The international faculty consisted of *Sarah Rees Jones* (Centre for Medieval Studies, University of York, UK), *Peter Johanek* (Institute of Comparative Urban History, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany), *Rossina Kostova* (Department of Archaeology, University of Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria), *József Laszlovszky* (CEU, Department of Medieval Studies), *Anngret Simms* (School of Geography, Planning & Environmental Policy, University College Dublin, Ireland) and *Gábor Gyáni* (CEU, Department of History / Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest), the course coordinators were *Kyra Lyublyanovics* and *Dóra Mérai* (both PhD students at the Department of Medieval Studies).

The academic agenda of the course was informed by the notion that urban settlement has always had a strong and complex spatial dimension. Besides the obvious requirements of food, water, and sheltered dwelling, integration within existing communication networks or the creation of new connections shaped the physical environment of towns in every given period. Within this general framework, each settlement developed its unique structure and built form, which has undergone several changes in time, including rapid and fundamental alterations in modern times. The result of these processes is our urban cultural heritage; research into it, its protection and possible uses formed the core of the course. The participants investigated the interactions of people and place across the medieval, early modern and modern periods.

The principal questions discussed within the framework of the CEU SUN included queries into the main elements of the natural and built heritage of modern towns: how far back can these be traced and using which sources and

methods? How can data on urban heritage be collected, ordered, presented and utilized? Attention was devoted to social aspects as well: what part do space and place play in the development of a community or locale? What emphasis should historians place on the built and natural environment of a place and how should they analyze the relationship between people and their urban environment? How does the study of cultural heritage contribute to our understanding of past and present life in towns?

Our agenda fits into a broad trend within international research. Historical, archaeological, geographical, architectural and environmental studies have been dedicated to the exploration of the urban fabric, both on the level of individual settlements and on a larger regional or global scale. These research results have stimulated academic debates on the creation and growth of towns; on the role of seigniorial power, civic initiatives and external forces in these processes; and on the role of migration, colonization and cultural transfer in the spread of urbanization – just to name a few.

Equally important – or perhaps even more crucial – are the practical implications of such research: how do the elements of present townscapes reveal the development of past periods and what needs to be done to preserve their values? How can the results be conveyed to town planners, developers and to the general public? How can knowledge about past processes influence contemporary policy issues in an effort to counteract urban tension and to lessen the disadvantages of segregation and the emergence of ghetto-like districts? The long-term view of the way the profiles of town zones can change provides a warning about past failures and promising perspectives in the form of successful examples.

The course was designed as a discussion forum on various aspects and interpretations of urban topography and cultural monuments, as perceived by urban, economic and social historians, geographers, archaeologists, and conservationists. After a survey of the sources: their contents, characteristics, potential and limitations, the lectures and roundtables dealt with the methods and uses of settlement geography and urban morphology as ways of explaining the development or decline of towns. Through a series of topographical features, which were present in various forms in the majority of medieval European towns (defense works; squares and streets; churches, chapels, monasteries; cemeteries; marketplaces and shops), we examined how the built form of settlements reflected and influenced the needs of medieval society. An equally important issue was the place, role and use of these elements of urban environment in our modern world.

As already indicated above, the course included several walking tours led by József Laszlovszky and other colleagues to sites within Budapest to show both positive and negative examples of heritage management. A fruitful cooperation developed with colleagues from the Budapest History Museum, which goes back to previous common projects. Members of the Medieval Department of the museum (*Adrienn Papp, Károly Magyar*, and *András Végh*) devoted much time and energy to guiding the course participants to little known or otherwise inaccessible sites. The last full day of the course included an academic field trip to visit the monuments and cultural landscape of Győr (with the guidance of Prof. Gábor Winkler) and Sopron. The former city is a good example of the transformation of a medieval bishop's seat into a modern industrial town in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries while retaining its medieval (and Roman) core; the latter is a winner of the European Prize for Monument Protection in 1977, the site of the most important systematic research and refurbishing of a protected city centre with Roman, Gothic and Baroque architecture and well-preserved street pattern.

The small selection of contributions offered here derives from the various activities that characterized the course. The thematic lectures given by one or two faculty members that provided a solid theoretical ground for our common coursework are represented here by *Anngret Simms*' paper on her view as a historical geographer on the approaches of various disciplines to urban landscapes. *Thomas Stiglbrunner*[1] was one of the participants in the course, and his piece was presented in the seminar discussions on everyone's own research topic, whether it was physical space or the intangible spaces created through communication. Finally, *Ágnes Flóra*'s article as another research report (and a chapter of her dissertation to be completed in our department) exemplifies the complex set of meanings that confronts researchers as they try to unravel the use of urban space in its everyday and festive spheres. This was also one of the points taken up by the one-day workshop that took place on Saturday entitled *Urban Space and Topography: Research, Use, Reuse*, an event which successfully connected past and present in the lived space of towns.

---

[1] Recipient of a DOC fellowship of the Austrian Academy of Sciences at the institute of Eastern European History at the University of Vienna (thomas.stiglbrunner@gmx.at).

DIVERSE APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF URBAN LANDSCAPES IN ANGLO-AMERICAN GEOGRAPHY (WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON URBAN MORPHOLOGY)

Anngret Simms ⬇

Paradigm Shift in Urban Geography

Over the last thirty years the study of urban landscapes has become an exciting field of research among English language geographers making use of a variety of different approaches. During the 1960s to '70s, urban geographers focused, in the main, on locational analysis, that is, the understanding of the internal structure of towns. These studies were motivated by the quantitative revolution and the capacity of computers to deal with large data banks. In this way models were refined that explained the functions of towns. In this context urban form, the town plan and the building fabric were only of interest insofar as they acted as the containers of urban functions. The earliest of these models was that proposed by the American social scientist E.W. Burgess in 1925. This developmental model explains the distribution of social groups within urban areas. It shows that towns grow outward from a centre and, as they do so, the various occupants of the land become separated from each other, generating a standard pattern. We have all become familiar with the concept of the Central Business District (CBD) that takes up the centre of the town.

Once the locational analysis school had become the dominating paradigm in urban geography, the study of urban morphology that was previously concerned with the form and fabric of the city became, in the view of mainstream geographers, a barren outpost. However, since the late 1970s there has been a revival of interest in urban landscapes among colleagues writing in English. This revival was due to three disparate developments:

1. The crisis of the urban environment, particularly in American towns, returned the focus to the physical fabric of inner cities.
2. The rediscovery of the importance of space, the so-called "spatial turn" in the social sciences, helped to revive interest in urban morphology.
3. The interest in the symbolic, political and material foundation of landscape has made urban landscapes the focus of investigation for the practitioners of New Cultural Geography, whose main interest is the interpretation of landscapes.

I have attempted to show different approaches to the study of urban landscapes in a diagram published in the volume entitled *Vielerlei Städte*[1] (*Fig. 1*). The diagram shows, separated by a strong black line, two fundamentally different approaches. Those on the left-hand side are primarily based on empirical studies and those on the right-hand side are informed by critical social theory. On the left we find the field of Classical Cultural Geography with the exploration of urban morphology. Here the focus is on the creation and transformation of urban form. Next we have the field of History where urban landscapes are primarily viewed as historical phenomena. Then follows the field of Architecture where urban landscapes are studied as cultural artefacts. And finally within this section we have the field of politics, where urban landscapes are seen in the context of political economies. Separate from the approaches that can be linked to specific disciplines, we find more recent approaches that are linked to New Cultural Geography and are embedded in Social Sciences. We will begin our discussion with those.
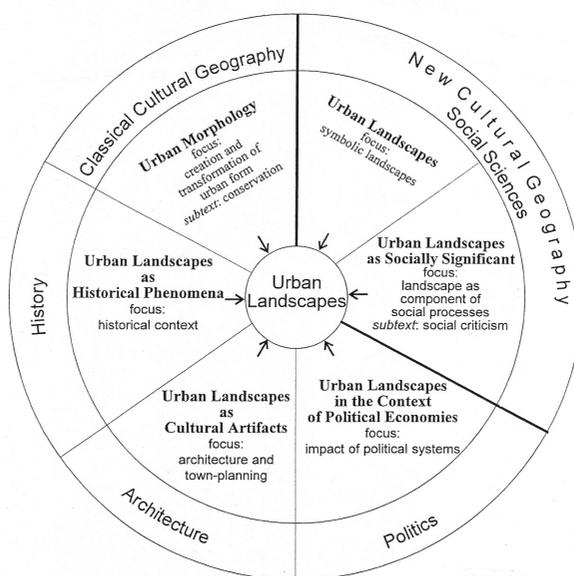

Fig. 1. Different approaches to understanding urban landscapes (since the 1970s) compiled by Anngret Simms, from: Vielerlei Städte. Der Stadtbegriff*, edited by P. Johanek and F.J. Post, (Cologne, Vienna, Weimar: Böhlau), 2004, 55.*

---

[1] Anngret Simms, "Neue Wege der historisch-geographischen Erforschung von Stadtlandschaften in der anglo-amerikanischen Geographie," in *Vielerlei Städte: Der Stadtbegriff*, Städteforschung A 61, ed. Peter Johanek and Franz-Josef Post (Cologne, Vienna, Weimar: Böhlau, 2004), 53–70.

Anngret Simms

Urban Landscapes as Socially Significant

Let us first look at the category of urban landscapes as socially significant. In the 1980s a paradigm shift occurred. Urban phenomena, for example urban functions or urban form, were no longer considered something worth exploring for their own sake. Instead the interest shifted to urban change as an indicator of social transformation. This approach is the result of the introduction of Henri Lefebvre's concept of space as a social product into cultural geography. Lefebvre shifts our attention from the analysis of "things in space" to the "production of space".[2] Our attention is drawn to the fact that the inequalities inherent in capitalism are reflected in the spatial arrangement of towns. The concepts of space, culture, and power have become important issues in contemporary discourses. Lefebvre influenced human geographers including E.W. Soja and David Harvey.

Soja writes that "Space is a material product of a range of social relations which themselves are reproduced and mediated by it."[3] In this context, the built environment is not only the product of design (a matter for architects), but also a reflection of economic, social and political relationships within society and a means through which these relationships are produced, sustained, and modified. Urban landscapes become constituent elements in socio-political processes of cultural reproduction and change. The study of landscape is at the heart of the study of social and cultural processes.

The other category under the umbrella of the New Cultural Geography focuses on urban landscapes and their symbolic value. The symbolic qualities of urban landscapes, in particular the significance of monuments as symbols, have attracted the interest of those geographers who interpret the social significance of urban form. Urban landscapes are, in fact, part of the iconography of a nation. The battle for the reconstruction of the Marienkirche in Dresden and the intended reconstruction of the former royal residence in Berlin are good examples of a nation's determination not to lose those icons that have been part of its identity.

The iconography of the landscape is of particular interest in post-colonial countries such as Ireland and Finland, both countries that won their independence only in the early twentieth century. The iconography of Dublin changed considerably when in 1922 it became the capital of an independent nation. Nelson's Pillar, built in 1808, once stood on the main thoroughfare in

---

[2] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

[3] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso Press, 1989).

Dublin. It was destroyed in 1966 by a bomb laid by the Irish Republican Army and thus is a good example of the deconstruction of a colonial landscape.[4] The graceful pillar with Nelson on its top was replaced in 2003 by a spire of light, a large stainless steel monument that is bereft of any political or cultural meaning (*Fig. 2* and *Fig. 3*). Other statues in Dublin relating to the British royal family were also destroyed. Those included the statues of King William III (formerly on College Green) and King George II (formerly in St Stephen's Green), while the statue of Queen Victoria (formerly outside Leinster House) was safely tucked away in a storehouse before being given a new home in Sydney in Australia. The monuments celebrating the involvement of British royalty in Ireland were replaced by a large number of monuments relating to national Irish culture and politics (*Fig. 4*).

Fig. 3. The spire of light in O'Connell Street, Dublin, erected in 2003 as millennium monument.

Fig. 2. Nelson's pillar in O'Connell Street, Dublin, built in 1808, destroyed by a bomb in 1966.

---

[4] Yvonne Whelan, "The Construction and Destruction of a Colonial Landscape: Monuments to British Monarchs in Dublin Before and After Independence," *Journal of Historical Geography* 28, no. 4 (2002): 513. See also eadem, *Reinventing Modern Dublin: Streetscape, Iconography and the Politics of Identity* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2003).
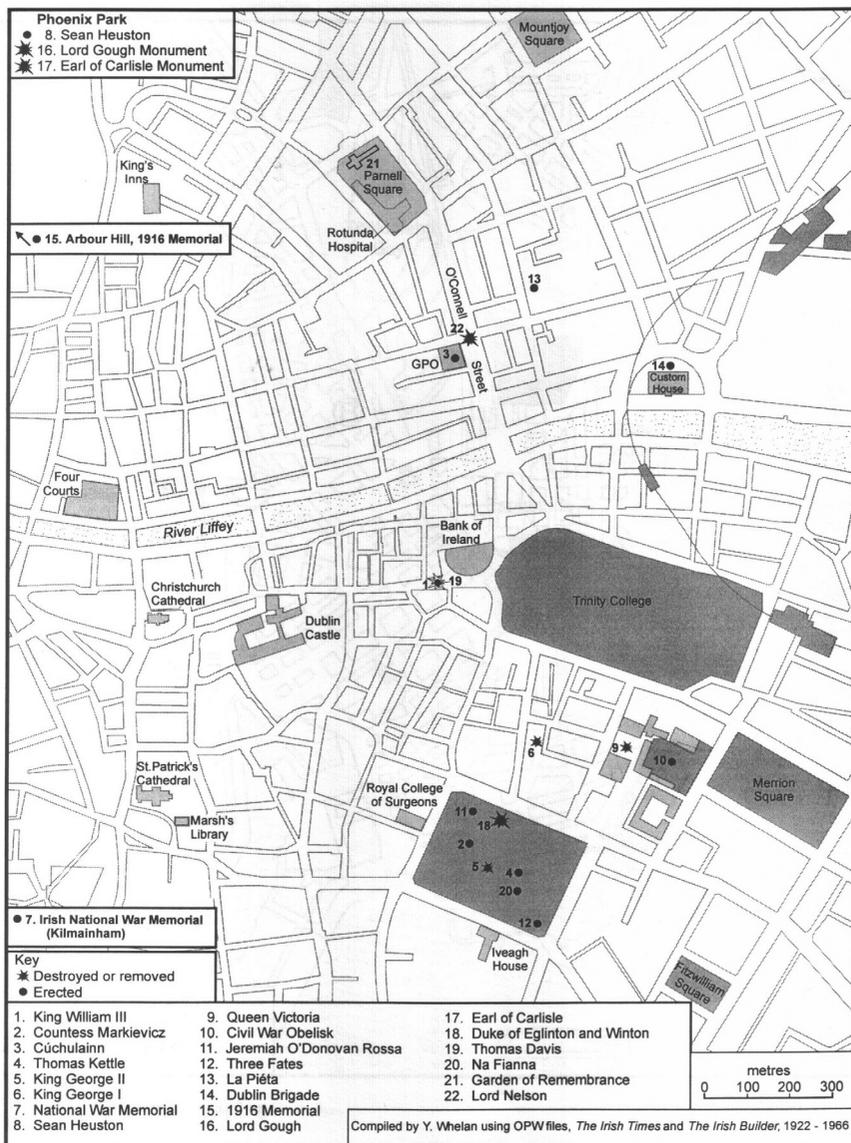
Fig. 4. *Public monuments erected, removed and destroyed in Dublin, 1922–1966. Compiled by Y. Whelan using Office of Public Works files,* The Irish Times *and* The Irish Builder*, 1922–1966. From Yvonne Whelan, "The construction and destruction of a colonial landscape: monuments to British monarchs in Dublin before and after independence,"* Journal of Historical Geography*, 28, 4 (2002): 513.*

We return to the field of urban morphology which will be explored now in greater detail. Urban morphology is the systematic study of the physical form of towns and cities, at different scales and in a full cultural context. The study of the historical development of urban form is called morphogenesis. This type of research has its roots in Central Europe where it first surfaced in the mid-nineteenth century. The origins of urban morphological studies go back to Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's mid-nineteenth-century assertion that the town plan served to underpin urban society, expressing in material form the spirit of its people. The 1894 monograph dedicated to the comparative study of German town plans by a Strassburg schoolteacher J. Fritz was also significant in the emergence of urban morphological studies. The German geographer Otto Schlüter and the archaeologist and art historian Paul Jonas Meier were impressed by Fritz's study and began to look at town plans as the key to regional urban identity.[5] I have recently taken up the topic of regional urban identity in an article comparing the morphology of medieval colonial towns in Ireland and in East Central Europe.[6]

In the late nineteenth century, the study of town plans consisted mainly of laying side-by-side reproductions or reconstructions of plans at a reduced scale. Gradually, interest widened and the aim became to distinguish distinct growth phases in towns and patterns of urban plots. Also at this time, Hugo Hassinger published his wonderful *Kunsthistorischer Atlas von Wien*, which focused on mapping the age of buildings.[7] In 1922, P. J. Meier first published his *Niedersächsischer Städteatlas*, which consisted of 13 loose multi-coloured maps of Lower Saxony, all drawn at a scale of 1:5000[8] (*Fig. 5*). These maps introduced the individual urban plot as the fundamental spatial unit of the town plan. Unfortunately Meier's atlas project came to a premature end with the onset of World War II. However, the idea lived on and was revived after the war with the creation of the European

---

[5] Otto Schlüter, "Über den Grundriss der Städte," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, 34 (1899): 446–462; P. J. Meier, "Die Fortschritte in der Frage der Anfänge und der Grundrissbildung der deutschen Stadt," *Korrespondenzblatt des Gesamtvereins deutscher Geschichts- und Altertumsvereine* 62 (1914): cols. 222–246.

[6] Anngret Simms, "Mittelalterliche Gründungsstädte als Ausdruck regionaler Identität," in *Aedificatio terrae: Festschrift für Eike Gringmuth-Dallmer zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Gerson H. Jeute, Jens Schneeweiss and Claudia Theune (Rahden/Westfalen: VML Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2007), 347–354.

[7] Hugo Hassinger, *Kunsthistorischer Atlas von Wien*, Österreichische Kunsttopographie 15 (Vienna: K. u. K. Zentral-Kommission für Denkmalpflege, 1916).

[8] Michael Conzen, "Retrieving the Pre-industrial Built Environments of Europe: The Historic Towns Atlas Programme and Comparative Morphological Study," *Urban Morphology* 12, no. 2 (2008): 143–156.

Fig. 5. Braunschweig *1760. Excerpt from P.J. Meier's Niedersächsischer Städteatlas, 3rd edition, 1926 (scale: 1:5000). From: M.P. Conzen, "Retrieving the preindustrial built environments of Europe: The Historic Towns Atlas programme and comparative morphological study,"* Urban Morphology, *12,2, (2008): 143–156.*

historic towns atlas project. With the publication of *Sopron*, Hungary has become the latest member of the European towns atlas project.[9]

The ideas of urban morphology developed in Germany were transferred to England by a German refugee from fascist Germany by the name of M.R.G. Conzen. He developed town-plan analysis as a research tool for the reconstruction of urban growth. This line of research is at present particularly strong in Birmingham and in North America, albeit in significantly developed forms. As Professor of Geography at Newcastle University, M.R.G. Conzen developed his conceptual framework for urban morphological studies. He identified six different categories for the study of urban landscapes:

---

[9] See previous footnote. Michael Conzen (Chicago), the son of M.R.G. Conzen recently wrote a critical review of this European project.

the town plan
the building fabric
land use
streets
plots
buildings.[10]

Conzen recognized that the plot is the fundamental unit of town-plan analysis. The periods during which particular combinations of building types and street and plot patterns were created he termed "morphological periods."

Two of Conzen's students, Jeremy Whitehand and Terry Slater, became lecturers in the School of Geography at the University of Birmingham, where they founded the Urban Morphology Research Group in 1974. The conceptual framework of their research is based on M.R.G. Conzen's ideas. The work of this group is reflected in the international journal *Urban Morphology*. Jeremy Whitehand and Peter Larkham's book, *Urban Landscapes*, published in 1992, reflects the coming together of urban morphological studies, both in international and interdisciplinary contexts. It refers to three major research directions of the morphological paradigm firstly, town-plan analysis; secondly, the reconstruction of medieval town planning and finally, recent townscape change and management.[11]

Conzen also introduced the concepts of "the burgage cycle" and "the fringe-belt." These are best understood as building-intensity cycles linked to cultural and economic change. Such rhythmic growth occurs internally by repletion – when a plot is completely built over, followed by the clearance of plots in preparation of redevelopment, when the cycle begins anew. Another phenomenon noted by Conzen was the fringe-belt. This occurs on the periphery of a town, for example along the line of an earlier town wall. In Wrocław (Breslau), for example, the fringe belt is represented by the development of the *Stadtrandzone*, first identified by the German geographer Louis (1936) in a study of Berlin. Fringe belts are the physical manifestation of periods of slow growth or even stagnation (as for example in the shadow of the former town-wall in the outward extension of the built-up area. They seem initially to be occupied by land users seeking large sites

---

[10] M.R.G. Conzen, *Alnwick, Northumberland: A Study in Town-plan Analysis*, Publication 27 (London: Institute of British Geographers, 1969) (reprint, with minor revisions and the addition of a glossary, of a monograph first published in 1960).
[11] Jeremy Whitehand and Peter Larkham, eds., *Urban Landscapes: International Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1992).
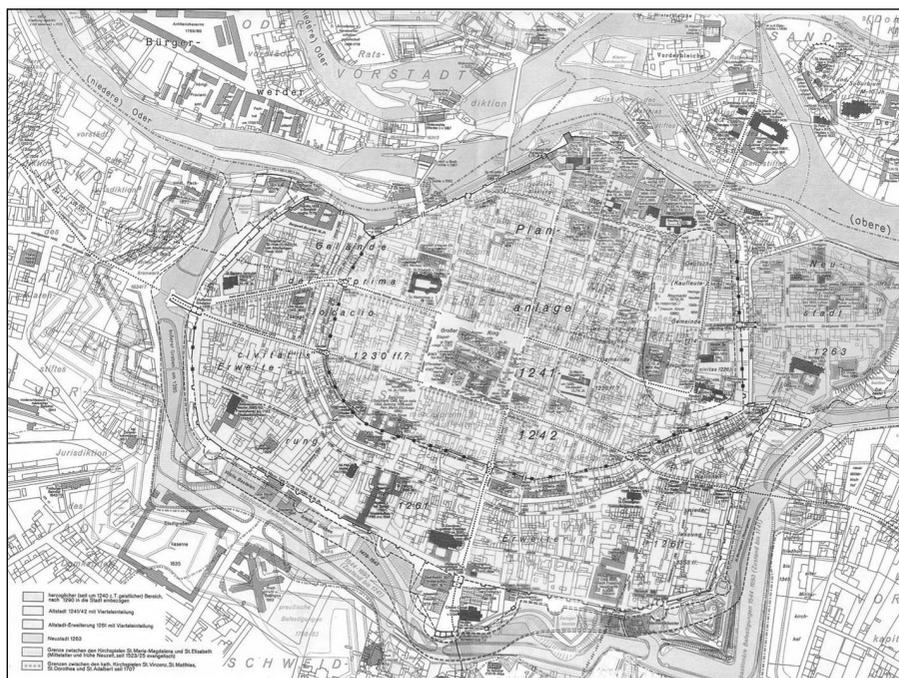
Fig. 6. The fringe-belt of Wrocław (scale: 1: 2500). From: Breslau, Deutscher Städteatlas (Münster: GSV Städteatlas Verlag, 1989).

and having a low requirement for accessibility to the commercial core, such as prisons and barracks (*Fig. 6*).[12]

Three strands of current research in urban morphology can be identified:
1. The morphogenetic approach: the analysis of town plans (usually medieval), with the aim of discovering the town's origin.
2. The agents responsible for the creation of urban landscapes.
3. Concern for the management of urban landscapes.

With particular reference to the second strand, studies of townscape change in English and Irish town centres have identified the agents, developers, architects and builders named on building plans submitted to local authorities. Building plan records show that the shift from local to national and international construction companies means that their impact on traditional townscapes is increasing.

---

[12] Hugo Weczerka, *Breslau, Deutscher Städteatlas*, Lief. IV, 5 (Altenbeken: GSV Städteatlas Verlag, 1989).

The large-scale town plans, constituting the centre-piece of the European historic towns atlases, present us with the challenge of understanding the spatial aspect of a town (the town plan) together with the town's history. This provides an insight into the nature of historical change in towns. We will use two examples from the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, with the aim of tracing existing forms back to underlying formative processes. Following the morphogenetic tradition, the present form of the city will be explained through an understanding of its historical evolution.[13] The Irish country town of Kells (*Fig. 7*), to the north-west of Dublin, has its origins in an important early Christian Columban monastery, which had proto-urban functions between the ninth and eleventh centuries. Contemporary charters testify to "clergy and laity, freemen and strangers." The present-day circular street pattern reflects the circular enclosure of the former monastery. Kells is representative of other monastic sites which seem to have been designed in conformity with a planned arrangement. When the Anglo-Normans invaded Ireland in the twelfth century, Kells was granted a charter and was extended along the perimeter of the monastic site, particularly to the east of

Fig. 7. Kells *(scale 1:2500), Irish Historic Towns Atlas 4, Royal Irish Academy, 1990.*

---

[13] Anngret Simms with Katharine Simms, *Kells*, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 4 (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1990).

the former enclosure. Street names help us understand the medieval evolution of the place: Cross Street was the site of the famous eleventh-century market cross; Castle Street was where the Anglo-Norman tower-house stood; and John Street was the location of the house of St John's Hospitallers, of which only a cemetery remains.

In contrast to Kells, the town of Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland was created on *tabula rasa* in the early thirteenth century, by an Anglo-Norman lord (*Fig. 8*).[14] The lord's castle is the dominating feature of the townscape. High Street was the main axis of the medieval town, with a Franciscan friary at the northern end. The parish church, dedicated to St Nicholas, the patron saint of seafarers, stood removed from the main street. Where did the medieval walls run? The walls represented on the 1:2500 map are those extended by Sir Arthur Chichester beyond the medieval circuit. Chichester took over the town during the Plantation period (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) and caused the medieval walls to be obliterated by early modern walls with bastions. This serves as a useful warning
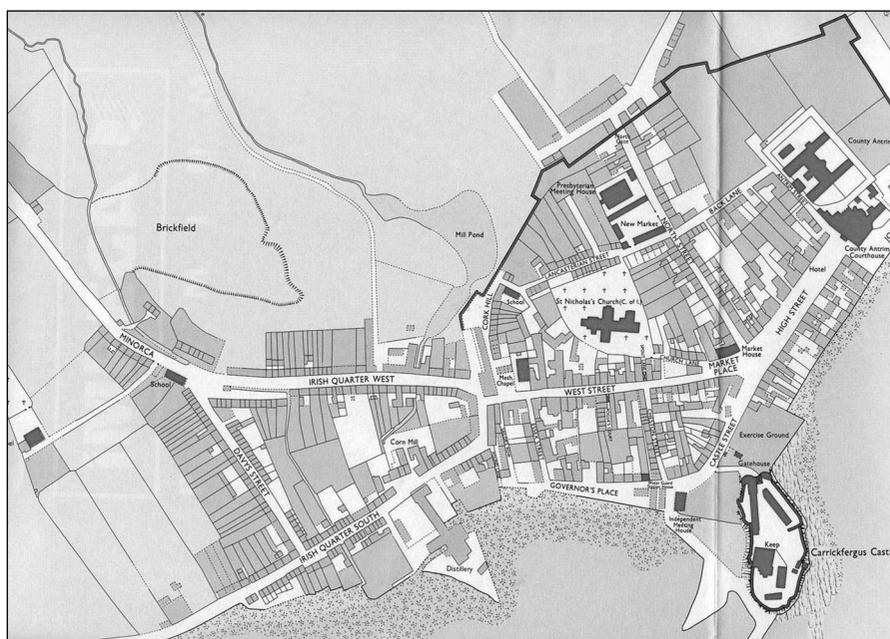

Fig. 8. Carrickfergus *(scale 1: 2500), Irish Historic Towns Atlas 2,*
Royal Irish Academy 1986.

---

[14] Philip Robinson, *Carrickfergus*, Irish Historic Towns Atlas, 2, (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1986).

– town plans offer possibilities, but no certainties. Chichester also erected public buildings (the gaol and courthouse) and built his mansion on the site of the former friary.

The longevity of town plans led some medieval historians to believe that the cadastral maps of the early nineteenth century reflected the layout of a town at its time of origin. For example, Erich Keyser wrote in 1963 that the interpretation of large-scale town plans "allows us to recognize the original spatial arrangement of the core of historic towns."[15] This approach prompted strong protests from archaeologists, who demonstrated that the nineteenth-century town plan was frequently the result of either an earlier reorganisation of a multi-centred settlement into a coherent plan, or adjustments after a major fire. Of course, those who expressed such opinions of continuity, such as Erich Keyser and indeed also Heinz Stoob (the founder of the German Städteatlas), should have realized that places of early urban origin would have been built according to the spatial organizations common in their own time and not according to later concepts.

At present, the historic towns atlas project has publications relating to over 460 towns. This large data bank can facilitate comparative urban studies and assist in the recognition of the identities of regional townscapes in their own right. Medieval chartered towns spread across Europe in a wave of modernisation. While the medieval town maintained its legal and functional identity during this diffusion process, in topographical terms different regional identities emerged. In the old settled areas of Charlemagne's territories, such as Wetzlar (*Fig. 9*), there existed a close association between the original parish church and the market place, and the streets that were newly laid out as the population increased.[16] In contrast, in areas of East Central Europe where towns were founded 200 years after their medieval counterparts in western Europe, the centre of the town is taken up by a geometrically laid-out market place separate from the church. The primary dynamic in these later towns came from the merchants and the market, and no longer from the church. Wrocław is a good example for this type of town (*Fig. 6*).[17] The foundation of Wrocław can be traced to a tenth-century castle on Cathedral Island. This castle was a centre for the Polish Piast state that came to be associated with a bishopric from *c.* 1000. By the twelfth century, the place had taken on proto-urban functions, with Benedictine and Augustinian monasteries.

---

[15] Erich Keyser, "Der Stadtgrundriß als Geschichtsquelle," *Studium Generale* 16 (1963): 345–351.
[16] Friedrich Bernward Fahlbusch, *Wetzlar*, *Deutscher Städteatlas* Lief. III, 10, (Altenbeken: GSV Städteatlas Verlag, 1984).
[17] Weczerka, *Breslau*.
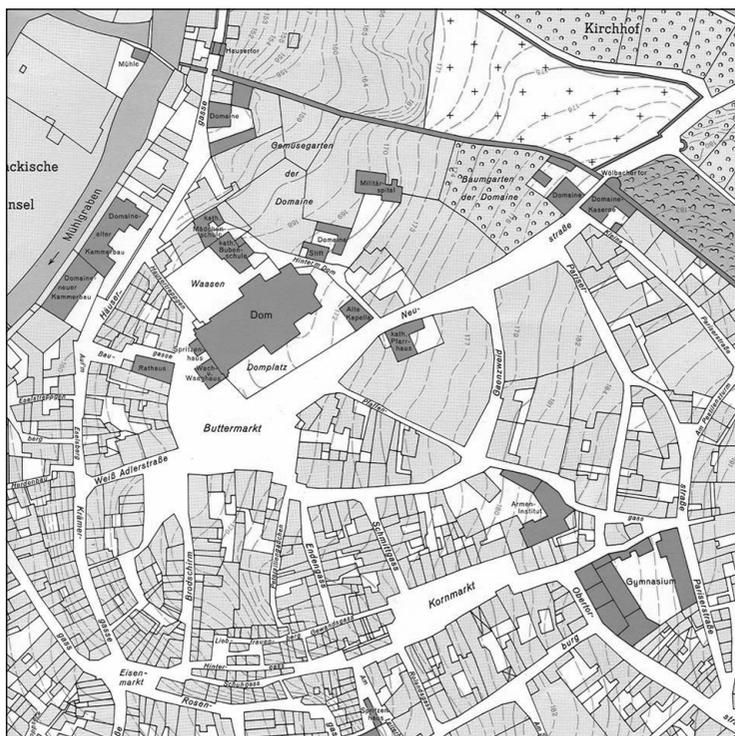
Fig. 9. Wetzlar *(scale: 1:2500), Deutscher Städteatlas, Lieferung III, 10 (Münster: Deutscher Städtealtlas Verlag, 1984).*

From the late twelfth century onwards there were Walloon, Jewish, and German settlers. From the early thirteenth century a merchant settlement grew up on the left bank of the river around the chapel of St Adalbert. The settlement was granted a charter according to German law in 1230. The second charter came in 1242 after the Mongol invasion of 1241; this charter coincided with the spatial reorganisation of the place with a new rectangular market (212 × 175m). Like Prague and Cracow, medieval Wrocław was built in a number of distinct phases, the results of socio-economic, legal and cultural transformations. Therefore, any suggestion that the early cadastral map reflected the layout of the town at its foundation date must rightly be rejected.

I will conclude with some possible research questions for comparative urban studies on the basis of the 1:2500 town plans contained in the historic towns atlases.

1. What was the relationship between the topography of medieval towns and their constitutional history? Were changes in the legal status of medieval towns accompanied by changes in their topography?
2. Do colonial towns at the opposite ends of Europe show more similarity or dissimilarity with each other in morphological terms?
3. Settlement colonisation in previously settled areas created problems relating to cultural identity. Do the town plans provide any clue as to this situation, in street names or church dedications for example?
4. Do the locations of urban parish churches and monastic houses in different countries indicate a similar role across European societies, or are major differences evident?
5. What does the location of synagogues tell us about the status of Jewish communities? Why are synagogues missing from so many European nineteenth-century town plans?
6. The spread of town law, either following Lübeck Law or Magdeburg Law in Central Europe, or the Law of Bristol or Breteuil in Ireland, provided unity in the legal framework of medieval towns. Did this unity have a topographical expression?
7. Finally, does the formation of particular types of town plans express distinct types of cultural areas? What factors make town plans vary from country to country? Are the similarities among European town plans convincing enough to permit reference to "the European town"?

COMMUNICATION IN FOURTEENTH-CENTURY NOVGOROD

Thomas Stiglbrunner ⬇

This article deals with various facets of medieval communication. I intend to present a short overview of two main aspects, termed here "everyday communication" and "symbolic communication."[1] My examples are all chosen from the Russian medieval oligarchic city-republic of Novgorod. As Marco Mostert stated at the Medieval Congress 2010 in Leeds, "every communication is symbolic," so the two aspects of my paper are quite closely interwoven. The analysis is embedded in a short overview of the history of fourteenth-century Novgorod, since I focus on one family and their communication patterns. This boyar clan, the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi, was mainly economically and politically active in the fourteenth century. I am using their example to present the reader with various aspects of medieval Novgorodian communication[2] and with ways they may be accessed through sources.

To quote the editors of the volume "New Approaches to Medieval Communication," the main theme of my article is the transition from an illiterate to a literate society:

> One of the most important developments in European history took place in communication. A transition is clearly visible from illiterate societies to societies in which most members are active users of the written word. This complex process, which started in Antiquity and is still not complete, gained momentum during the Middle Ages.[3]

The source basis of my study is divided into two blocks. One part contains written evidence (mostly of Novgorodian origin)[4] while the other one is data from the archeological record. From the 1930s up until now (with the forced break of World War II), 2% of medieval Novgorod was excavated in large-scale excavations

---

[1] Gerd Althoff, *Inszenierte Herrschaft. Geschichtsschreibung und politisches Handeln im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003).

[2] See Marco Mostert, "New approaches to medieval communication," in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 15–37.

[3] Editorial Preface, in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication,* VII.

[4] *Русские летописи, Новгородские летописи* (Книга первая и вторая) [Russian chronicles, Chronicles of Novgorod, vol. 1 and 2], ed. [A. I. Tsepkovym] А. И. Цепковым (Ryazan': Александрия, 2002); *Новгородская первая летопись старшего и младшего изводов* [The old and the new redaction of the first chronicle of Novgorod], ed. [M. N. Tikhomirov] М. Н. Тихомиров (Moscow: Издательство Академии наук СССР, 1950).

at about 45 different spots in the city. Due to the water-logged circumstances organic substances, in particular leather, wood, and textiles were well preserved. So the prism through which we gained access to medieval literacy changed due to the excavations and especially to the discovery of the birch-bark letters.

Novgorod in the Fourteenth Century

After the consolidation of the Novgorodian frontiers in the 1240s, a spectacular development took place in Novgorod and its hinterland. The population quickly grew in the 1260s, since large groups of people fled before the Mongols from the southern and eastern parts of Rus' to Novgorod. By the fourteenth century Novgorod had thus grown into a city of approximately 25,000 inhabitants.[5] This development is also mirrored in a growth in the built up area in the city, the formation of two more quarters (since its foundation Novgorod was divided into three quarters and in the fourteenth century into five)[6] and an assimilation of the Novgorodian dialect into the rest of the south-eastern isoglosses.[7] The fourteenth century can rightly be considered to have been a Golden age for Novgorod.

The boyar elite, in its constant struggle for power, finally gained the administrative upper hand over the prince. They managed to gain control over the highest duties in the city: the *possadnik* (the mayor) and the *tysjatskij* (the highest judge in the economic court and the military leader of the city's army). The five quarters of the city and their boyar families found ways to cooperate and, in 1354, the reform of the highest magistrates was established.[8] The *possadnik* and the *tysjatskij* were elected every year. Every quarter had its *possadnik* and one of the five was elected *possadnik* to represent the city as a whole. The election of the *tysjatskij* took place in the same way. Up to that point, the city had been divided into two jurisdictions and spheres of power: one belonging to the boyars and one to the prince and the free men of Novgorod, but in the fourteenth century a few

---

[5] Carsten Goehrke, "Einwohnerzahl und Bevölkerungsdichte altrussischer Städte. Methodische Möglichkeiten und vorläufige Ergebnisse," *Forschungen zur Osteuropäischen Geschichte* 18 (1973): 25–53. There are also population estimates ranging from 10,000 to 100,000, but Goehrke's estimate seems to be the most reasonable.

[6] Valentin L. Janin, "Ein mittelalterliches Zentrum im Norden der Rus'. Die Ausgrabungen in Novgorod," in *Novgorod. Das mittelalterliche Zentrum und sein Umland im Norden Rußlands*, ed. Michael Müller-Wille et al. (Neumünster: Wachholtz, 2001), 75–97, here 83.

[7] [A. A. Zaliznyak] А. А. Зализняк, *Древненовгородский диалект* [Old Novgorod dialect] (Moscow: Языки славянской культуры, 2004), 1–238.

[8] [V. L. Yanin] В. Л Яанин, *Очерки истории средневекового Новгорода* [Essays on the history of medieval Novgorod] (Moscow: Языки славянских культур, 2008), 97–109, 149–169.

boyar families gained control over the whole city, its political duties and most of the sources of income. At this time, the boyar families began to produce craft products on a large scale (for example combs, spoons, jewelry, and so forth). They shifted from bespoke piece work to mass production. For this kind of industrial production, a great quantity of raw material was needed (wood, amber and metal). These materials were imported via the mediation of the Hanseatic League and financed with the income from the vast territories of the boyar clans. For the organization of their businesses the boyars required reliable forms of communication.

Everyday Communication in Medieval Novgorod

In 1951, the first of the by now (2010) over 1000 birch bark letters[9] in Novgorod were found.[10] At this time, western scholars argued that this could not be a genuine medieval source, but that Soviet archaeologists had planted the letters there themselves. After almost sixty years of excavation, the picture has changed and scholars now acknowledge the extraordinary source value that the birch bark letters represent. What is it now that lead Valentin L. Yanin, the leading historian of Novgorod, to conclude that "berestology" (*beresta* is the Russian word for birch; he had papyrology in mind as a comparison) needs to be established as an independent branch of scholarship.

First, the log-built roads of the town and the setting where the birch bark letters were found should be considered. The medieval reader of a note, in most cases, got the note, read it and generally threw it away or tore off the part he had read and no longer needed. This explains why most of the letters are not preserved in one piece. Therefore, it can be argued that the place where the letters were thrown away and preserved was the place where they were used.[11] It is here that the log-built roads come into play. They were renewed after the old roads

---

[9] For other aspects of birch bark letters for example: [A. A. Zaliznyak] А. А. Зализняк, *Древнековгородский диалект* [Old Novgorod dialect] presents an overview of birch bark letters found up to 2003 with a linguistic and historical analysis. www.gramoty.ru is a homepage, which published all birch bark letters from Nr. 1–956. In English, the volume *The Archaeology of Novgorod, Russia. Recent Results from the Town and its Hinterland*, ed. Mark A. Brisbane (Lincoln: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 1992) provides a good historical overview and a focus on the birch bark letters as well.

[10] Birch bark letters were also found in, for example, Staraja Russa, Pskov, Ladoga, and a few other north-eastern Russian cities.

[11] The shorter the span between reading and contact with the humid floor, the better the letters were preserved.

sank into the wet ground or were destroyed by fire and so they put the new layer on top of the old one. With dendrochronology the roads can be dated in absolute terms and to the archaeological layers according to a relative chronology. It is possible to date the letters within approximately 20 years in this way.

Secondly, the character of the "letters" and notes is quite unique. There is, as far as I know, no other city in Medieval Europe north of the Alps where such a mass of communications from everyday life of the tenth to the fifteenth century can be found. The main issues which the birch bark letters deal with include economic affairs (fiscal arrangements, agricultural production); religious affairs (prayers, incantations); private affairs (love letters, letters to relatives); education; testaments, drafts of official documents, and many more. The majority of the birch bark letters belong to the first group (economic affairs), since dealing with financial matters was one of the main reasons that they emerged as a form of communication. Concerning the term "letter," one could argue that this is not the best way of describing these carved inscriptions on birch bark. But since these carvings either took the form of letters to other people or notes to oneself, this word still seems the best way of comprising this complex variety. Inscriptions on birch bark have been found all over Novgorod and at almost every excavation site.

A survey of writers and readers shows that various strata of Novgorodian inhabitants (boyars, clerics, peasants and, craftsmen) had members who could write and/or read. Besides the stunning fact that lower strata were also literate, it also is quite remarkable that men and women were both included among the readers and writers of the birch bark letters.[12] One of my favorite examples is birch bark letter 752 which dates from 1080 to 1100. This striking document is the complaint of a woman who had sent a letter to her lover for the third time and complains that he did not show up for a rendezvous. The hurt, but still caring tone and the expressive manner make the letter very special and impressive.[13]

The last short introductory remark concerns the acquisition of the ability to write. Birch bark letters no. 199–210, which comprised the first writing and counting steps of Onfim (an approximately six-year-old boy), show the pattern of how writing was taught. First pupils carved with a stylus in wax; after they gained some experience, they changed to birch bark which needs much more strength endurance to carve into. Pupils were taught with the help of liturgical texts and

---

[12] [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 416–420.

[13] http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=752&act=full&key=bb (accessed 28/05/2011); [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 249–254.

had to first carve the letter alone and then one consonant in combination with vowels.[14] Onfim's drawings, made on the obverse side of the birch bark, provide a nice insight. Although everyday life and drilling in medieval schools was quite hard, students knew how to make the best out of the situation[15] (*Fig. 1*).

These notes and letters were all found in a layer dating to the 1240s and 1250s during excavations at the so-called "Nerevsky site letter I ("И")," which was later in the mansion of the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi boyar family (*Fig. 2*).
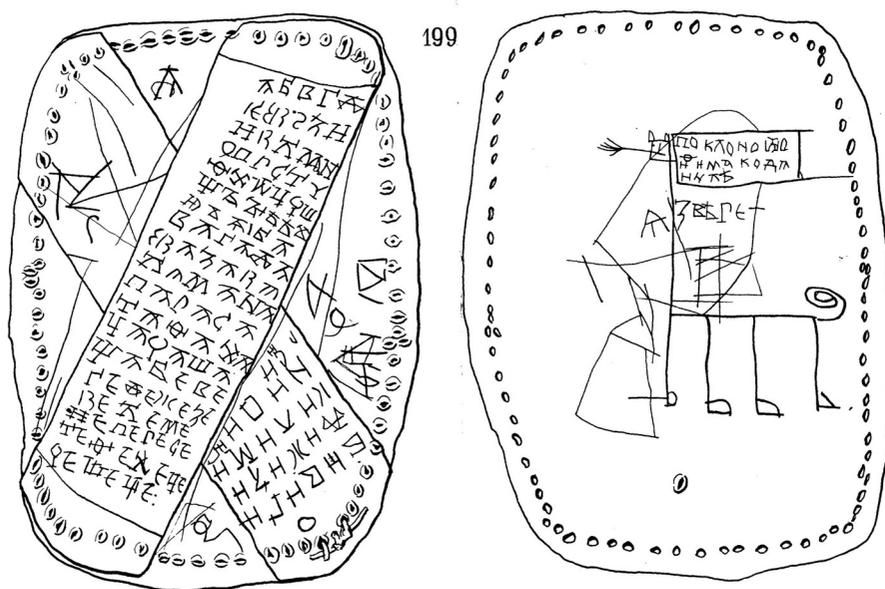

Fig. 1. Novgorod, birch bark letter No. 199, 1240–1260.
http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=199&act=full&key=bb

---

[14] Elena A. Rybina, "Bildung im mittelalterlichen Novgorod anhand archäologischer Zeugnisse," in *Zwischen Christianisierung und Europäisierung. Bieträge zur Geschichte Osteuropas im Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit. Festschrift für Peter Nitsche zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Eckhard Hübner (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa 51) (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998), 69–90.

[15] http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=199&act=full&key=bb; (accessed 28/05//2011); [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 475–478
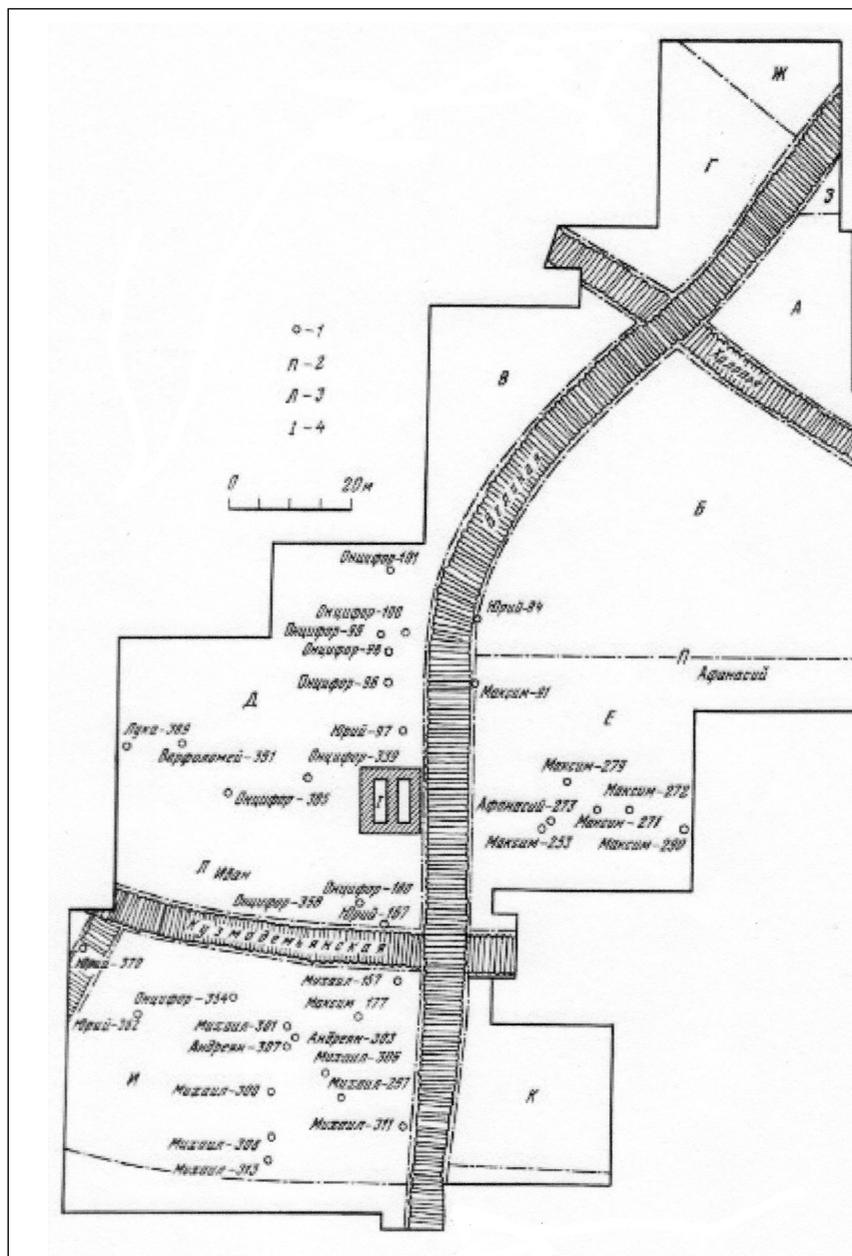
Fig. 2. Novgorod, distribution of birch-bark letters in a part of the town.
Source: Яанин, Очерки, *128.*

Thomas Stiglbrunner

The Birch Bark Letters of the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi Family

After this brief outline of the origin and significance of the birch bark letters, let us turn our attention to the topic of everyday and symbolic communication within this particular family. The main source of income of the boyar families were their huge landholdings and the goods they extracted from them. The products of the land also comprised the raw materials for artisans and craftsmen living on the boyars' estates. These people produced commodities for the local market in the boyars' mansions or for exchange for other goods with mostly Hanseatic merchants. Their enterprises were complex and consisted of several hierarchical levels. At the top were members of the boyar families themselves. Each branch of their families had their own business, so they divided their properties among their male heirs. The second level of worker was the so-called *kljuchnik*, a governor, who supervised peasants and craftsmen. Last but not least, an armada of dependent craftsmen at their mansions in the city produced goods for the local market while peasants were responsible for the production and collection of salt, wheat, fur, wax, honey and so forth. The raw materials which were needed for the production through the craftsmen (amber, different sorts of metal) were imported via the Hanseatic League or came from the boyars' properties.[16]

These economic enterprises occupied areas in the city, small villages and lands up to a few hundred kilometers away from the center of Novgorod, and they were controlled by only a few persons. Hence efficient forms of communication were essential. The male and female heads of the boyar families, the governors on their estates and dependent workers needed a way to communicate over long distances and so they developed the system of communication on birch bark. This material was durable and easily accessible and was hence proved an ideal writing material.

One of the most influential families of fourteenth-century Novgorod was the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi.[17] This wealthy and politically influential family is hardly known in the historiography of Western Europe.[18] The status of this family

---

[16] Елена А. Рыбина [E. A. Rybina], Торговля средневекового Новгорода [The commerce of medieval Novgorod] (Novgorod: НовГУ им. Ярослава Мудрово, 2001), 1–106.

[17] The crucial research concerning this family was carried out by V. L. Yanin, see e. g. [Yanin] Янин, *Очерки* [Essays], 97–109.

[18] Literature available about them in western languages includes Alexander S. Chrošević, "Haus und Hof. Die Grundstücke im mittelalterlichen Novgorod," in *Novgorod. Das*

is best comparable to North Italian families (for example, the doges in Venice). Some family members were *possadnik*s several times and strongly impacted city politics. The family owned at least four mansions in the city, on pieces of land of 2000 m² each over at least three generations. The excavation of the birch bark letters with names of the family members on them made it possible to assign the mansions to different family members.[19] *Fig. 2* shows the distribution of the birch bark letters in relation to the places where they were found. Mansions D, E, I, K (written in Cyrillic) were all inhabited by members of the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi family. (The crosses symbolize birch bark letters found that correspond to family members of the clan).[20]

The mansions themselves were no bigger than most of the other mansions, but the sheer number of them made the family something special. In my view, the number of mansions represented the size of their landholdings. Thus no one family occupied a bigger mansion (they all were approximately 1200–2000 m²), but that the family as a whole possessed even more mansions. When there were no family members to inhabit a particular mansion, they rented it out to others.[21] In the areas of these mansions, archeologists found a variety of items, from birch bark letters, raw materials for crafts (amber, metal, wood) as well as goods related to daily life. These goods were comparable to finds from other mansions, but the number of finds of non-Russian origin was higher than at other mansions. During excavations in the 1960s and 1970s archeologists found several birch bark letters written by, addressed to, or mentioning different family members of the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi clan. I present here a few representative examples which demonstrate how the family organized their business and how they communicated.

Examples

The first example (*Fig. 3*)[22] is a birch bark letter dated to 1340–1360. It was written by Ontsifor, one of the most important clan members, who was *possadnik* from 1350 to 1354 and who was responsible for the changes in the way this magisterial

---

mittelalterliche Zentrum und sein Umland im Norden Rußlands, ed. Michael Müller-Wille et al. (Neumünster: Wachholtz, 2001), 149–166.

[19] [Janin] Яанин, *Очерки* [Essays], 97–109.

[20] [Janin] Яанин, *Очерки* [Essays], 128.

[21] [Janin] Яанин, *Очерки* [Essays], 149–169.

[22] http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=354&act=full&key=bb; [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 550 (accessed 28/05/2011).

position was elected. He died in 1367. The letter is addressed to his mother. The text translates as follows (translations by the author):

> Greetings from Ontsifor to his mother. Send Nestor to collect a rubel' and go to Jurij. Ask Jurij to buy a horse. And go from Obrosij to Stepan after you have taken my share. If Stepan agrees to take a rubel' for the horse, buy another one. And demand half a rubel' from Jurij and buy salt. And if he does not obtain fur and the money before his departure then send them to me with Nestor. And send two trivets, a stamp, a robe, bags and a bear's hide. And go and ask Maksim for wheat and
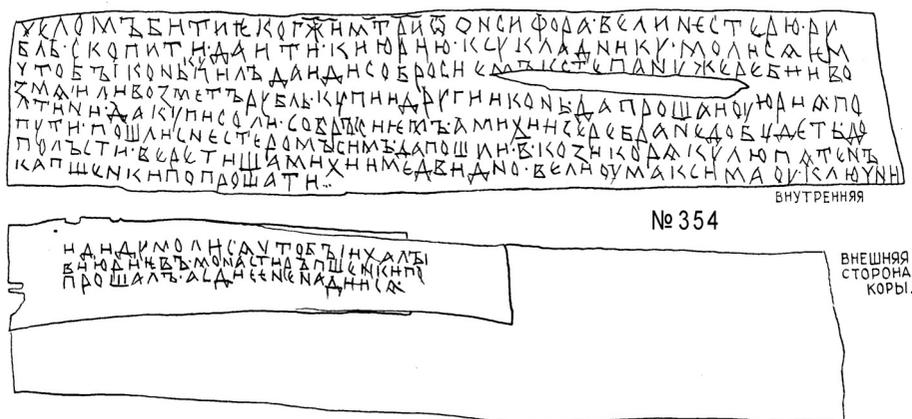

Fig. 3. Novgorod, birch bark letter No. 354, 1340–1360.
http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=354&act=full&key=bb

greetings to grandfather, so that he demands wheat from the Jur'ev monastery. Nothing is happening here and we live in hope.

In this birch bark letter, Ontsifor and his mother are organizing the family business. Ontsifor is obviously out of town in one of his villages. He asks his mother to take care of certain duties. The tone of this note is very respectful. In this birch bark letter a number of other persons are mentioned. Nestor and Jurij are most likely *kljuchnik*s of the clan and are obliged to administer certain tasks. One is to collect debts, which were paid in natural produce, since Novgorod had no currency in the fourteenth century. Salt and wheat were two main goods collected in the vast territories and were essential for the market in Novgorod. Thus, centralization of production was welcome. In addition to the commercial content, the note is also quite private. He asks his mother to send him several items he needs for his trip that he has obviously forgotten. The letter also demonstrates

178
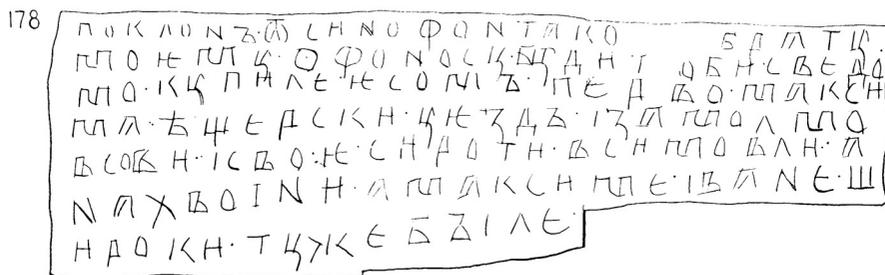
Fig. 4. Novgorod, birch bark letter No. 178, 1380–1400.
http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=178&act=full&key=bb

that male as well as female members of the family could read and were integrated into the family business.

The second birch bark letter dates to 1380 to 1400 (*Fig. 4*).[23] This letter is written by Sinofont and addressed to Afanassij, the son of Ontsifor.

> Greetings from Sinofont to my brother Afanassij. I want to tell you that I bought Esherskij from Maksim and Zamolmosov'e and a peasant for Simovl and the lake Xvoin. And Maksim and Ivan Shirokij were my witnesses.

This birch bark letter is interesting, since it testifies to business transactions and legal actions. Since property and peasants were the biggest sources of income for the boyars, it was important to make transactions concerning land traceable. The mentioning of witnesses was therefore crucial to legalize the transaction. Whether a birch bark letter was used as an official agreement of sale is not known, but it is very possible. The other possibility is that this birch bark was the draft for a document later written on parchment.

The last birch bark letter (*Fig. 5*)[24] from the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi family presented here was either written by a peasant or the *kljutshnik* of a town and is addressed to another famous member of the clan, Jurij. He is well known from the Chronicles and was first mentioned in 1376, was elected *possadnik* in 1409, and died in 1417.

> Greetings from Kondrat and the town to its master, Jurij. The horses, master, that you sent us, Zacharij gives them to somebody. Stop him,

[23] http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=178&act=full&key=bb; [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 590f (accessed 28/05/2011).
[24] http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=446&act=full&key=bb; [Zaliznyak] Зализняк, Древнековгородский диалект [Old Novgorod dialect], 590 (accessed 28/05/2011).

№ 446
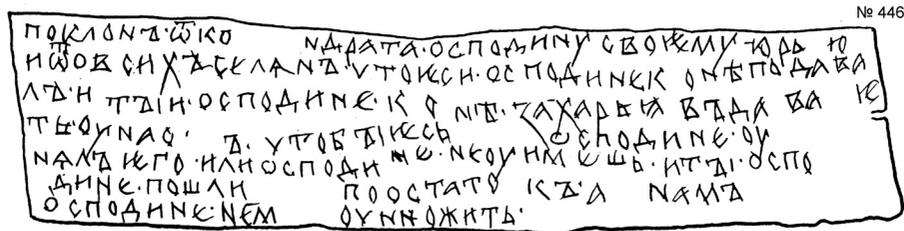
Fig. 5. Novgorod, birch bark letter No. 446, 1380–1400.
http://gramoty.ru/index.php?no=446&act=full&key=bb

master. If you cannot, then please send us other horses. This way, master, it is impossible to live.

Here you can see a formal complaint from a village. Since it was possible for peasants or whole villages to change ownership these complaints had to be taken quite seriously. The horse as the most important draught animal in the economic life in the city is confirmed and the dramatic tone of the note makes it quite clear that the villagers are seriously thinking about a change in lordship.

Symbolic Communication in Novgorod

After having presented a few aspects of everyday communication, let us conclude this article with a few glimpses at symbolic communication.

Political organization was divided into two parts. The boyars controlled the *possadnik* and tried to gain influence over the other organizations in the city, the smallest entity of which was the street with the street-elder as its head. (Further on in the hierarchy came the *sotskij*, "leader of 100" and the *tysjatskij* "leader of 1000"). A good way of exerting influence over a smaller district was founding churches in those streets that the families wanted to control. Beside the religious reasons for founding a church, such an act also had a highly socio-political component. Churches were places for social gatherings (e.g. the *veche*, a gathering of all free men) and a storage place. So the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi founded several churches around their mansions. Church foundation was one form of symbolic/representational communication and a way to exercise power. In the end the families succeeded and came to control the street elder as well.[25]

Thus far we have considered the mighty and rich boyar strata in Novgorod. The Novgorodian Chronicles shed light on communication strategies in other

---

[25] [Janin] Яанин, *Очерки,* 126–149.

social strata as well. A clash of interests is hard to pick up on in medieval documents, but a few hints in the Novgorodian Chronicles make it possible to get a closer look at symbolic communication concerning the concept of conflict resolution by analyzing some descriptions of riots and their consequences. Riots took place (or were recorded) almost every twenty years in Novgorod, for example in 1291, 1327 and 1332. I want to emphasize two aspects of the depictions in the Chronicles. One is the plundering of the mansions of the boyar families, the other is the punishment of the delinquents by throwing them off the bridges.

Here are three short examples from the First Novgorodian Chronicles (translations by the author):

1291 The same year rebels plundered the market and the following day the Novgorodians held a *veche*. They threw two rebels off the bridge.[26]

1327 There has been a riot in Novgorod and they plundered the house of the Ostaf'i Dvoryaninets and set everything on fire.[27]

1332 Rioters rose up in Novgorod and they unseated the *possadnik* Fedor Achmyl and gave it to Zacharij Michailovich. They plundered the house of Smen Sudokov and plundered the villages of his brother Senefont.[28]

Those notes represent just a few out of very many examples which depict the terms of symbolic communication concerning disagreement with the authorities. It seems to have been a ritualized way of expressing disagreement by the Novgorodian masses to plunder the mansions of the boyars and divide their property amongst themselves. The moveable goods were divided and after that, they burnt down the houses of the families. After these events the mansion was divided into smaller units of 600m² and was given to other families[29]. This seems to have happened with the agreement of the other wealthy families and to be a "coordinated riot". Due to the laconic descriptions, more detailed analysis is impossible; however it does show a small piece of ritualized communication through behavior.

If the regulating power strongly disagreed with the actions of the masses, they inflicted severe punishment on the rebels. The bridge over the main river of the city, the Volchov, connected the two parts of the city. If somebody challenged

---

[26] *The Chronicle of Novgorod, 1016–1471,* transl. Robert Michell et al. (London: Offices of the Society, 1914, reprint 1970), y. 1291.
[27] *The Chronicle of Novgorod,* y. 1327.
[28] *The Chronicle of Novgorod,* y. 1332.
[29] Chroševič, "Haus und Hof," 149–166.

the peaceful cohabitation of the two parts or the entire city, or was guilty of high treason the *veče* decided to throw them off the bridge. The first mention of this ritual is in the legend of the *possadnik* Dobryn[30]. This legend describes the acts of the *possadnik* Dobryn, whose biggest sin was the replacement of an orthodox church with the catholic Olaf's church in the 1110s. Due to his sin, the wind blew him off the bridge while he was crossing it. Thus, the strong connection between earthly and heavenly punishment is apparent in the legend. If God saved the rebels from death – as happened once in the thirteenth century – their life was spared and they were expelled from the city.

Conclusions

My aim in this paper was to analyze some modes of communication in medieval Novgorod. I divided my work into two parts: everyday communication and symbolic communication. The first issue was mainly discussed through the birch bark letters written by members of the Mishchinichi-Ontsiforovichi clan, which provide a perfect insight into many aspects of everyday life and communications. The second, shorter part was dedicated to symbolic communication, with church foundation and the form of punishing delinquents by throwing rioters off the bridge and the regular, patterned riots in Novgorod. As a Novgorodian author stated: "If Petersburg was the window to Europe, then Novgorod was the barn door." Hence, it is of great importance that Novgorod is brought closer to the rest of Europe. When analyzing medieval times, most authors create a modern division between East and West by excluding the East. But remember that without the wax from Novgorod, medieval times in Europe would have been a really dark age.

---

[30] [E. A. Rybina] Е. А. Рыбина, Новгород и Ганза [Novgorod and the Hansa] (Moscow: Рукописаные памятники древней Руси, 2009), 301.

BETWEEN SACRED AND PROFANE
COUNCIL ELECTION IN THE LIVED SPACE OF THE
MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN TOWN OF CLUJ

Ágnes Flóra

The council election undoubtedly represented one of the most important episodes in urban administrative and political life, since it not only embodied the privileged status of free royal towns and their independence from any overlord other than royalty, but it also provided a semblance of wide public legitimacy. As Clifford Geertz eloquently formulated it, the ceremony served both as "models of" society and a "model for" society.[1] Thus, it is not surprising that this very important moment became the subject of well-defined rituals and sets of symbols, or a "montage plan"[2] of festive actions. These actions denoted transition, change, and passage − in this case from one council mandate to another in a physically and spiritually lived place in the town.[3]

Michael Oppitz ascribed the parts of a ritual into four categories; accordingly, a ritual had to have a topographical dimension, that is, a place in which to perform it. Ritual also demanded some acoustic elements, movements and verbal expression.[4] In the urban context, the site of the performed rites of governance, the chime of the bells that marked the beginning of the elections, the processions before or after the voting and the oaths that were sworn in every urban community fit these categories well.[5]

---

[1] *Encyclopedia of Religion and Society*, ed. William H. Swatos, jr. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1998), 205.

[2] Michael Oppitz, "Montageplan von Ritualen," in *Rituale heute. Theorien – Kontroversen – Entwürfe*, ed. Corina Caduff and Joanne Pfaff Czarnecka (Berlin: Reimer, 2001), 73–79; Uwe Goppold, *Politische Kommunikation in den Städten der Vormoderne. Zürich und Münster im Vergleich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2007), 35.

[3] For the passage rites see Edward Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (New York: CUP, 1997); Arnold van Gennep, *Übergangsriten (Les rites des passages)* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1986), 142–159.

[4] Oppitz, "Montageplan", 83; Goppold, *Politische Kommunikation*, 35.

[5] Goppold, *Politische Kommunikation*, 35–36. Due to limitations of space only some aspects of the council election in Cluj will be discussed here. On rituals and power see Gerd Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale. Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003).

Ágnes Flóra

Political rituals, whether on the state level or in a local environment, were built on preexisting models, most of them borrowed from liturgical contexts.[6] The day or place where the election was performed, or the various symbolic actions such as the procession of the senators, the celebration of the mass, the common meal, the text of the vows or simply the number of the councilors, all have a single common root: the liturgical or sacramental rites sanctioned by the church. Although one might think that these rituals developed in the earlier stages of urban development when church influence on towns and cities was more powerful, these ceremonies really developed and came to dominate public life with the emergence of civic consciousness and broadening autonomy. The roots of the implementation of church symbols and rites into civic space were, in any case, anchored in the very deep faith of medieval and early modern townspeople.

The origins of rituals and symbols of the town administration in Cluj (Kolozsvár, Klausenburg) can be traced back to the privileges of the town and to the regulations of Buda that were the models for council organization after 1486.[7] Articles 24 to 64 dispose the election process of the council, establishing not only the criteria for the elections but the required qualities of the candidates, too.[8]

The self-government of Cluj consisted of two representative units, established by the charter of King Sigismund of Luxemburg in 1405 when Cluj became a free royal town. The minor unit was the town council while the assembly of the *centumviri* (the council of the 100, initially 60) formed the major representative body, reported as the number of aldermen. In 1458, a parity system was introduced to secure equal representation of the Saxon and Hungarian populations. Thus, the number of the council seats was equally assigned, and the office of the judge and royal judge were filled in yearly rotation by the two communities.[9]

The Number of Councilors – the Divine Space of Symbols

Medieval and early modern town councils were not only administrative bodies entrusted with everyday duties, but were institutions that assumed a profound

---

[6] Muir, *Ritual*, 231.
[7] András Kiss, "Kolozsvár város önkormányzati fejlődése az 1458-as 'unióig' és kiteljesedése az 1568-as királyi ítélettel" [The administrative development of Kolozsvár until the "union" of 1458, and its coming to fruition with the regal judgment from 1568], in Idem, *Más források, más értelmezések* [Other sources, other interpretations] (Marosvásárhely: Mentor, 2003), 160–171.
[8] *Das Ofner Stadtrecht: eine deutschsprachige Rechtssammlung des 15. Jahrhunderts aus Ungarn*, ed. Karl Mollay (Weimar: Böhlau, 1959).
[9] Kiss, "Kolozsvár város," 160–171.

divine call. They were institutional bodies with both sacred and profane legitimacy. In this context, the arguments put forward for rejection of the wage request of the inner council in 1592 in Cluj not only seems logical but inherent as well. The *centumviri* declined to allot wages for the city services of the councilors on the grounds that if they are governors (*locumtenentes*) of God, they should expect their reward from God.[10]

The holy vocation of the council is also clearly symbolized by their numbers. No doubt, the twelve senators and the judge or mayor makes reference to Christ and the apostles although one can also find mythological aspects, too: the *Dei Consentes* of the Greek-Roman tradition, or historical ones such as the twelve tribes of ancient Jews. The number twelve (or its double) was the most common number of councilor seats in European towns.[11] Dietrich Poeck posed the question whether this number may even have been a reference to the ideal city, the heavenly Jerusalem?[12] Undoubtedly, twelve appears as a symbolic number in the *Book of the Revelations*, when John describes the heavenly city of the New Jerusalem.[13] Conscious Jerusalem-image construction may be detected in some cases in Western Europe. It may even be expressed by the participants and the notion increased in popularity with the Reformation when studying the Bible became an everyday custom among literate people.

---

[10] Serviciul Judeţean Cluj, al Arhivelor Naţionale Române, [Cluj County Branch of the Romanian National Archives] *Fond Primăria oraşului Cluj* [The Town Archive of Cluj Fond] (henceforth POC), *Protocolul Adunărilor Generale* [Records of the *centumviri* council meetings] (henceforth AdnGen.) I/5. 1592. 90.

[11] Dietrich W. Poeck, "Zahl, Tag und Stuhl. Zur Semiotik der Ratswahl," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 33 (1999): 413.

[12] "Wird mit dem Zwölfgremium ein Hinweis auf eine vorbildliche Stadt gegeben?" (Poeck, "Zahl, Tag und Stuhl," 413).

[13] "It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed; on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its breadth; and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia; its length and breadth and height are equal. (…) The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass." (Revelations 14: 12–21)

Ágnes Flóra

The election of twelve councilors was granted in the privilege of Sigismund in 1405, when Cluj became a free royal town.[14] Later, when the parity system was introduced, the number was not changed, only divided equally among Hungarians and Saxons.

The Council Election Day

In 1537 the *centumviri* of the town of Cluj adopted a new town statute aiming to prevent disorder, conflict, animosity, or competition. It is hard to tell if the introductory sentence refers to a pre-existent conflict among the elite of the town or whether it just reflects the most common principle of town governance, the pursuit of absolute concordance. Previously, the town of Cluj followed the articles of Buda as ordered by King Matthias in 1486. In 1513, the town adopted some new articles, but it did not change the mode of elections.[15] Nonetheless, there have been changes, or rather adjustments, to local conditions and needs. The changes adopted in 1537 do not exhaustively reformulate the existing statutes but improve the Buda town statutes in certain directions, although the Buda regulations had not been implemented *ad litteram*.[16] The Buda statutes, for example, assigned the date of the council elections to the day of Saint George,[17] while, according to the introductory part of the newly adopted town regulation, the elections in Cluj were held on New Year's Day.[18] Apparently the town retained the initial set order of the council election, most probably, already with the privilege of 1405.[19] In 1537, this date was changed.

It seems logical that after a while, developments in urban life made it necessary to reform or expand the internal rules of administration, or to adjust them to local needs. Whatever the reason that lay behind it, the new statute not only contained new regulations regarding taxes, punitive justice and other everyday matters of the town, but it also touched upon the council election rites. In 1537

---

[14] Jakab Elek, *Oklevéltár Kolozsvár története I. kötetéhez* [Collection of documents for volume I of the History of Kolozsvár] (Buda: Magyar Egyetemi Könyvnyomda, 1870–1888), (henceforth *JakabOkl I.)*

[15] SJAN Cluj, Fond POC, *Seria Privilegii și acte* [Charters series], Fasc. A. nr 8. Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives] *Collectio Antemohácsiana* DF 280963.

[16] …*condicionem et Statum huius Ciuitatis nostre in melius reformare intendentes. JakabOkl* I., 380.

[17] Mollay, *Das Ofner Stadtrecht,* 70.

[18] *JakabOkl I.*, 379.

[19] *Die Dominica post diem Strennarum seu Circumcisionis Domini primitus occurrente, de ipsorum medio, Duodecim Ciues Juratos, annis singulis, et tandem ydem Jurati cum Senioribus et Hominibus possessionatis ipsius Ciuitatis Idoneis tamen et ad Id aptis, Judicem eligendi. JakabOkl* I., 124.

the inhabitants represented through the outer council changed the dates of the election from the eighth day after *Natalis Domini*, i.e. the Circumcision, to the feast of Saint Stephen's day on 26 December.[20] Why this change seemed so very important in 1537 is unknown. They may have simply been following the example of other towns in the region. The elections in Sibiu (Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt) also took place during the Christmas feast, as is testified in the protocols from 1498. Apparently, sooner or later, the important urban centers in Transylvania adopted this date for the change in council seats.[21] In Southern Germany, for example, neighboring towns or the ones that lying within a reasonably close distance had some kind of influence on the choice of the day elections were to be held on.[22]

There might have been very practical reasons behind these choices as well. One such reason was the fact that the town gates were closed during feasts. Thus, it was reasonable to hold elections on a feast day so that no special curfew had to be introduced in town on the day of the election to secure undisturbed voting. In addition, the first day of Christmas was and is one of the most important feasts in the Christian calendar. That in itself may have created a solemn framework for such an important public ceremony, not to mention the expanded facilities for meals in holiday time. Although these are only speculations, it is still worth emphasizing that generally Christmas day was not a specific election day in Europe, and not even in the Hungarian Kingdom. The most popular election days in Hungary fell at the end of the year or the beginning of the New Year.[23] Most European cities chose the day of their patron saints or of the most important saints (e.g. St. Andrew, St. George), New Year's Day, i.e. the feast of Circumcision of Christ, or Pentecost.[24]

---

[20] *JakabOkl* I., 380.

[21] Georg Müller, *Stühle und Distrikte als Unterteilungen der Siebenbürgisch-Deutschen Nations-universität, 1141–1876* (Hermannstadt: Krafft & Drotleff, 1941), 34. Müller argues, yet not very convincingly, for the Christmas feast as election period with the possibility for the mayor to come back from his journeys. He probably refers to the congregation of the Saxon *universitas* on St Catherine's day. Mediaş (Medgyes, mediasch) in the seventeenth century elected the new council also on Christmas day.

[22] Dietrich W. Poeck, *Rituale der Ratswahl. Zeichen und Zeremoniell der Ratssetzung in Europa* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003), 64.

[23] István H. Németh, "Városi tisztújítások a királyi Magyarországon a 16–17. században" [Urban council elections in the Kingdom of Hungary in the 16th–17th centuries] *Arrabona* no. 2 (2007): 59.

[24] Poeck, *Rituale,* 67–151.

The Calling of Bells and Depositing the Seal. The Election Procedure

Every ritual had to have an unequivocal start, a sign, a sound that clearly indicated the importance of the action, and called those concerned to participate. In the medieval and early modern urban context the chiming of the bells or the voice of the trumpet called the citizens to participate in the elections of the new council.[25]

Although the town of Cluj had hired a trumpeter the tolling of the bell called the *centumviri* to the election gathering.[26] It was the great bell that was tolled for the meeting and for that, as opposed to usual custom, the bell ringer was not paid in cash but in raw food stuffs.[27] Interestingly, the *centumviri* were gathered together only after the judge had resigned.[28]

The act of resignation was not a local custom but was part of the Buda town regulations that ultimately derived from the Magdeburg law. Thus, it was an act that could be found in most of the Germans towns.[29] It represented the last interaction of the old administration with the town, when the resigning judge, the councilor, and the notary, according to the Buda town regulations, expressed their acknowledgments, first in German and then in Hungarian, and through an appointed spokesman the town expressed the gratitude of the community.[30]

During the election ceremonies, objects or regalia with symbolic value, either of a divine or secular character, were used to accentuate the official act of council change. Usually a sword, a stick, or the town keys were used. These were objects that embodied jurisdiction and justice, referring back to the Greek-Roman tradition. The first two objects symbolized power laid on institutional tradition while the keys represented the autonomy of the town, as well as guardianship and control.[31] The Buda town regulations mention the white stick or the sprig as items

---

[25] Poeck, *Rituale,* 6, 10, 15; Goppold, *Politische Kommunikation*, 35.

[26] *JakabOkl* I., 380.

[27] SJAN Cluj, Fond POC, *Socotelile orașului* [Town accounts series]. 1585. 3/XIX. 7. The usual sum for tolling the big bell at funerals was 3 fr (florenus Rheni): 1 for the ringer, one for the singing pupils and one for the town.

[28] *…dum Dominus Judex officium suum in Cimiterio resignabit, mox Campana pulsetur, et domini Centum Electi congregentur in unum. JakabOkl* I., 380.

[29] Mollay, *Ofner Stadrecht,* 85.

[30] Mollay, *Ofner Stadrecht*, 85.

[31] These three objects were usually used by the town officials during ceremonies in the towns of the Hungarian Kingdom during medieval and early modern times. See István H. Németh, "Pre-Modern State Urban Policy at a Turning Point in the Kingdom of Hungary: The Elections to the Town Council," in *Urban Election and Decision-making in*

used in the ritual, implying at the same time the transfer of power but also the renewal of power and the possibility for change.

The reformed town regulations of Cluj do not mention placing a green sprig or a white stick before the gathered community, but do mention putting down the seal.[32] This may represent a translation of symbols and a simplification of the ceremonial act as well. Instead of keeping the seal in a sealed box guarded by the parish priest,[33] it became part of the ceremony and not accidentally. The seal became the symbol of autonomy for the towns.[34]

This shift from an object with divine connotations and great symbolic potential, to an object that reflected an important issue of town authority clearly denotes the presence of strong civic consciousness not only among the restricted group of the elite, but for the town as a whole. It is obvious that this translation of symbols took place together with the advance of urban literacy and the growth of urban chancelleries. This was reflected by the more extensive use of the seal and the higher level of social differentiation among townspeople who used written and sealed documents for their own purposes, whether in economic transactions or in personal matters. In the internal affairs of the town the authenticated seal had the highest credibility.[35] Thus, this shift in the kind of symbols being used in public ceremonies may also reflect the different perception of signs from a mainly agrarian medieval urban society to a more mercantile early modern population.

The keys of the town gates were probably never used in the ceremonials in Cluj. It was never adopted, not only because it was not customary in Buda, but also because there was parity in the key-holding as well: when the judge was elected from among the Hungarians, the Saxons kept the keys, and vice versa. That made the ritual character of handing down the keys practically senseless.

The Place of Election – Why in the Graveyard?

Not only was the election date changed in 1537, but its place, too. Instead of the town hall, the ritual of council change was transferred to the graveyard of

---

Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800, ed. Rudolf Schögl (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009), 283.

[32] *JakabOkl* I., 380.

[33] Mollay, *Ofner Stadtrecht,* 84.

[34] András Kubinyi, "Buda város pecséthasználatának kialakulása" [The development of the use of seals in Buda], in *Tanulmányok Budapest Múltjából* [Studies from the past of Budapest] 14 (1961): 118.

[35] Kubinyi, "Buda város pecséthasználata," 109; Bernát L. Kumorovitz, "Az autentikus pecsét" [The authentic seal] *Turul* 50 (1936): 59.

St Michael's church. Although the decision to hold an open-air ritual in winter, especially in a church yard, might seem odd at first and so far unique in the medieval and early modern Transylvanian context, it is not so surprising in a broader comparison of European towns.[36] There may be various explanations for this seemingly peculiar choice.

Certainly there was a need, whether deriving from the community or from some inner conviction of the council, for local politics to be brought out into the open. Thus, the interaction between the town elite and the inhabitants became more visible and tangible, bringing a double advantage. The townspeople did not feel excluded from the election process that was notably legitimized by them, but at the same time, the council could manipulate the public with a well-managed ritual. In this way, passive and active election rights were brought together, although only through a symbolic act.[37] However, there still remains an interesting question, namely why in the graveyard?

Apparently, when and where town leaders decided to make communal a ceremony that till then was only partially accessible to the wider public, they chose spaces with a symbolic value that reinforced the legitimacy of the council and yet did not interfere with other authorities or generate conflicts. The graveyard around St Michael's church in Cluj fulfilled not only the above-mentioned criteria, but was one of the few open spaces that could be designated for this kind of ritual purposes. It was a space lying between the town hall and the church, between the sacred and profane.

The precise location, area, and borders of the graveyard, given the present stage of excavations and published archeological works, are impossible to determine (see *Fig. 1*). Most probably it should be located on the southern side of the church, around the St James chapel that was demolished around 1730. Little is known about the chapel that is mentioned in 1349 in an indulgence letter issued

---

[36] From the mid-fifteenth century in Goslar, the yearly council elections were held in the *ossarium* in the graveyard of the church. Antje Diener-Staeckling, *Der Himmel über dem Rat. Zur Symbolik der Ratswahl in mitteldeutschen Städten* (Halle: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 2008), 67–69. The Old Town Hall in Marburg was built on the place an *ossarium* in the graveyard, see Antje Diener-Staeckling, "Orte der Ratswahl – Orte der Macht. Die Räume der Ratswahl in der frühneuzeitlichen Stadt," in *Machträume in der frühneuzeitlichen Stadt*, ed. Christian Hochmuth and Susanne Rau (Constance: UVK, 2006), 160–161.

[37] For the term "passives Wahlrecht" see Eberhard Isenmann, "Ratsliteratur und städtische Ratsordnungen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit. Soziologie des Rates – Amt und Willensbildung – politische Kultur," in *Stadt und Recht im Mittelalter – Le ville et le droit au Moyen Âge*, ed. Pierre Monnet and Otto Gerhard Oexle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 371.
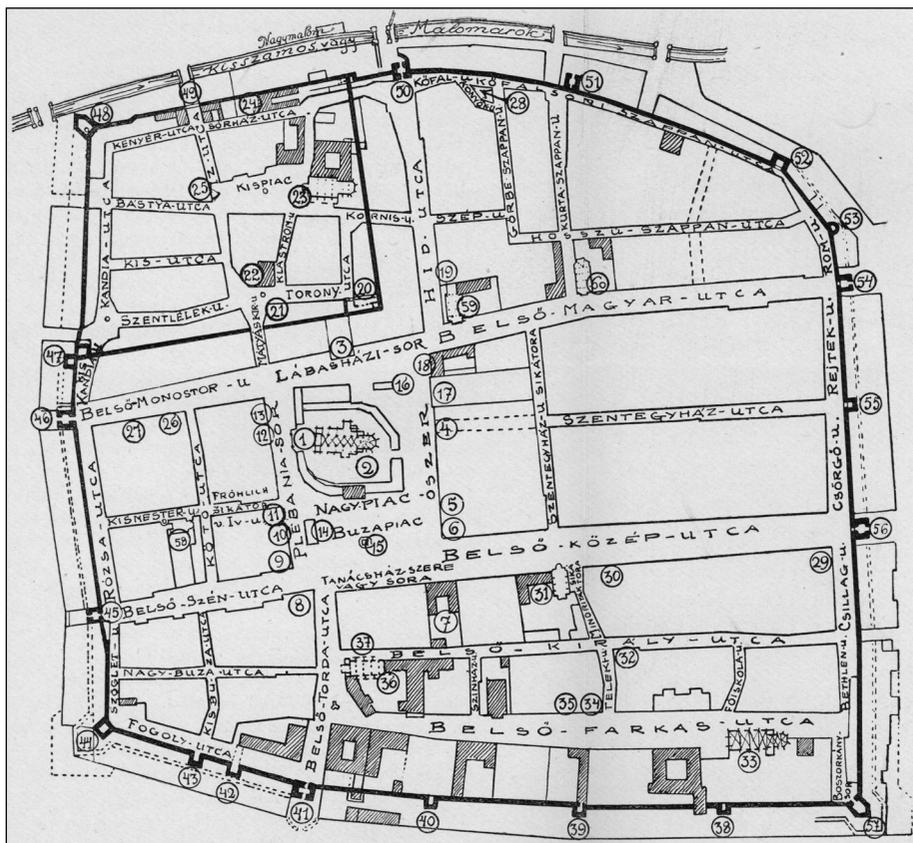
Fig. 1. Town map of Cluj in the 18th–19th centuries. Source*: Szabó T. Attila,*
Kolozsvár települése a XIX. századig [Cluj until the 19th century] *(*Kolozsvár:
Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet, 1946*). (no. 2 The churchyard, no. 7 The Town Hall).*

in Avignon, and in 1397 as being located south of St Michael's church.[38] Prior to
the Second World War, scholars often referred to it as if it had been an ossuary
or lich-house.[39] No doubt, its position, the patron saint, and the close analogies

---

[38] *JakabOkl* I., 105. Elek Jakab, *Kolozsvár története I.* [The history of Cluj] (Buda: Királyi
Egyetemi Nyomda, 1870), 361.

[39] Fidél P. Benedek, *Ferences kolostorok és templomok II.* [Franciscan friaries and churches]
(Miercurea Ciuc: Pallas-Akadémia, 2008), 267–276; János Esterházy, "A kolozsvári Szent
Mihály-Egyház történeti és építészeti leírása" [The historical and architectural description
of St Michael's church in Cluj] *Archeológiai Közlemények* 3 (1863): 57–62.

with other towns from medieval Hungary support this supposition.[40] But even if the chapel had any such functions previously, it changed during late medieval times, as revealed by the historical sources. In sixteenth-century archival sources it is referred as the "small church" and when the parity system of town governance was expanded to ecclesiastical matters as well (1568), this building was used along with St Michael's parish church in a yearly shift by the Saxon and Hungarian communities, respectively.[41]

In the sixteenth century the chapel was used together with St Michael's church. Among their other duties, the two church wardens had to administer both places. The inventory from 1585 records the movables that belonged to St Michael's church and St James' chapel, too.[42] However, there are no specific data that would support the theory that there was a lich-house. Moreover, the *Instructio campanatoris* reveals that funerals took place in both churches, saying nothing specific about any special attribution of the chapel. Apparently, the use of such graveyard chapels lost its importance, since examples show that the chapels which had previously been used as *licchus* were transformed into town archives, council chapels, or even into a library, as it apparently occurred in Sibiu where the St James' chapel situated in the graveyard of the parish church hosted the library of the humanist Albert Huet.[43] In Sopron there is no mention of the St James chapel being used as an *ossarium* after the sixteenth century either.[44] Moreover, the Lutheran synod even banned the use of ossuaries in Transylvania in 1607.[45]

Therefore the presence of this chapel was not the reason why the council decided to choose the graveyard as the stage for their political manifestation, although it might have been used during the ceremony, since according to the

---

[40] *Magyarország műemléki topográfiája II. Győr-Sopron megye műemlékei. (Sopron és környéke műemlékei)* [The topography of monuments in Hungary. The monuments of Győr-Sopron county. The monuments from Sopron and its surroundings], ed. Dezső Dercsényi (Budapest: Akademiai Kiadó, 1953), 314–316.

[41] Kiss, "Kolozsvár város," 171; Jakab, *Kolozsvár története* II., 129–131.

[42] SJAN Cluj, Fond POC, *Socotelile orașului*, 1585, 3/XIX.; Elemér Lakó, "Két kolozsvári templom leltára 1585-ből" [The Inventory of two churches in Cluj in 1585] *Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Közlemények* 22, no. 2 (1978): 216–219.

[43] Gustav Gündisch, "Die Bibliothek des Sachsengrafen Albert Huet (1537–1607)," *Korrespondenzblatt des Arbeitskreises für Siebenbürgische Landeskunde* 4 (1974): 32–52.

[44] *Magyarország műemléki topográfiája II,* 314.

[45] Edit Szegedi, "Moartea, disciplina ecleziastică şi socială în mediile protestante din Transilvania (sec. XVI–XVIII)" [Death, ecclesiastical and social discipline in Transylvanian protestant context, 16th–18th centuries], in *Reprezentări ale morţii în Transilvania secolelor XVI–XX* [Representations of death in Transylvania in the 16th–20th centuries], ed. Mihaela Grancea (Cluj-Napoca: Casa Cărţii de ştiinţă, 2005), 75.

description of the town from 1734 a pulpit was attached to the wall outside the small church.[46] The pulpit could have been used for holding mass or for the sermons held during the ceremony.

Why was the ceremony not held in the church, especially given that it was winter time? Open-air council elections in themselves were not rare occurrences in European urban centers, although they were not very usual either. In cases where the election ceremony was brought before the public, a congestion of symbols and symbolism may be observed. The southern part of the town or church was a symbol of Jerusalem. The depictions or sculptures of Christ and his apostles or other symbols that by their passive involvement in the ceremony put emphasis on the divine vocation of the council were also incorporated.[47] In Cluj, however, none of these reasons provide a valid explanation. It may be more reasonable to consider that in 1537, when the new regulation was adopted, the parish church was used by the Saxon community.[48] Thus, the Hungarian councilors might have been opposed to an oath-taking in a space that was not used by them, or was not accessible to the Hungarian citizens. The council would not have benefited from a possible conflict under any circumstances and it would have damaged the image of total concordance. Therefore, the place between the two churches must have represented neutral ground, a good intermediate space for public legitimatization.

Unfortunately, the new town *regula* does not tell us the reasons why the cemetery became the central stage for the ceremony. Plausibly, it was the best place for a *memento mori* to the councilors, who must never forget that breaking laws, lax morals, corruption or even a deceitful pledge not only might have earthly consequences but bring divine judgment, too. Furthermore, a council election ceremony performed in front of the whole town, both living and dead, and in a place with a certain sacred character, conferred a triple legitimacy on the council[49] and ensured continuity of traditions and respect for civic and spiritual values. Citizens of any kind, women and men, Hungarians and Saxons, maids and widows, poor and rich were buried in the church yard where the council solemnly took its oath on the Bible to keep justice and order with no discrimination.

Remembering aldermen from previous times may also be listed among possible explanations for the choice of this location, especially since references to elder councilors and their achievements were part of the political discourse. In

---

[46] *Kolozsvár leírása 1734-ből* [Description of Cluj from 1734], ed. Pál Páter (Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1944).

[47] Diener-Staeckling, "Orte der Ratswahl," 156.

[48] Parity in the use of the church was adopted only in 1568.

[49] Diener-Staeckling, "Orte der Ratswahl," 166.

this case, however, this aspect is not likely, since even at the end of the sixteenth century the town elite continued using the churches as a place of burial place but not the church yard.[50]

The most plausible explanation is, however, that the town had returned to a medieval tradition. In 1486, the charter of King Matthias, through which the town regulations of Buda were adopted in Cluj, refers to a conflict, moreover to *"rumores clamoresque"* among the citizens during the public elections. The *consistorium*, or the town hall, appears here for the first time as the place where in the future the election had to take place.[51] It seems that the *"in cimiterio"* expression in the renewed town regulation of 1537 did not explicitly point to the cemetery as the place of election rituals, but referred to the church yard as the place connected to local traditions in electing the leaders of the community.[52] The charter of Matthias, however, changed this tradition by directing the public ceremony to be held in a closed place for more security. This may answer the question: why in the graveyard? Besides the hard to define symbolic values, it was the only central open space that was fenced and afforded protection for the gathering.

Walking around the Town

The full ceremony of the council election did not end with the oath-taking ritual in the cemetery, but was expanded to the streets of the town. According to the Buda town law, the last festive act of passage from the old council to the newly elected one was enacted by presenting the judge and its council to the town dwellers in the form of a procession. According to this regulation, the new council had to be presented to the town on the first Friday following the election day, and it was suggested that the townspeople greet them as they were able.[53] The procession ended in a common meal of the councilors at the new judge's house. This ritual was adopted in Cluj as well and remained a custom until the end of the sixteenth century, when the *centumviri* abolished it with reference to the great expenses involved in this ritual that could not be afforded in times of need.[54]

---

[50] András Kiss, "A Házsongárdi temető" [The Házsongárd cemetery], in his *Források és értelmezések* [Sources and interpretations] (Kolozsvár: Kriterion, 1990), 117.

[51] *JakabOkl* I., 275.

[52] In this case, the Upper Hungarian towns provide a good comparison since they also maintained the tradition of resigning from office in the church yard. See H. Németh, "Pre-Modern State Urban Policy," 282.

[53] "Von des Richters erzaigung dem statfolk." (Mollay, *Das Ofner Stadtrecht*, c. 82).

[54] Corpus Statutorum Hungariae Municipalium, I. ed. Sándor Kolosváry and Kelemen Óvári (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1885), 240–241.

The ecclesiastical roots of such processions are undeniable. The important feasts of the calendar were marked by processions. Transferred into a secular context, the procession became part of the institutionalization of a political order.[55] Nonetheless, the common meal, besides being a good opportunity for rejoicing, symbolized the consensus of the councilors.[56] The economic argument for the obliteration of this custom in 1595 seems very reasonable, as a common meal for 100 people must have been a huge financial burden for the newly elected judge or to the town, since there is no clear evidence whether the feast was entirely financed by the judge or paid from town revenues.[57]

Besides financial reasons, however, two phenomena must be considered in order to find the explanations behind the facts. First, the influence of Reformation thought, and especially the dispersion of the radical Reform (in Transylvania mainly Calvinism and anti-Trinitarianism), influenced the perception of rituals.[58] The permanent appeals to morality and modesty, and imposed social control were important principles of the Reformation, all contradicted the ceremonial actions that provided opportunities for self-display. Both the procession and the common meal were the kind of occasion that could create emulation and animosity between the citizens of the town.[59] However, the suppression of this tradition was also facilitated by the drift away from the original roots of such pageants, the religious processions.[60]

Since there exist only circumstantial data concerning the existence of such processions in Cluj, we can only speculate about the course of this ritual. Logically, it did not simply mean escorting the new judge to his house, but it must have included an itinerary through the town. Nonetheless, it most probably was not a silent walk through the town. There must have been acoustic elements to

---

[55] Ruth Schilling, "The Magistrates' Procession and Political Order in Venice and Lübeck," in *Urban Election and Decision-making in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800,* ed. Rudolf Schögl (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009), 89.

[56] Poeck, "Zahl, Tag und Stuhl," 399.

[57] In the Upper-Hungarian town the "Richters Mahlzeit" was financed by the town. See Kálmán Demkó, *A felső-magyarországi városok életéről a XV–XVII. században* [Life in Upper-Hungarian towns in the 15th–17th century] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1890), 199.

[58] Muir, *Ritual,* 32.

[59] On the importance of social control see Robert W. Scribner, "Social Control and the Possibility of an Urban Reformation," in his *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 177.

[60] In 1624, the town council of protestant Bremen abolished the council procession because it was considered to be far too catholic for a protestant town (Schilling, "The magistrates," 71).

mark the approach of the pageant. Singing or trumpeting was usually provided the accompanying tunes for the procession.[61] Moreover, it must have had a well-established order and hierarchy for the march. Thus, this very last public moment in the council election became the most important self-representing instrument for the town elite. They had to visibly demonstrate the ultimate in concordance and conflict-free elections as well as both their profane and divine legitimacy.[62]

Even if the source materials are more scattered and the pieces of information on the council elections in the Transylvanian town of Cluj appear almost incidental, it is clear these events were full of symbols, rituals and signs that were meant to stress the relations between the town and its officials as well as between the officials and God. Although the yearly council elections were the only public secular feast day that took place in the town, the sacred and profane space of the town was used for interaction and to form a duality and shift in meanings as well. Occurrences that had belonged exclusively to ecclesiastical space, such as the procession through the town, the burial place, the songs became scenes in a profane, earthly ritual, while profane realities, such as the number of the councilors, the oath, the bells, entered the sphere of the sacred.

---

[61] The Pentecostal song *Veni sancte spiritus* was sung in the upper Hungarian towns. H. Németh, "Pre-Modern State Urban Policy," 282.
[62] Schilling, "The magistrates," 86.

REPORT OF THE YEAR

György Geréby

The academic year 2009/2010 was as rewarding as it was strenuous and challenging. On a general level, the most fundamental issue was the implementation of the curriculum reform decided at the departmental retreat in the previous academic year. These changes first aimed at reducing mandatory courses (credits) on all levels, allowing for more choice for students. Secondly, it also reduced the number of contact, or in-class hours to permit our students to do more individual research and work more on their theses. These two improvements answered student needs and were received favourably by the new groups.

This year also marked a most significant development for the department with the expansion in the number of departmental faculty. This was related to the commitment of the Rectorate to turn CEU into a centre of excellence in Humanities. Four new faculty members began teaching in our department: Tijana Krstić (PhD Michigan), who added to our expertise in the area of Ottoman Studies, Volker Menze (PhD Princeton) in Late Antiquity, Carsten Wilke (PhD Cologne) in Jewish studies and Daniel Ziemann (PhD Frankfurt/Main) in medieval history. While the new colleagues settled in, István Perczel was on research leave in Jerusalem, and Tijana Krstić honoured an earlier research obligation during the Winter term which she spent in the USA. At the beginning of the academic year, Niels Gaul and Katalin Szende were both promoted to the level of Associate Professor.

Nine students began the 1YMA program (out of which seven defended, since one moved over to the 2YMA, and one postponed his defence to the next year). The 2YMA group had 10 students enrolled (increasing to 11 during the year), and two students from the first 2YMA group defended their theses. The doctoral program also took in seven new PhD students.

The academic year began with the usual two-day field trip, this time to the Jászberény–Tiszafüred–Hortobágy area. The trip again proved to be a great opportunity to bring together the new students and raise spirits for the coming year. The second, longer annual field trip in April was aimed at north-eastern Hungary and northern Romania (primarily northern Transylvania and Moldavia,

including Moldavian monasteries, towns, and castles). The trip covered about two thousand kilometres, and thanks to the experienced organisers, József Laszlovszky and our PhD students, Péter Szőcs (Satu Mare) and Zoltán Soós (Târgu Mureş) it proved yet again to be an enriching, albeit demanding field experience.

At the end of the academic year, the thesis defences were chaired by Marianna Birnbaum (UCLA), Nancy van Deusen (Claremont Graduate University) and Patrick Geary (UCLA). The intensive work of the academic year was rewarded by the high quality of the theses, acclaimed in most cases by the external reviewers. The Tănăsa Fund prizes went to James Plumtree (UK), for his innovative research and collegial attitude and Jana Bačová (Slovakia), for her remarkable progress during the Academic Year.

The guest lectures this year were particularly varied and interesting, not least because of the co-operation between the Centre for Eastern Mediterranean Studies and the Religious Studies Program (which is a joint specialisation with the History Department). The long list of distinguished speakers was headed by our SEP guest Svetlana Luchitskaya (Russian Academy of Sciences) on chivalry in Russian cultural memory, followed by the late Boudewijn Dehandschutter (Leuven) on the recently publicized Gospel of Judas, which alas, proved to be one of his last public lectures. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Cyprus) give us three talks on Byzantine literature, Irene Givianishvili (Tbilisi State University) spoke about the church in Oshki and Georgian church architecture, Carlo Ginzburg (SNS Pisa) gave a talk on Dante and the invisible text of the *De vulgari eloquentia*, and Frederick Lauritzen (CEMS) spoke on Psellus. Jonathan Barnes gave us a fascinating lecture on the Stoics and the soul and Natalie Rothman gave a talk on conversion and convergence in the Early Modern Mediterranean. In April, the Special Lecture Series featured Robert Black on Renaissance political philosophy. Sonja Petrovič (Belgrade) lectured on the literary tradition of the Battle of Kosovo and Athanasios Markopoulos (Athens) spoke about Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. Sir Anthony Kenny F.B.A. (Oxford) gave a talk on Just War and Just Rebellion, and Wendy Doniger (Chicago) discussed Dalits in Hinduism. József Laszlovszky (CEU) spoke about his research project conducted in Koh Ker in Cambodia followed by Claude Jacques on the beginnings of Angkor. Finally, in May, Nicole Bériou (Paris) gave a talk about the relationship of economy and religion for the mendicant orders. The Natalie Zemon Davis Annual Lectures were given by Ute Frevert (Director at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development) on "Emotions in History: Lost and Found."

The conferences and workshops organised by the department started in September with a workshop on *Ecclessiastical Topography in East Central Europe.*

Methods, Problems and Possibilities which was convened by József Laszlovszky together with our alumna, Beatrix F. Romhányi, from the Gáspár Károli Calvinist University. A month later, in mid-October, a conference on the later crusades ("*Late Crusades – Les croisades tardives*") was also organised by József Laszlovszky. An international symposium in November was convened by the Centre for Eastern Mediterranean Studies on *Centre and Periphery in the Age of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos*, in co-operation with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Csanád Bálint). In was then followed by the annual departmental workshop in February on "*Intricate Interfaith Networks: The Variety of Jewish-Christian Contacts in the Middle Ages*" organised by Gerhard Jaritz and Effie Shoham-Steiner (BGU-Beersheba).

Medieval studies would be incomplete without festivities and merriment. The "*Medium aevum quotidianum da nobis hodie*" or "The Invisible Cook" a multi- and interdisciplinary workshop on the "Medieval Cook" and related issues provided us precisely with this, in honour of the sixtieth birthday of our colleague, Gerhard Jaritz. At the same time, we also greeted our expert on social anthropology and academic writing, Judith Rasson, on her round anniversary.

The academic year was closed by a summer university course in late June directed by Katalin Szende: *Lived Space in Past and Present. Challenges in the Research and Management of Townscape and Cultural Heritage*. In July, the Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry organised an international workshop at CEU with the title: *On the Fringes of Alchemy*, in which many of our alumni/ae also participated (Dóra Bobory, who was also an organisers, and Ana-Maria Gruia).

On the international scene, the Kalamazoo medievalist meeting was attended by quite a few colleagues and students: Fabrizio Conti, Edit Sárosi, Gerhard Jaritz, and by alumni/ae, as Kristina Potučkova, Kiril Petkov, Annamária Kovács. The International Medieval Congress at Leeds ("Travel and exploration") was coordinated by Felicitas Schmieder (FernUniversität Hagen), recurrent visiting professor at the Medieval Studies Department. The congress, with its over 400 sessions, attracted more than 1,500 participants, among them several faculty members as well as current and former students of the Department. As in each year, Gerhard Jaritz organized numerous sessions on topics such as business networks in late medieval society, the network of medieval roads, and a round table exploring medieval attitudes to cats with Alice Choyke. On the occasion of the publication of the *Gesta Hungarorum* of the Anonymous Notary and the epistle of Master Roger about the Mongol invasion, one of our founders, János Bak (now Professor Emeritus), convened a round table talk at the congress. Paul W. Knoll (University of Southern California), Zrinka Nikolić Jakuš (University of Zagreb), Martyn Rady (University College London) and Balázs Nagy discussed

the established traditions and the future plans of the Central European Medieval Texts book series with János Bak. In addition to these events, Alice Choyke, Fabrizio Conti, László Ferenczi, Julia Jedamski, Alena Kliuchnik, Balázs Nagy, Magdolna Szilágyi, András Vadas, and Daniel Ziemann read papers at individual sessions of the congress.

The year was also rich in departmental publications. Katalin Szende edited a volume with Finn-Einar Eliassen entitled: *Generations in Towns. Succession and Success in Pre-Industrial Urban Societies* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), and with Derek Keene, and Balázs Nagy another volume: *Segregation – Integration – Assimilation. Religious and Ethnic Groups in the Medieval Towns of Central and Eastern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). György Geréby published a book on "God and Empire. Political theology" (in Hungarian). He also received his habilitation at ELTE University, Budapest. The department was particularly proud to launch the book of our alumnus, Zsolt Hunyadi, on the *Hospitallers in the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary* in the CEU Medievalia series.

This was the final year of my headship. Katalin Szende was elected as the next in line. We all wish her good luck!

ABSTRACTS OF MA THESES DEFENDED IN 2010

Peter Rareş and his Visual Concept:
An Ambitious Sixteenth-Century PR Campaign?
Teodora Artimon (Romania)

Thesis Supervisors: Marcell Sebők, Béla Zsolt Szakács
External Reader: Claudiu Mesaroş (West University of Timişoara)

Peter Rareş (1527–1538; 1541–1546) found himself in an unsettled situation when he came to the crown of Moldavia. Although the Ottoman threat was more omnipresent than ever and Rareş desired to keep his lands free, some of his most important boyars militated for accepting subordination to the Ottoman Empire. Given these conditions, the ruler developed a strategy to make his position visible and influential. Using the exterior walls of the monasteries he had commissioned, Rareş and his team of loyal nobles tried to reach out to their most important public: the free peasants who would comprise the grand army of Moldavia.

The exteriors of Peter Rareş's monasteries are representative of a so-called medieval public relations campaign implemented by the ruler. The Akathistos Hymn, the Last Judgment, the Celestial Hierarchy and, the Tree of Jesse are the four main mural scenes which embody figures and settings relating to the Ottoman Empire and which are, among other additional scenes, most connected with a strategic move by the ruler of Moldavia. The Ottoman army besieging Constantinople, together with the figures of the Ottoman soldiers heading for Hell in the Last Judgment, are the most important "actors" in the unique way Peter Rareş chose to make his point. Moreover, apart from using visual techniques, the voivode of Moldavia also used other strategies, such as distracting the attention of the rebellious boyars and building a positive and trustworthy image of himself through the Chronicle of Bishop Macarie.

This study comprises an analysis of the strategies how the Moldavian ruler used to carry out his campaign. For this purpose, modern methodology connected to the idea of public relations is used. SWOT analysis and visual rhetoric analysis have therefore been employed in order to provide a deeper understanding of this campaign.

On the Fringes of the Shrinking Empire:
The Militarization of Administration and Society in Byzantine Histria
Vedran Bileta (Croatia)

Thesis Supervisor: Volker Menze
External Reader: Archibald Dunn (University of Birmingham)

At the end of Late Antiquity, the Byzantine province of Histria went from being the center of the Empire, to its periphery. The centuries of peace and prosperity were replaced by constant warfare. This thesis concerns the effects that such changes had on the transformation of provincial society and administration from the late sixth to the early ninth century. As the written sources related to Byzantine Histria are scarce, the analysis employs an interdisciplinary approach using archaeological material, epigraphic or numismatic sources as well as data from the other parts of Byzantine Italy, particularly from the northern regions of the exarchate such as Liguria. The research itself focuses on the process of castrization and the process of militarization. By analyzing both processes, a pattern emerges, which reveals the gradual replacement of Late Roman urban society by a local military aristocracy who took over both military and civil power. The study also examines questions surrounding of some endemic elements within this new elite, such as their level of autonomy and their connections with Constantinople.

Legitimacy – Superiority – Subordination:
the Image of Danil Romanovich in the Context of Foreign Affairs in the
Galician-Volhynian Chronicle
Jana Bačová (Slovakia)

Thesis Supervisor: Balázs Nagy
External Reader: Márta Font (University of Pécs)

A new literary genre of secular biography appeared in thirteenth-century Kievan Rus'. One of these biographies deals with the life and deeds of Danil Romanovich, prince of Galicia and Volynia, described in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle*. The goal of this thesis was to examine the construction of Danil Romanovich's image in the *Galician-Volhynian Chronicle* with a special focus on foreign affairs. I selected four significant political factors from the text – the Hungarian kings, the Polish dukes, the pope, and the Mongols – and I analyzed how Danil Romanovich is represented together with each individual factor.

The examination of the image of Danil Romanovich in relation to foreign affairs showed that the image is not homogeneous but changes depending on which foreign factor or ruler Danil Romanovich is depicted with. With regard to Hungarian rulers, Danil's representation strongly promotes him in order to legitimize his position in the Galician principality. In the case of the Mongols, the image turns from Danil's subordination to them to the respect they rendered to him. A different image of Danil Romanovich is presented in connection to the Polish dukes and the pope. This representation of Danil Romanovich does not bear the stamp of a laudatory style, is laconic and lacks splendour. I concluded that the image of Danil Romanovich is, in fact, strongly connected to the foreign leaders with whom he is depicted.

Fourth-century Epitaphs from Salona: Religious and Social Identity
Dora Ivanišević (Croatia)

Thesis supervisor: Volker Menze
External reader: Maureen Carroll (Sheffield University)

Salona was the capital of the Roman province of Dalmatia, of which three early Christian cemeteries – Manastirine, Marusinac, and Kapljuc – have yielded ca. 1100 late antique epitaphs, the only written sources from the city. This thesis deals with the 80 fourth-century epitaphic funerary monuments (predominantly sarcophagi). Of these, 77 epitaphs are in Latin and three in Greek. Although the focus was on the epitaphs, they were also examined within their context. Thus, four conceptual dimensions of a funerary monument were taken into consideration: the verbal, pictorial, physical and locational. This body of epitaphic material was analyzed from the point of view of religious and social identity, i.e., how these two categories were constructed at the individual's death and displayed through funerary monuments.

Three major religious communities co-existed in Salona: the pagans, the Jews and the Christians. It is argued that early fourth-century Salonitan Christians deliberately separated their burial grounds which affected the development of a generally uniform set of epitaphic formulae. Furthermore, analysis of the ranks and offices of the deceased, and examination of onomastics, led to the conclusion that middle and upper-middle class levels of society were commemorated through the use of epitaphs.

Exegesis According to the Rules of Philosophy or the Rule of Faith? Methodological Conflict in the Ninth-Century Predestination Controversy
Tatiana Krapivina (Russia)

Thesis Supervisor: György Geréby
External Reader: Dominic J. O'Meara (University of Fribourg)

The mid-ninth century predestination debate was a remarkable event in the intellectual history of the Carolingian revival. Besides theological and anthropological issues raised in the polemics, the question of methodology – how to read the Bible? – was also of particular significance. This thesis focuses on the methodological conflict between John Scot Eriugena and his opponents Prudentius of Troyes and Florus of Lyon. The principles and applications of their methodologies are also disscussed. The Analysis of Eriugena's treatise *De praedestinatione* shows that he bases his exegesis on the rules of philosophy, because for him philosophical truth coincides with the Truth of Faith. Examination of the writings of Eriugena's opponents – Prudentius' *Contra Iohannem Scotum* and Florus' A*duersus Johannis Scoti Erigenae* – demonstrates their attempt to distinguish the principles of philosophy from those of theology. According to Prudentius and Florus, philosophical reasoning searches for the truth of the "mundane doctrine," while divine wisdom is found not in the liberal arts, but in the testimonies of the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers. In spite of their conviction that theology and philosophy should be separated, Prudentius and Florus themselves could not avoid applications of dialectical tools in their refutations of Eriugena's theses. This shows a general conceptual framework had already been created in the liberal arts where the autonomous development of philosophical and theological thinking could take place.

Forming the First Crusade: The Role of the Kingdom of Hungary in Western Crusading Discourse
James Plumtree (United Kingdom)

Thesis Supervisor: József Laszlovszky
External Reader: László Veszprémy (Institute of Military History, Budapest)

Historiography regarding the movement of multiple groups through Hungary during the First Crusade has predominantly used twelfth-century accounts of the event in an attempt to construct what historically occurred in the kingdom.

This thesis examines the anonymous *Gesta Francorum*, Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana*, Guibert of Nogent's *Gesta Dei Per Francos*, Ekkehard of Aura's *Hieroslymita*, and Albert of Aachen's *Historia Ierosolimitana* with a different purpose. Rather than quoting the texts selectively and amalgamating them into a single narrative, the texts are analyzed individually. Each treatment of the route through Hungary is examined in terms of focus, narrative, allusion, and position in the text, with methods taken from modern literary theory being employed. These accounts, when examined together, show the evolution of the role of Hungary in the crusader narratives: from being a functional detail used to assert the role of the Franks in the crusades, to being an episode to stress the authority of the Benedictine order, to being an extensive exemplum in how crusaders should act.

Quidam Cicero: The Indebtedness of Augustine's *Doctor Christianus* to Cicero's *Orator*
Uroš Rajčević (Serbia)

Thesis Supervisors: Marianne Sághy, Volker Menze
External reader: Mickaël Ribreau (Paris)

This thesis is a study of the formation of Augustine's Christian culture in the larger context of late Roman (Latin) high culture. The research focuses on two major points. The first point concerns the schools which prepared students to participate in the culture and maintained and perpetuated the culture. The second point revolves around the Fourth book of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* and its connection to the works of Cicero and Roman culture in general.

From the study of the process of education, a pattern within Roman culture emerges, as well as the connexion of education ("*culture préparatoire*") and culture ("*culture générale*"). Coupled with Augustine's coeval and reflected views on this process, the study illuminates Augustine's Christianizing tendencies in his later years.

The analysis of the Fourth book of *De Doctrina Christiana* forms a key part of the argument, following Augustine's advice to a Christian teacher. A further examination of the work reveals its connexion to Cicero and its indebtedness to Cicero's theoretical treatises on oratory, which contain certain educational and cultural ideals. Seen through the prism of the fully-formed west Roman culture of the period and the Latin system of education, as well as Augustine's experience and participation in both, the thesis examines arguments for and against Augustine's design for a separate Christian culture (including education and general culture).

The Concept and Role of *Experimentum* in John Buridan's *Physics* Commentary
Zita Veronika Tóth (Hungary)

Thesis Supervisor: György Geréby
External Reader: Gyula Klima (Fordham University)

John Buridan was one of the most influential natural philosophers of the Middle Ages. His work has often been regarded as an important forerunner of modern physics. This thesis examines Buridan's natural philosophy from a methodological point of view, presenting his methodology both as it is explicitly elaborated in his theoretical writings and as practiced in his *Physics* commentary. By analyzing five questions on void in the latter work, I argue that experience has a twofold role in Buridan's argumentation: it provides the basis for certain premises, but plays little part in scientific explanations and demonstrations. I argue that this role, restricted in some respects, instead of being contradictory, follows directly from Buridan's philosophy of science; the latter, although based on an empiricist epistemology in a broad sense, assumes that experience is necessary for the acquisition of some scientific principles. However, it also admits that there can be no necessary and universal knowledge without the active intellect.

Weather Anomalies and Climatic Change in Late Medieval Hungary: Identifying Environmental Impacts
András Vadas (Hungary)

Thesis Supervisors: Alice M. Choyke & Lajos Rácz
External Reader: Richard C. Hoffmann (York University, Toronto)

In this thesis I examine weather events in the late medieval Hungarian Kingdom. There are two focal points in the investigation: tracing the weather events of the 1310s based on charter evidence and narrative sources – non-contemporary narratives from the Hungarian Kingdom, annals and chronicles from neighboring countries – and studying long-term climatic processes in the same region as reflected in historical maps.

After discussing the main trends in climate history of the last millennium in Western and Central Europe, the discussion turns to our knowledge about the climatic processes of the Hungarian Kingdom based on historical data, scientific research, and archaeological remains. As one case study, I provide a

detailed analysis of the sources relating to the environmental crisis in the 1310s in the Hungarian Kingdom. Although a small number of sources note floods, environmental problems or famines, they still provide a basis for supposing that the European-scale environmental crisis of this decade reached the Carpathian Basin as well as most of the territories of Central Europe: Austria, Bohemia, and the Polish territories.

Perambulation charters in the period 1301–1330 are used to discuss the seasonality of legal processes and their connection to weather conditions. Based on the monthly distribution of perambulation charters it is likely that the weather greatly influenced the feasibility of perambulations. Given this sample I infer that a deeper analysis of perambulation processes will allow some characteristics of the climate of the Carpathian Basin to be better understood.

The last part of the thesis contains a discussion of early modern maps of the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain. This plains area can be studied easily to follow the main water level tendencies since the region formerly had a dense hydrography (before water regulation). Maps from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflect abrupt changes in climate and, in some cases, these maps combined with medieval texts can be used to reconstruct medieval environmental conditions.

The thesis, on the one hand, shows that it is possible to discuss long-term climatic processes and weather events (especially weather anomalies) in late medieval Hungary. Analysis of the text of charters yields significant information about the weather and the climate of the Middle Ages. Important results may be achieved by a thorough examination of historical maps.

Pictorial and Iconographic Reflexivity.
Images-within-Images in Italian Painting (1278–1348)
Péter Bokody (Hungary)

The Examination Committee at the public defense on June 1, 2009, consisted of: Victor Karády (Department of History, CEU), chair; Gábor Klaniczay (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU) dissertation supervisor; Joanna Cannon (Courtauld Institute of Art, London); Colum Hourihane (Index of Christian Art, Princeton); Gerhard Jaritz (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Béla Zsolt Szakács (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU). The external readers were: Joanna Cannon (Courtauld Institute of Art, London); Colum Hourihane (Index of Christian Art, Princeton).

The dissertation deals with the emergence of images-within-images in Italian painting around the end of the thirteenth century. This period marked a new beginning in the history of visual representation in Western art: the picture was no longer conceived of as a two-dimensional surface, but as a three-dimensional pictorial space depicting a world parallel to our own. This shift led to a "realistic" turn in the picture itself. One concomitant of this development was that images-within-images appeared in large numbers, usually as part of a building situated in the background or an object belonging to the setting. The term images-within-images refers to the phenomenon of presenting one figurative work within another (for instance, a fresco within a fresco, although hybrid combinations such as sculpture represented in painting are also included). A widely known and emblematic form of this is picture-within-picture, where paintings are depicted in paintings. The universal importance of the phenomenon is that it indicates a reflexive step, when the unilateral process of "an image representing something" is broken and gives place to "an image representing an image." My main question is how these embedded images contributed to the reality-effect of the pictures (by showing them as more life-like and detailed). I also investigate how these

embedded images facilitated a pictorial reflection on the visual organization of the picture itself, at the same time, creating meaning-related associations within the works and thus contributing to their message. Furthermore, by investigating the aspirations of the patrons and pictorial developments in the artists' workshops the results are situated in their broader historical context.

Chapter 1 sets up in detail the theoretical framework of the dissertation. By analyzing the research history of pictures-within-pictures I show how the dominance of the modern concept of art prevented the full appreciation of the problem of images-within-images before the Renaissance. This discussion is combined with analysis of the *Allegory of Obedience* from the Lower Church in Assisi, which is one of the most complex examples from the period. In this case it may be possible to show in detail how pictorial and iconographic consideration can apparently come together. Building on the results of this case study, I further evaluate the relevance of the concept of disguised symbolism in this period (thus acknowledging my indebtedness towards the legacy of Erwin Panofsky). Having asserted the possible interdependence of painters and their patrons, this chapter concludes with a short discussion of the "Franciscan question" in art history.

Chapter 2 deals with the complex question of how images were perceived and used in the Middle Ages prior to the Trecento. The aim is to create a historical framework in which the arrival of the realistic turn around the thirteenth century and the emergence of images-within-images can be interpreted. This reconstruction situates the realistic turn at the border of "medieval" and "modern" perception of the image in terms of the role of the aesthetic features of the works and the cultic and theological contexts.

Chapter 3 addresses the beginnings of images-within-images in the Trecento. These beginnings are treated under the name of Giotto of Bondone, even if I leave open the question of whether he was responsible or not for the *Legend of St. Francis* in the Upper Church at Assisi. I argue throughout this chapter that the phenomenon of images-within-images appears first on those works which have been connected to Giotto for a number of reasons. Despite the insecurities of certain attributions, I believe that there are a sufficient number of examples showing that he was indeed interested in exploring both their pictorial and iconographic implications. The discussion of his work in this chapter is limited to his activity up to the time he finished the *Allegory of Obedience* in the Lower Church in Assisi. The works in the focus of this chapter are the fresco decorations of the Upper and Lower Church in Assisi together with the Arena chapel in Padua and the *Stefaneschi altarpiece*.

Chapter 4 follows from chapter three since Giotto's work for the Franciscans of the Santa Croce in Florence is dealt with here, although from a different angle. In this chapter I concentrate on the emblematic motif of the depicted statuette. This motif epitomizes many questions within the dissertation. It simultaneously incorporates the influences of contemporary architecture and classical wall painting. I highlight the fact that this Classical motif had already been adopted for Christian purposes in Late Antiquity as, for example, the Palatium mosaic of the San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna indicates. Reconsidering theories proposed by Erwin Panofsky, Janetta Rebold Benton and Michael Camille, I attempt to show that the use of the statuette also transcended a mere expression of idolatry. It was exploited to express typological connections (in the case of the Temple) and permitted development of secular power-representation (in the case of the Palace) within a picture. In the context of the statuette, I discuss how Bernardo Daddi and Taddeo Gaddi absorbed Giotto's impact in the Santa Croce in Florence. Beside these two main followers of Giotto, the statuette influenced the works of Palmerino of Guido at the Santa Chiara in Assisi and of the Rimini brothers for the Augustinian convents of Tolentino and Rimini, and it appears in the *oeuvre* of Duccio of Buoninsegna as well.

In addition to the cross-section provided by the discussion of statuette imagery in Chapter 5, I discuss another motif: the pseudo-sculptural decoration on the throne of the Virgin. The throne of the Virgin Mary is crucial to the entire dissertation. Most of the images-within-images in the period appear on narrative paintings which might give the distorted impression that the phenomenon was limited to the *historia*. This chapter demonstrates how images-within-images found their way to the *imago* as well and became integrated elements within the traditional iconography of the *Virgin and the Child*. The analysis of various works from Rieti, Spoleto, Assisi, Florence, Figline and Lodi reveals the role of images-within-images in integrating liturgical, typological, theological and even biographic references into the representation of the Mother of God. Complementing the argument on the statuette, I discuss how Bernardo Daddi and Taddeo Gaddi managed to merge the pictorial and iconographic implications of images-within-images for some of their major Madonna commissions in Florence.

Following these two comprehensive chapters on the statuette and the throne of the Virgin, in Chapter 6 I return to the more monographic treatment of the subject and analyze the relationship of the Lorenzetti brothers to the phenomenon. Pietro Lorenzetti, in the left arm of the transept of the Lower Church in Assisi, continued Giotto's design and thus, came into first-hand contact with the images-within-images of his predecessor. I show how in the *Passion* cycle Pietro absorbed

and developed Giotto's solutions further. I evaluate whether these details can be understood as a pictorial exegesis on the passion of Christ. The other two subchapters are dedicated to two major works of his brother Ambrogio: the *Martyrdom of the Franciscans* in the San Francesco Church and the *Presentation to the Temple* for the Cathedral, both in Siena. With the pseudo-sculptural decoration on the palace of the sultan in the *Martyrdom*, Ambrogio intended to create a complex reference to Classical gods. In the *Presentation* he blended together an allusion to the contemporary building of the Cathedral of Siena, the origins of Circumcision in the Old Testament, and perhaps the actual liturgy to be performed before the painting. In this way he managed to harmonize topographical, typological and liturgical codes.

In Chapter 7, I briefly touch upon the question of the diffusion and afterlife of the phenomenon. The images-within-images reflecting the visual and iconographic organization of the picture apparently first showed up outside Italy around 1330 in the Augustinian abbey of Klosterneuburg. The *Morning of the Resurrection* panel of the altarpiece contains a typological reference to the Prophet Daniel displayed as part of the sarcophagus. This case study should reveal how images-within-images were tailored to fit different contexts outside Italy.

Either the pictorial or the iconographic aspects alone would already make the problem of images-within-images in the Trecento interesting. Yet, what makes it particularly intriguing in the period is that the visual and semantic tendencies appear tied to the same phenomenon. In certain cases the same image-within-image indicates simultaneous engagement both with the pictorial and the iconographic aspects. The combination of the two testifies to the relevance of the phenomenon in the investigation of representational reflexivity and helps bridge the gap between the broadly understood discipline of visual studies and traditional iconography. The theoretical model worked out in the dissertation for understanding pre-modern Western developments can perhaps be applied to the analyses of other non-Western visual systems and, ultimately, contributes to a cross-cultural understanding of pre-modern reflexive imageries.

Students from Košice at Foreign Universities
before and during the Reformation Period in the Town
Iulia Caproş (Moldova)

The Examination Committee at the public defense on February 24, 2010, consisted of: György Endre Szőnyi (Department of History, CEU), chair; Katalin Szende (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU) dissertation supervisor; Gerhard Jaritz (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Marcell Sebők (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Gábor Czoch (Atelier Department of European Historiography and Social Sciences, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest); Tünde Lengyelová (Institute of History, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava). The external readers were*:* Gábor Czoch (Atelier Department of European Historiography and Social Sciences, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest); Rainer Ch. Schwinges (University of Bern).

This doctoral thesis provides a quantitative and descriptive analysis of the students from Košice (Kassa, Kaschau), a town in present-day Eastern Slovakia, formerly in the northern part of the Hungarian Kingdom, who attended universities from the end of the fourteenth until the end of the sixth decade of the seventeenth century. My research proposes to fulfill two major goals: the first is to present this group of students using empirical data and the second is to delineate a number of its characteristics, with special attention paid to aspects related to academic peregrination and the relationship between the town and its studious inhabitants, either during or after their university studies. The research is based upon a prosopographical catalogue which comprises all students from Košice who went abroad to study at universities until the year 1660, identified in the available sources. This catalogue includes academic information about each of the students supplied with further data about his family background, social status, postgraduate career, etc. depending on the information that could be gathered. Whenever possible, some indication is given on the student's contribution, if any, to the cultural development of the town and the region. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of this catalogue allows some conclusions to be drawn concerning the general characteristics of the student population coming from Košice and the meaning and the impact of university attendance within the framework of a specific town.

The main text begins by setting the local context: presenting political, economic, and religious aspects of the development of the town of Košice during the period of research. While located at the periphery of Western Christianity and

relatively far away from the most important centers of learning, Košice was, at the same time, one of the most important merchant towns in Northern Hungary. It was a significant component of the trade network in East Central Europe at the time and an important regional center. The town presents interesting patterns of political, economic, and religious development, in particular from the fifteenth to the first half of the seventeenth century. This pivotal role that it played within the region provided an incentive for researching both the development of education in the town and the university attendance of its inhabitants or other type of protégées.

The third chapter of the dissertation maps out the academic peregrination of the students from Košice throughout the entire research period and analyzes the main factors that influenced the numerical evolvement and the institutional choices at different stages. In addition to analyzing the numerical fluctuations and the institutional preferences, further aspects related to the academic peregrination of students from Košice have been considered, such as the content and duration of studies, graduation, social status of the students, inter-university mobility and traveling in groups. One of the important outcomes of this work is the establishment of a comprehensive quantitative picture of the academic peregrination of students from Košice during the period researched. A total of 306 matriculations at different universities until the 60s of the seventeenth century (1660) by 278 students originating from the town of Košice was identified and systematized in the prosopographical catalogue. Two major sub-periods were delineated when analyzing the university attendance of the students from Košice. The first one lasts until the year 1530 and is characterized by an increased number of university matriculations at a rather limited selection of universities. During the second period – from 1530 to the 1660 – the number of university attendees decreases while the geographical framework of university attendance broadens considerably. In the first period, the most popular university was, undoubtedly, Cracow. Another favorite was the University of Vienna, where students from Košice could be identified already beginning in the late fourteenth century and until the seventeenth with several interruptions caused by various political and social events of both internal and external character. While during the first sub-period Italian universities, were popular for Košice students to some extent and less so the German ones, the situation changed in the sixteenth century, when Wittenberg dominates from the 1550s, followed by a number of other German universities. The numerous university foundations in the German territories offered cheaper and closer options for going abroad to study to Košice inhabitants than the Italian institutions. In addition, the official adherence of the town to

Lutheranism directed the institutional choice of students originating from the town to those universities where the same confession was in force. In the first half of the seventeenth century, students from Košice continued to go to Germany, although the previously popular university of Wittenberg seems to have been replaced by Königsberg and other universities, in particular in the north-east of the German territories, which were relatively unaffected by military actions and tended to be more tolerant towards the religious beliefs of their students. And finally, a few students began to matriculate at Catholic universities in the first decades of the seventeenth century, although this occurred only sporadically.

Chapter number four focuses on defining the opportunities for financing university studies that students from Košice had at their disposal at different stages in the research period. The information for the fifteenth century is rather scarce in this respect. The major support for university studies came from home, from the family and prosperous relatives. In addition to the possibility of accommodation at various bursas, as was best illustrated in the case of Cracow University, a number of students representing the Dominican order could be identified. They benefited from the common practice of this order to provide financial support for its members studying theology at schools or universities in Italy. However, this funding applied only until the mid-sixteenth century at the latest, after which date the members of this order had left Košice.

From the middle of the sixteenth century until the end of the Reformation period, the town council was actively involved in improving the educational opportunities for the inhabitants of the town and the surrounding area. Several categories of beneficiaries could be identified, such as representatives of well-established families in the town, relatives of town council members, sons of former or present employees in the town administration, church or school, under-age descendants of prominent town burghers, for whom the town council was entrusted to handle their inheritance and help them financially during their studies, and individuals already employed at the school or in the church locally or in the neighborhood. Among the conditions for receiving financial support, the following could be identified: the student had to express his intention to pursue studies or to already have studied at one of the Protestant secondary schools or universities abroad, the beneficiaries were expected to spend the money they received to pursue their education and were supposed to keep in touch with the town council in order to keep them informed about their life at school and their academic progress. There are some documented cases in which a precondition for a financial subsidy was a commitment to return to the town, to take a position at the local church or school or to continue working in one of these positions,

if previously employed there. As illustrated in a number of letters, a common practice in Košice at the time seemed to be financing two years of stay at a university, but the duration of the subsidy varied from case to case. Some students stayed longer and received financial support for the entire period. In some cases, a student would be sponsored starting from his secondary school studies until the end of his university studies, even while moving from one university to another, as was more typical in the first half of the seventeenth century. On average, the annual grant was 50 Hungarian florins, yet again this amount varied from one student to another. There were cases in which the student would receive this amount with relative regularity throughout several years, and other students who maybe received it only once or twice. The amount of 50 florins is commensurate with the amount of money granted to students by foundations or urban councils in various towns in the German territories, as presented in the scholarly literature. What makes the situation in Košice different from that of these other towns is the number of provided scholarships.

The last chapter of the dissertation addresses the postgraduate careers of the former students and attempts to assess the impact that university studies had upon individuals and the town or region as a whole. In spite of its many limitations, some data about the postgraduate fate of students from Košice in the fifteenth and the first two decades of the sixteenth century could be collected and analyzed. It resulted in the identification of three main patterns of postgraduate career development, namely a) students who returned to Košice, b) who stayed in the town where they completed their studies, either at the university or practicing a profession, and c) students who moved to other locations, either to continue their studies or to develop a career as scholars, doctors, artists, etc. Since university attendance required financial investment and the possibilities to find support for studies were not very numerous at that time, attending a university was the privilege of those who had already attained a certain social status and possessed sufficient material wealth. Based on the identified cases, the highest achievements acquired after the university attendance in the fifteenth century was the development of a professional career abroad or advancement in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which a few former students from Košice made use of.

The data that could be collected with regard to the development of the postgraduate careers of students from Košice after the 1530s is more numerous, and this allows for defining a number of their characteristics underpinned with more factual support. A first obvious feature is the vast geographical mobility of the former students, many of them moving frequently from one location to the other, within the region of Upper Hungary but also further away, forced by

economic, political or religious factors. A second identified feature is the so-called "professional mobility", which refers to individuals changing their "profession", alternating between school, church and civic administration – in most cases the order being school-church or school-town administration. The success of this type of mobility was determined by the same type of education these employees had received at a secondary school or university and by the nearly identical standing of the teachers and priests in Košice. Employment as a scribe or notary was certainly more attractive, due to the increase in political influence and the chances to advance to urban council membership. Therefore, it seems clear that to a certain extent from the sixteenth century on university studies became a means to secure employment and professional advancement. Social respect for learned competences started to increase and the persons who had attended universities had more chances to become part of the urban elite in Košice. This way, a third type of mobility can be delineated to characterize the former students from the town – social mobility. For people not belonging to the elite by birth, university studies more and more became an essential factor in the process of intellectual and professional advancement. At the same time, additional ways of improving one's social and financial status were often considered by former students, and sometimes pursued besides their professional career, such as family inheritance, involvement in trade or a successful marriage.

In addition to increasing the size of the urban intellectual elite, another important impact of former students from Košice from the second half of the sixteenth century is their contribution to the establishment and sustainability of the Reformation, in particular of its Lutheran branch in the town of Košice and in other neighboring locations. Students were among the first messengers of the new religious movement and, further on, in their positions as school rectors contributed to the increase of the level of education in local schools, while the town churches were the places where such graduated priests promoted Lutheran ideas. In general terms, the Reformation addressed two aspects of the town's cultural development, school education and book culture, and both these directions gained a significant momentum starting from the second half of the sixteenth century with the strong involvement of the former students.

The fact that notwithstanding the changing cultural context at home and at the universities of the time, individuals of Košice did not cease to go to universities throughout the entire period of this research, suggests that university education represented something of importance for the town's inhabitants. The number of students, however, was lower than in other towns of similar size located in the German territories. Among the important reasons for this low representation

was the peripheral character of the town, the lack of financial resources among the population, and the still-limited need for university graduates in the public and economic life. The commercial importance of Košice stayed high and the town's political, military, and religious functions increased during the sixteenth century, while the potential for intellectual activity stayed rather limited. In other words, even though Košice remained the leading member of the "Pentapolis alliance" throughout the researched period, its intellectual centrality was much weaker than its economic one. Indeed, it never became a significant intellectual centre, and none of the church leaders in the Reformation period originated from Košice. A large number of students from the town were driven to universities abroad for more pragmatic reasons than by the desire to get involved in academic scholarship (with a few exceptions noted in the dissertation). The greater part of the population, even those associated with to the urban administration, was satisfied with the existing secondary schools or private education of some kind and only a very few ventured to leave their homeland searching for knowledge.

Even though this study concentrated on a single town, it was not intended as a narrowly focused local study. It was my hope to contribute to the further development of two major areas of study. The first area of interest is the medieval and early modern history of towns, to which this study contributed an essential element, namely reflecting on the university education of the town inhabitants and its impact within the local urban context. The study provided further information on the urban elite in Košice during this time period, researching the group of students and identifying it as a socially privileged category of the town's inhabitants. This research demonstrates the direct relationship between university attendance and political, social, economic, and religious developments at home as well as the importance of the active involvement of the town's administration in improving the educational opportunities for its inhabitants.

The other area addressed in the thesis is the history of university education in East-Central Europe, before and during the Reformation, the analysis of which is advanced by providing material for further comparative studies on Upper Hungary, based on the rich and still only partially explored, archival material preserved in present-day Eastern Slovak towns. Research about other towns from this region would be very beneficial for estimating and explaining the role and position of Košice within the context of the regional academic peregrination, to answer the questions about the extent to which the town conformed to or differed from the common patterns, and to reveal in what ways the town of Košice was distinctive with regard to its education policies.

The Birth and Development of Pragmatic Literacy in the Medieval Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia (from State Foundation to the end of the Sixteenth Century)

Mariana Goina (Moldova)

The Examination Committee at the public defense on September 23, 2009, consisted of: Lajos Rácz (Department of History, CEU), chair; Gerhard Jaritz (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU), dissertation supervisor; József Laszlovszky (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Bogdan Murgescu (Faculty of History, University of Bucharest); Katalin Szende (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Daniel Ziemann (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU). The external readers were: Marco Mostert (Department of History, University of Utrecht); Bogdan Murgescu (Faculty of History, University of Bucharest).

In this study I intended to trace the spread of practical literacy in Moldavia and Wallachia from the end of the fourteenth until the end of the sixteenth century. After the Roman withdrawal from Dacia there is no evidence for written culture on the territories of the medieval Romanian Principalities up to the mid-fourteenth century. Indirect evidence suggests an extremely limited use of writing prior to the establishment of the states. The use of writing was manifest mainly after the foundation of a central political authority, both in Moldavia and in Wallachia. The surviving data that indicate the use of documents for practical purposes are mainly restricted to records concerning land ownership and communications of various kinds.

1. Land charters as promoters of pragmatic literacy

As land titles constitute by far the largest part of the surviving documents, I have concentrated first and foremost on the dynamics of the growth of literacy as reflected in the increasing number of extant land charters. I could see that the dynamics of growth in the number of documents and their dissemination among various social strata were, especially in Wallachia, strongly correlated with changes in land ownership and conflict situations deriving from traditional land inheritance patterns and the demands of new land owners. In Moldavia the number of documents seems characterized by a rather monotonous growth, without major inflection points.

While there is a reasonable expectation that fewer documents survive from earlier periods, I suggest that the increase in extant documents reflects an actual growth in writing practice that characterizes the research period. I stress that the formulary of the early documents reflects unsettled writing practices, while the

low value attached to written land titles up to the middle of the sixteenth century points to scarce use of written records.

While in Moldova written land titles were granted, received and re-confirmed as a matter of ordinary business, in Wallachia they seem to have been asked for in extraordinary cases only. These (specific) cases are recurrent in the documents and have permitted me to identify the factors that stimulated Wallachian nobility to use written records instead of the customary oral rituals carried out to perform the same task:

– The first increase in the number of Wallachian charters is related to the desire to avoid *defectus seminis* through the practices of *praefectio* (turning a daughter into a son for the purposes of the law) and *fraternal adoption* (turning a stranger into a brother). An additional element here is constituted by attempts to circumvent customary land succession.

– The sixteenth-century process of accumulating land to form great estates owned by high-ranking noblemen triggered the appeal of writing to small land owners as they strove to preserve their landed properties against encroachment.

– The great number of land disputes (possibly triggered by the same process of accumulation of land to form great estates) brought about a significant increase in the number of Wallachian documents. In this respect, the strengthening of the defensive role of the charters as probative evidence during disputes was essential.

Thus, the analysis of land titles reflects the differences between the written cultures in the two principalities. While Wallachia entered the scene roughly as a pre-literate society, with a strong emphasis on customary (oral) legal practices, in Moldavia writing seems to have had a more secure footing from the onset. The process of transition from collective to individual forms of land ownership in both cases is one of the reasons for the multiplication of land titles. The specificities of Wallachia's social structure brought about major social changes (which are less reflected in Moldavian documents), namely the formation (during the sixteenth century) of large landed estates at the expense of small land holders, a social conflict that stimulated a demand for written records.

2. Foreign relations and trade: essential factors for the early written culture
The two medieval Romanian principalities were located in an area where written culture extended to neighboring Hungary and Poland, as well as south of the Danube. In my view, trade and international relations represented the main media through which foreign writing practices trickled into the lands that I have dealt with here.

Political treaties were among the first conduits of transmission of Western cultural and literary traditions to the newly created states of Moldavia and Wallachia, as the first extant treaties were written abroad, in Latin, and using the host's customary format, whether it was Poland or Hungary. Early political treaties indicate that both Moldavia and Wallachia were significantly influenced by the practices employed in the Polish and Hungarian chanceries. Later, as the fluctuations between Western and Eastern Christian tradition settled into a strong affiliation with the Eastern Church, the Western influence was gradually coupled to a South Slavonic one.

Correspondence on foreign affairs issued from the Moldavian principality constituted the most important factor that stimulated the production of Moldavian written communication. The constant on-going correspondence with Western kingdoms led, among other factors, to the early establishment of a written tradition in Moldavia's chancery. From the reign of Stephen the Great (1457–1504), when the number of documents increased, Moldavian letters sent abroad indicate established practices, a mature tradition and the ability to produce documents in the official regional languages.

Conversely, in Wallachia, the political relations with neighboring powers seem to have played a less important role in the use of writing; active high-level diplomatic interactions resolved in writing were almost discontinued after the reign of Mircea the Old (1387–1418), only to be resumed during the reign of Michael the Brave (1593–1601). The style and format of Wallachian Slavonic political letters is often colloquial and oral, the information referred to was called "speech" and its transmission was referred to as "spoken." Especially during the fifteenth century, the style of these letters suggests that there was no differentiation between spoken and written language and that the prince formulated his letters as a direct verbalization to the recipient. These findings corroborate the very low number of letters that survived, indicating a 'literate mentality' still shaped by oral culture. Only the letters issued during the reign of Michael the Brave (1593–1600) suggest a gradual establishment of written practices in Wallachia.

In Wallachia, written communication was used mainly for trade-related and not diplomatic documents. The role of trade was especially prominent during the early period, when most of the Wallachian foreign correspondence was related to commercial activities. Out of a total of 21 Wallachian documents preserved up to the reign of Aldea (1431–1433) in the Braşov municipal archives, 20 were related to trade. Thus, during a period when written evidence, especially in Wallachia, was extremely rare and was issued mainly on behalf of clerical institutions, trade-related issues seem to have been among the few factors that stimulated the

circulation of written documents among a very restricted community of laymen. According to my data, in Moldavia trade relations were less well-formed.

The direct and indirect evidence for trade (along with other types of documents) indicates that the Moldavian principality was more influenced by Western structures and cultural traditions, while Wallachia enjoyed a stronger southern influence. Thus, trade-related documents demonstrate that various trade milieus had an impact on the introduction of written practices in Moldavia and Wallachia.

3. The process of dissemination of written practices

Up to the turn of the sixteenth century, most of the documents, whether charters or foreign letters, were issued almost exclusively at the level of the princes' chanceries. Only exceptionally were documents produced at the urban and regional level, mainly for foreign communication. After the turn of the sixteenth century in Wallachia, and even half a century later in Moldavia, documents began to be produced for record keeping by other state structures and even private individuals.

The earliest exchange of letters was initiated by towns inhabited by German-speaking communities involved in commercial activities. Later, after the turn of the sixteenth century, land titles began to be produced outside the princely chancery. The first surviving urban land titles indicate that they were produced by the same town administrations that had previously used writing for communication with foreign institutions.

Thus, I advance the hypothesis that correspondence with foreign institutions led to a familiarization with written culture which, later on, facilitated the production of other types of documents (such as charters). I conclude that the richest corpus of written records was produced in urban institutions involved in commercial activities with broad ethnic and religious diversity.

Indirect evidence indicates that a large number of local charters attesting land ownership did not survive because of their limited juridical value. However, the significant increase in the production of surviving documents by the last quarter of the sixteenth century, and the dynamics of writing practices reflect an on-going transition that seems to have begun in the second half of the sixteenth century. Thus, even if more documents may have existed previously, the type of documents and the social groups involved in their commissioning and producing might not differ significantly from the image offered by the extant data.

4. *Who was writing?*

Up to the turn of the sixteenth century, the production of documents was restricted to elite professionals within the state apparatus. The acquisition of active literacy skills constituted a resource that tended to bring its practitioner high-ranking social status and wealth. Unlike the norm in the Catholic world, the early scribes in the medieval Romanian principalities were laymen. They seem to have been young and wealthy noblemen, offspring of highly positioned clergy or state dignitaries. Careers in the chancery were usually lengthy; skills seem to have been learnt in the office, as during the early period future chancellors were usually selected from former scribes. It may be that writing skills were learned within the family context, as the recurrence of the names of certain families reflects an almost dynastic transmission of this occupation across generations.

After the mid-sixteenth century, especially in Moldavia, the social pool out of which scribes were recruited began to include families of the lower nobility. However, the high-ranking social standing and wealth of scribes continued to be well attested. In addition, toward the end of the sixteenth century writing skills became diversified to a small extent beyond the professional scribes to a limited number of high state and church dignitaries. The use of the vernacular brought a limited number of village priests into the writing arena. The local documents issued in vernacular Romanian strongly suggest that these were incipient and unsettled writing practices. The active literary skills possessed by parish priests were very important in order to supply the demand for the written word at the local level, thus facilitating the transition from oral practices to use of the written record among the lower social strata.

5. *Oral culture/Literate culture*

I have revealed the processes of appearance and dissemination of written culture in two "preliterate" societies. This process can be understood only by stressing that at the onset of my study the two principalities relied almost exclusively on oral practices that included, but were not limited to, customary law, practices of administration, proof of ownership and dealing out justice. Gradually, certain common oral customs such as record keeping and communication began to include written documents. Nonetheless, the involvement of documents in the practices of the two societies did not bring about an immediate change in non-literate mentality. Documents neither replaced oral testimonies nor functioned as "real" sources of information. Instead they were perceived as symbols of princely power or as a symbol of ownership: they were preserved, hidden, and stolen as

very valuable objects in themselves, with little concern expended on the actual content of the texts.

Only gradually and inconsistently did written documents begin to replace former oral practices. Despite the fact that at the highest level of these societies writing was used for communication from the first half of the fifteenth century, at all the other levels, even at the end of the sixteenth century, most communication of information took oral forms.

It is only after a number of generations that an inflection point can be identified in the way written records were perceived and valued. Written charters, which earlier carried little or no legal weight compared to oral testimonies, gradually increased their legal value and took precedence over witnesses. By the end of the sixteenth century, transactions of land regularly began to involve written records, at least among high-ranking social strata. Moreover, the perception of the documents as powerful instruments during potential social struggles extended down to the village level. Consequently, free peasants began to confirm their rights to land in writing and carefully preserved all pieces of writing, either their own or belonging to others.

However, the written record did not replace the performance of oral ceremonies but rather co-existed with them. By the end of the sixteenth century, there were very few new types of documents indicating that written culture went beyond official communications and the ownership records. Moreover, evidence of active writing skills was still restricted to certain princes or high-ranking state officials.

Thus, by the end of the sixteenth century, in the medieval Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, I unveil a set of processes that impacted the ways in which written documents were perceived, valued, and acted upon, rather than one in which assimilation of active writing skills spread throughout the two societies.

Preaching Saint Stanislaus:
Medieval Sermons on Saint Stanislaus from Cracow and their Role in the Construction of his Image and Cult
Stanislava Kuzmová (Slovakia)

The Examination Committee at the public defense on May 19, 2010, consisted of: György Endre Szőnyi (Department of History, CEU), chair; Gábor Klaniczay (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU) dissertation supervisor; Nicole Bériou (Université Lumière-Lyon 2, Lyon); Martin Homza (Faculty of Arts, Comenius University, Bratislava); Gerhard Jaritz (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); József Laszlovszky (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Edit Madas (National Széchényi Library, Budapest). The external readers were Nicole Bériou (Université Lumière-Lyon 2, Lyon); David d'Avray (History Department, University College London).

The objective of this dissertation was to supply one of the missing pieces in the mosaic of sources which constructed the image and cult of St. Stanislaus of Cracow in the Middle Ages. Numerous studies have dealt with various issues concerning St. Stanislaus, including the obscure origins of his cult, his hagiography, the miracle collections, and the liturgy. These studies have demonstrated that devotion to the saint, variously manifested, flourished among all strata of society in the Late Middle Ages. However, sermons have been largely neglected in these studies and received only cursory attention, despite the fact that they were an integral part of the "hagiographic discourse," and preaching was certainly instrumental in facilitating the cult's proliferation. Preachers would retell and use the material from the saint's legends and other hagiographic sources together with material from the Bible and various authorities in order to interpret and present a lesson about this saintly figure. Recently, scholars have called for enquiry into the sermons on St. Stanislaus, perhaps motivated by a more general renewed interest in sermon studies which has only reached Central Europe in the last decade. My dissertation, which offers a comprehensive analysis of the sermon corpus on St. Stanislaus within the late medieval discourse on him, provides at least a partial response to this express interest.

Stanislaus was the bishop of Cracow in the eleventh century. His legend tells the story of his conflict with Boleslaus II, the king of Poland, which resulted in the bishop's murder in 1079. The oldest preserved evidence of his cult dates back only to the turn of the thirteenth century. The Polish Kingdom, which had long since ceased, had splintered into several principalities. The popularity of the cult

grew in the thirteenth century and, thanks primarily to the efforts of the bishops of Cracow, but also with the concerted support of the mendicant orders, the duke of Cracow, and the area of Little Poland centred on Cracow, Bishop Stanislaus was canonised by Pope Innocent IV at Assisi in 1253. The centre of the cult of St. Stanislaus was in Cracow, where he had lived and acted as a bishop and where he had also attained his martyr's crown. As the first Polish native to be canonised, he became an especially prominent figure among the saints venerated in Cracow and later in all Poland. St. Stanislaus enjoyed respect and devotion from both the official and popular audience, which lasted well into the fifteenth century and, in a way, still continues to be very much present even in today's Poland. He became the patron-saint of Poland, one of the symbols and icons of Polish history and society.

An important outcome of this work is a collection of medieval sermons on St. Stanislaus which I identified in manuscripts, here available as an inventory in the Appendices. It served not only as a source for my analysis of sermons in this dissertation, but it can also be utilised for further studies. I have gathered 80 different sermons and sermon materials from 86 various codices, which comprise altogether 129 instances in which St. Stanislaus appeared in sermons in manuscripts dating from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century. I have gathered the corpus without the help of the usual tools, especially Schneyer's *Repertorium*, which is an indispensable help for Latin sermons in other, more studied, parts of Europe, but was not of much help in my case. Geographically, this enquiry focused primarily on the central area of the cult of St. Stanislaus, and especially on the major reservoirs of medieval manuscript resources in the area – Cracow and Wroclaw – supplemented with materials from other locations in Poland and abroad (including Prague, Budapest, Bratislava, Uppsala, Oxford, Sankt Florian, and the Vatican).

In this study the relationship between sermons on St. Stanislaus, the construction of his image and the operation, spread, and uses of his cult are examined. First, the functions and uses of the sermons that survive in manuscripts were identified. Then, the functions and uses of the cult of St. Stanislaus could be described on the basis of the various images of the saint presented in sermons. The sermons consciously constructed an image of the saint favouring certain aspects of his sanctity. The preachers chose what to emphasise depending upon the conditions and considerations during the composition and delivery of sermons. However, the inventory of images utilised by preachers was limited to a certain extent, most importantly by the type of sainthood that Stanislaus represented. The variability was also constrained by the fact that preaching occurred within

the repetitive liturgical framework of the saint's feast-days, which occurred each year on the same days, and was characterised by a relatively stable repertoire of liturgical texts. Preachers frequently tended to distil the message about a particular saint (within a particular sermon, but also in general) to an essential image, which recurred in numerous sermons. Thus, the study presents multiple images and functions of the cult of St. Stanislaus in the Late Middle Ages on the basis of the sermons and, at the same time, points out the most prominent and successful uses.

1. *The Image of St. Stanislaus in Various Sources of His Cult*

In this chapter the development of the image and cult of St. Stanislaus is presented on the basis of other representations – hagiography, historiographic sources, liturgy, and visual representations. It provides a setting for further study and familiarizes the reader with the topic. I summarize the most important developments in the construction of the saint's image chronologically, and describe the contribution of particular sources and their function in the saint's cult.

2. *The Contexts of Preaching on St. Stanislaus – Preaching Occasions*

I then proceed from preaching as an activity (Chapter 2) to sermons as written texts preserved in manuscripts (Chapter 3). Chapter 2 provides the background to the preaching on St. Stanislaus and determines the contexts in which the preaching on the saint occurred based on sources other than sermon manuscripts. First, Chapter 2.1 delineates possible occasions for preaching about St. Stanislaus before and during the process of canonisation. In order to evaluate the distribution and impact of preaching on the cult of St. Stanislaus, it was necessary to define the feasts of St. Stanislaus observed after the canonisation, to distinguish between the feast of martyrdom and the feast of translation, and to analyse the status and diffusion of the feasts. The feasts were observed with limited success in isolated places outside Polish lands, which I describe concisely in Chapter 2.2.2. I attempted to reconstruct the prescriptions for observance of the feast as comprehensively as possible on the basis of a variety of normative sources and accessible liturgical books. Most importantly, the overview demonstrated the great significance of the feasts of St. Stanislaus, especially in Cracow and also in other Polish dioceses (2.2.1, 2.2.3). Festivities of such elevated status required sermons to be delivered in these areas not only to a small group of clergy, but also to the public at large who were engaged in the celebrations. The overview of the feast observance confirmed my assumption that a variety of sermons designed for various audiences was to be found in preachers' manuscripts because of the significance of the feasts of St. Stanislaus in Cracow and Poland particularly. Chapter 2.2.4, devoted to

the prescriptions for preaching, helps to identify particular opportunities for the delivery of sermons on St. Stanislaus, especially during the annual assemblies of the Cracow Cathedral Chapter (and rarely also synods) which took place on the feasts of St. Stanislaus and provided a distinct framework for a special group of sermons on St. Stanislaus – the sermons delivered *ad clerum.*

3. Sermons on St. Stanislaus of Cracow in Manuscript Codices – an Overview
While the previous chapter presented the occasions and contexts for preaching on St. Stanislaus – for real delivery of the sermons about him – Chapter 3 presents the sermons as they survive in medieval manuscripts. It provides a comprehensive overview of the dossier, showing the variety of sermons and sermon materials present in manuscripts, a list of which is presented in the appendices for the first time. The chapter includes a discussion of a variety of materials in preachers' manuscripts, revealing sermons in various stages of elaboration and a consideration of their different forms of transmission and function in codices (sermons which were parts of the sermon collections, model sermons, other sermons). Different sections in Chapter 3 provide an overview of the genres and the themata of sermons on St. Stanislaus, summarize some remarks on the liturgical occasions for the sermons on the basis of their manuscripts, and describe the relationship of sermons and hagiography (legends) in the manuscripts.

Sermons were composed by authors from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from mendicant friars to cathedral, court, and university preachers, and perhaps even parish priests. Although a number of texts remain anonymous and are difficult to place precisely in time and place, an overview of the authors and users of sermons on St. Stanislaus resulted in some interesting observations. Most of the evidence comes from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; a number of persons connected with Cracow University composed or copied sermons on St. Stanislaus. In the late fourteenth century the university became a centre of learning for an entire generation of Polish intellectuals who had studied at Prague University before returning to Poland. A number of these intellectuals later composed sermons on St. Stanislaus. The university also facilitated the increased production of sermon manuscripts, their exchange, and also an exchange of ideas which formed a repertoire of motifs for sermons on St. Stanislaus. The identified authors of sermons were often active among several centres – the university, the cathedral, and the city, and sometimes their Order, and so on. Thus, the texts circulated whenever students and alumni from Cracow brought their sermon manuscripts with them to their new prebend, parish or monastery.

4. The Sermon on St. Stanislaus of Cracow by Peregrinus of Opole and Its Reception
Chapter 4 is a case study of one of the preaching texts, a model sermon by Peregrinus of Opole, a Dominican friar, composed at the turn of the fourteenth century. As it would not be possible to analyze all collected sermons in an equally thorough manner, I chose instead to study this particular one in greater detail. The chapter provides a detailed analysis of this sermon – perhaps the oldest extant sermon, the most frequently copied, and the most influential sermon text on St. Stanislaus – including consideration of its posterity, transmission, and reception. The chapter shows the mechanism by which sermons, and especially model sermons, worked. First, it elucidates how a sermon on the saint could be composed using hagiography, images of the saint, and rhetorical devices. Second, the chapter investigates how a sermon was received, transmitted, and spread, i.e., its manuscript copies and versions, utilization of its parts and so on. The sermon continued to be used by preachers throughout the fifteenth century; there are at least 17 copies and four other redactions, and a number of other sermons borrowed various elements from it (which I was able to trace thanks to the dossier I compiled). The sermon by Peregrinus can also be used as a reference point to evaluate and analyse other sermons. Moreover, some historians have wondered about the reception of the de sanctis collection and this sermon is evidence of the success of Peregrinus' work.

The analysis of the remaining sermons focuses on two basic aspects of Stanislaus' cult corresponding to the two most prominent groups of topics addressed by preachers, as well as to the two basic functions of the saints' cult in general: articulation and definition of the admirable and the imitable. Peregrinus had already used these patterns in his sermon.

5. Saint Stanislaus in Sermons – the Imitable and the Admirable
Chapter 5.1. "An Exemplary Shepherd" deals with the imitable: the image of St. Stanislaus as an exemplar of the good shepherd for contemporary clergy and non-clerical lords, in the case of the former connected with contemporary efforts at reform of the clergy. This study demonstrates that although St. Stanislaus belonged to the traditional type of saintly bishops and martyrs, which were otherwise declining in popularity in the Late Middle Ages, he was also much more. A significant group of sermons presented him as a good shepherd, including a number of sermons on the *thema Ego sum pastor bonus*. Some of these sermons were meant particularly for clerical audiences, to whom Stanislaus was presented as a role model in a period of increased efforts at reform. A number of elements which appear in sermons on Stanislaus were not specific to this genre,

but appeared in sermons on other occasions as well, given the rich tradition of the good shepherd motif. Additionally, St. Stanislaus was also presented as an exemplar to secular lords, and, to a lesser extent, to ordinary Christians. Catechetical instruction was an important element of the preaching on saints, in some cases even more important in sermons than the moral lesson from the saints' lives. These matters were present in sermons on St. Stanislaus as well, the most important point being perhaps teachings about the Passion and the Resurrection, which was a natural concern of the sermons about the Good Shepherd, Christ, and corresponded especially to the position of Stanislaus' feast of martyrdom in the Easter period of the liturgical cycle. Part 5.2, "A Powerful Intercessor," focuses on the admirable aspect, which was also represented in sermons on St. Stanislaus. Preachers frequently presented him as an effective protector and a patron-saint not only for individuals, but also for the community of Cracow, of Poland, and the Poles, who were urged to turn to him in times of spiritual or physical hardship.

Knowledge of the corpus enabled me to consider new questions and further avenues of research. I have identified some themes which deserve more attention in the future, such as, comparative studies concerning sermons on other bishop saints, including Sts. Thomas Becket, Adalbert, and other saints canonised in the same period, such as Peter the Martyr. Such studies could shed more light on the function and position of such cults in the Late Middle Ages. The next objective will be an electronic edition of the collected and inventoried sermons on St. Stanislaus, only a portion of which is presented in the Appendix to the dissertation. A catalogue of the hagiographic motifs related to St. Stanislaus with their occurrences in sermons, but also in other sources, would be fruitful for further analyses of various motifs connected with St. Stanislaus. This dissertation has provided a platform for such enquiries.

Imperial Systematization of the Past:
Emperor Constantine VII and His Historical Excerpts
András Németh (Hungary)

The Examination Committee at the public defense on June 2, 2010, consisted of: Howard M. Robinson (Department of Philosophy, CEU), chair; Niels Gaul (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU), dissertation supervisor; Gábor Bolonyai (Greek Department, ELTE); Cristian Gaşpar (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); György Geréby (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Athanasios Markopoulos (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens); Daniel Ziemann (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU). The external readers were: Athanasios Markopoulos (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens); Gábor Bolonyai (Greek Department, ELTE).

The purpose of my dissertation is to explore the innovative and, at the same time, conservative concepts and vehicles by which Byzantine imperial power was manifested in an extraordinary project initiated and overseen by the Byzantine emperor, Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. This project involved the deconstruction of a vast corpus of earlier historical writings in Greek (by at least 26 historians) into small sections and reconstructing them within a new systematic order. This intricate editorial endeavour seems to have commenced in the early 940s, was mainly carried out during Constantine's reign as sole emperor (945–959), finalized in the early years of Basil II (r. 976–1025), and resulted in the substantial collections of historical extracts known as the *Constantinian Excerpts* (henceforth: *CE*). The corpus of the *CE* provides a unique insight in the tenth-century imperial view of history through the selection of fifty-three subjects, tenth-century methods of data management, and the compilation technique, which is also significant for a more thorough understanding of other imperial compilations such as *De administrando imperio* (hereafter: *DAI*), *De thematibus*, and *De cerimoniis*.

Assessments of the *CE* have been monopolized so far by observations of scholars who focused on historians whose works only survive in the *CE*. The small number of recent attempts to locate *CE* in their Byzantine milieu has only focused on certain historians with regard to the way they were incorporated among the excerpts. As far as a comprehensive view of *CE* is concerned, scholars have not managed to improve the results achieved by C. de Boor and Th. Büttner-Wobst, who edited the surviving collections of the *CE* one hundred years ago. Thus, the aim of my work was to help scholars better understand the *CE* in general and

in particular with regard to how Constantine VII and his circle conducted their systematization.

1. The Byzantine Context

The extensive introductory chapter explores the historical and intellectual context in which the *CE* were produced. In addition to providing a fresh view on tenth-century Byzantine excerpting methodology, my work locates Constantine VII's project within its conceptual frame. The *CE* are interpreted in my work as a rich repertory of historical examples. The fact that the chronological framework of events was neglected in the *CE* demonstrates that the historical examples were judged more important than their position in a chronology. The surprising inclusion of fiction, Iamblichus's historical novel, the "Babylonian History," shows that the instructive aspect of the examples was regarded as more significant than their reality. Thus, grouping by subject seems to have employed the advantage of highlighting the edifying pattern behind similar events, a method of learning which was suggested by Constantine VII to his son, Romanos, in *DAI* (46. 146–149).

Compared to "traditional" compilation techniques, Constantine VII and his circle seem to have made improvements in terms of extending the scope of historical enquiry not only by embracing a larger corpus of data, but through the method of systematization as well. A "triple reference system" was invented as a tool for data management.

(1) A group of fifty-three subjects was created with the goal of embracing all aspects of history, which functioned as the main organization principle. The selection of this number has been explained for the first time in my work. I suggest that Polybius' concept of viewing the interval of fifty-three years, regarded as the most crucial period in history when Rome conquered the inhabited world (220–168 BC), played a major role in the selection of this number. At the same time, fifty-three is an extraordinary prime number which can be divided by one and itself in arithmetic and can also be arrived at by summing five consecutive primes (5+7+11+13+17). As various phenomena in the world can be expressed in numbers as compounds of prime numbers, fifty-three subjects indeed seem an ideal number to cover everything visible in the universe. Conceptual phrases in the first four books of a historical account compiled at Constantine VII's commission (*Theophanes Continuatus*), and his *Vita Basilii* occasionally include citations from passages by Polybius which also appear in one of the fifty-three collections, entitled: "On gnomic statements." In addition to these phrases, the privileged position of the collection "On the inauguration of emperors" (no. 1),

which included passages on the translation of power from the Babylonians to the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and finally to the Roman Empire, also support this idea. From this point of view, the interval of fifty-three years for the last translation of power into the hands of the Romans, a self-identifying label for the Byzantines as well, seems to have been momentous enough to serve as the basis of a conceptual system.

(2) The historical models employed in Constantine's treatises (*De thematibus*, *DAI*, and *De cerimoniis*) appear, in general, identical with the historical periods selected for the *CE*. Constantine VII followed in the footsteps of his father, Leo VI (r. 886–912), when selecting the glorious period from Justinian I (r. 527–565) to Heraklios (r. 610–641) as a main model to follow. However, Constantine's selection of historians and historical periods went beyond the world of Byzantine chronicles composed in the ninth century. The main novelty of the *CE* lies in the way Roman Republican history, the period between the origins of Rome and Julius Caesar, was included in the endeavour. The main emphasis is placed on the Punic wars and the conquest of the Mediterranean world, especially the East; the civil war of the second and first centuries BC received less attention. For this purpose, historical accounts by Polybius, Appian, Arrian, John of Antioch, and Cassius Dio were used. The selection of Diodorus of Sicily for Constantine's project shows a deeper interest in the archaic history of Greece than the perspective usually found in chronicles of the ninth century. All these phenomena lead to the conclusion that collecting and restructuring huge quantities of historical accounts by using the method described in this dissertation resulted in an expansion of the Byzantine view of history as primarily imperial Roman and Biblical. As far as the historical genres are concerned, detailed historical accounts of contemporary events are preferred over chronographies; George Synkellos and Theophanes Confessor, the leading chronographers of the ninth century, do not feature in the final copies of the *CE*. Biographies did not require restructuring. Proportionally, Late Antique historians prevail. For this period, the selection of authors in the *CE* is larger than that in the *Bibliotheca* of Patriarch Photios because the complete works of Menander Protector, Priskos, and Agathias were excerpted in the *CE*.

(3) Personal and geographical names, functioning as indices, were copied in the margin of the manuscripts of the *CE* in roughly a ratio of one index to each excerpt. This type of index would have facilitated the production of the compilations ascribed to Constantine VII. As far as their subjects are concerned, some passages in certain functional positions in *De thematibus* and in *DAI* may have been borrowed from the *CE*. There are three extensive citations in *De thematibus* from historians (Polybius and Nicolas of Damascus), all providing a

mythical explanation for the origins of certain geographical names. In the same functional position, instead of a citation, reference is made to the sources where the author of *De thematibus* searched in vain for the origin and the attestations of a particular geographical name (ii. 5–12). This reference provides information on the sources used for the first redaction of *De thematibus* in the early 940s. The reference includes a list of historians from the age of Justinian I, whose works were selected for excerpting in the *CE*. The "triple reference system" of *CE* would have facilitated such research that aimed to find a passage from these historians in a particular context of a specific geographical name.

My dissertation demonstrates that the fifty-three subjects, as far as it is possible to reconstruct them, share an interest in aspects of imperial power which appear in the treatises ascribed to Constantine VII. The attention given to the person of the emperor such as his inauguration, marriage, successions in power, his death, and ambushes against him appear in *De cerimoniis* and partially in *DAI*. The analysis of a passage from Arrian, appended to my dissertation with comparative apparatuses, demonstrates that specific aspects of warfare were distinguished more carefully than has been assumed so far by military historians. This fine distinction seems a phenomenon that parallels the creation of military collections in the second and third quarters of the tenth-century with works grouped according to thematic principle for Constantine VII and his circle. The geographical, political, ethnographic, and diplomatic categories as separate subjects seem to parallel some of the main concerns of *De thematibus* and *DAI*. The extraction of literary genres from historical writings such as public speeches, epistles, epigrams, object descriptions (*ekphraseis*), mythical stories, and gnomic statements created a systematic anthology of short literary excerpts which could be used for various compositions.

2. The Material Evidence

The analytic presentation of the manuscripts of the *CE* serves as the material basis for exploring the method of Constantine VII's team. Through careful study of the palaeographical, codicological, and decorative aspects of the manuscripts of the *CE*, I was able to refine the chronology of excerpts based on three independent sets of arguments. Both (1) the hand and (2) the decoration in ms Tours C 980 (the ms of the collection no. 50 "On virtue and vice") lead to the conclusion that this deluxe copy was prepared within a couple of decades after Constantine's death, a hypothesis supported by (3) the fact that the Suda lexicon used a definite number of collections of the *CE* under Basil II (r. 976–1025). The chronology of the final copies of the *CE* and various aspects of a few other

manuscripts produced in the same context with the *CE* also seem to support the hypothesis that it was the eunuch, Basil Lekapenos, the illegitimate son of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos and one of the most influential courtly men in Byzantium from the 940s to 986, who was behind carrying out Constantine VII's wish to produce deluxe copies of the various collections of the *CE*. The time gap between the activity under Constantine VII and the date of some of the final copies can easily be explained by Basil's career. He became Constantine VII's trusted man and Prince Romanos' tutor, enjoyed great respect under emperors Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963–969) and John Tzimiskes (r. 969–976), and finally, governed the Byzantine Empire as regent from 976 to 986.

The description of the manuscript includes a concordance with the intermingled leaves of the Tours manuscript and its edition. This newly created tool was the basis of the full edition of the tenth-century marginal annotations in the Appendix of my dissertation. Concerning the sixteenth-century copies, I expand the number of arguments that they derived directly from copies of the late tenth century. Contrary to usual scholarly views, I argue that the historical excerpts in ms Par. suppl. gr. 607 reflect preparatory work for *CE*, carried out a few decades earlier than the date of the final deluxe copies.

By suggesting a date for the launch of Constantine's enterprise as early as his ascent to the throne (945) and by extending the production of the final copies as late as the 970s or 980s, I have established an alternative temporal framework for a new analysis of Constantine's project. This extended interval makes the project of restructuring such a huge number of historical texts more feasible than has been assumed by scholars so far. This new proposal weakens the concept of direct transmission from the complete historical texts to the final copies, a hypothesis which, although widely accepted, has never before been appropriately explored. Moreover, the date suggested here for the launch of the project makes it possible to establish links between the excerptors' methods and the data management behind Constantine's treatises as suggested in Chapter One based on internal evidence.

3. A Data Management System

In order to identify the elements characteristic of the activities of Constantine VII's team, the final chapter contains a scrutiny of the excerpting method by contrasting the prescriptive *prooemium* preceding each Constantinian collection with evidence from the tenth century traces materialized in the manuscripts of the *CE*.

The editorial supplements in ms Tours C 980, fully published with critical apparatuses in the appendix of this dissertation for the first time, display definite patterns showing the interdependence of their functions (heading, cross-reference, index, *scholion*) and visual appearance on the page (majuscule–minuscule script, main body of the text and the margin), that is to say, the hierarchical presentation of data. It is a phenomenon that has been neglected so far in the study of the *CE*. The anomalies in these supplements helped me demonstrate that the indexing system and cross-references were used in the process of excerpting and partially originate from the draft copies. The proportional reduction of indexing rare words and definitions, if compared to the high number of such entries transferred from the *CE* to the Suda lexicon, convinced me that students, probably those at the palace school of Constantinople, were engaged in preparation of the draft copies. The intermediate material seems to have differed from the final versions in terms of marginal annotations and associations of various clusters of excerpts.

The analysis of the organizational theory as expressed in the *prooemium* to the excerpts and in the dedication poem to Constantine VII as well as the compilation practices observed in the *CE* yielded in a characterisation of Constantine's method. Contrary to common scholarly opinion, my thesis demonstrates that Constantine VII's team was innovative in terms of the way they combined traditional compilation and excerpting techniques. The re-organisation based on subjects and an attempt to preserve the entire text had never been applied at the same time before Constantine VII. The key to this innovative idea is the simultaneous realization of both meanings of the expression in the *prooemium* (τοῦ λόγου ἀκολουθία): (1) the "sequence of the text according to its sense" and (2) "the sequence of the narrative." Using this method, his collections provided a vast amount of historical material in an easier-to-use arrangement than in either the abridged summaries of complete works or traditional *florilegia* and lexicographic collections.

By exploring some basic problems surrounding the *CE*, I have attempted to pave the way for future research and stimulate further discussion. The new findings presented here will extend our knowledge of Byzantine intellectual history and Byzantine compilation techniques in general. As a large proportion of the historical texts of the *CE* have not come down to us in any other form, my work will assist in studying the fragmentary works of historians from the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Antique periods as well as the compilations ascribed to Constantine VII. The excerpting method and the system of indices my work has explored also provide clues for ways to distinguish what comes from the original authors and what derives from the excerptors. The expansion of the

time frame for the excerpts and the hypothesis that an intermediary version and word lists existed before the final copies were produced will provide grounds for discovering new types of relationships among the various intellectual achievements of the Macedonian dynasty.

Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)
Orsolya Réthelyi (Hungary)

The Examination Committee of the public defense on February 25, 2010, consisted of: Gábor Gyáni (Department of History, CEU), chair; Jeroen Duindam (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen); Géza Pálffy (Institute of History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences); János M. Bak (Professor Emeritus, Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Gábor Klaniczay (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU); Katalin Szende (Department of Medieval Studies, CEU), dissertation supervisor. The external readers were: Jeroen Duindam (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen); István Fazekas (Archival Delegate of Hungary to the Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna).

Mary of Hungary (1505–1558) in the context of her courts is placed in the focus of my dissertation, from her arrival to the Austrian provinces of the Habsburgs in 1514 from the Low Countries, through her coronation as queen of Hungary in 1521 and her appointment as the regent of the Netherlands in 1531. The court was a place for the practice and display of power, a stage for diplomacy and political life, as well as the focal point for the accumulation and distribution of art, science and new trends. However, it also comprised a group of people of various backgrounds, social standing and interests living together in a regulated manner. In this study, the court is examined primarily as a group of people structured by social relations and tensions. Questions about the political, religious and social context of the royal court are approached through investigating the relationship of household and power, both formal and informal. Special attention is given to questions of religion, ethnic and linguistic identity, gender, and age. All these fields accommodate what contemporaries saw as problematic issues pertaining to the queen.

The best known issue of tension is the queen's interest in the ideas of the early Reformation. There is no end to sources in which Mary is accused of harboring protestant sympathies, by friends and enemies alike. Indeed, she was an admirer of Erasmus, was familiar with the teachings of Martin Luther and sympathized with the scripture-based reform movement within the Church. Several members in

her immediate surroundings, among others her court priests, were also associated with the reform movement. Even though most recent scholarship agrees that despite her interest and sympathy she cannot be considered "Protestant", her attitude to the religious controversy in her surroundings focused much religious tension on her person. One of my intentions was to study her religious interest and preferences within the context of the court. Did religious affinity play any part in the personal alliances and party politics? Can the signs of religious preference be found in the choice of who was employed in her household?

Since to many contemporaries, being "German" was an equivalent to being "Lutheran," the question of national and linguistic identity is closely connected with religious tension. Hungarian queens were nearly always foreigners and often the object of mistrust and hate in medieval Hungary. In addition to her foreignness, Mary was a representative of Habsburg influence in Hungary, which was feared and disliked by the majority of the Hungarian nobility. Recent research has demonstrated that the political controversies within Hungary in the years before Mohács cannot be simplified as a struggle between the "national party", supported by the lesser nobility on the one hand, and the barons, representing the Habsburg interests, on the other. In a large number of studies on the political power centers of the Jagiello period, András Kubinyi has shown that the situation was far more complex, characterized by shifting alliances between different sections of both groups of the nobility, and the court. Within this background the queen emerges as a figure of some importance, whose interests did not always coincide with those of her family. Nevertheless, the traditional xenophobic sentiments of the Hungarian nobility, which reached a peak in the rulings to expel foreigners from the court brought by the Diets of 1524 and 1525, were largely aroused by the queen's preference for "German" advisors and courtiers, and directed against them. In an age which does not yet consequently apply the theory of a nation as a geographical and linguistic unity, the use of the concept of "foreignness" in political discourse and ideology is especially intriguing. In this field of tension, Queen Mary also seems to have had an emblematic position, as the embodiment of foreignness. Within this topic I have investigated the concept of foreignness, how it was used, by whom, against whom, and for what purpose. The royal court was necessarily a group with a high concentration of non-Hungarians. The king himself, though born in Hungary, was from the Polish Jagiello dynasty and was king of Bohemia as well. Therefore, the number of Czechs and Poles at the court was significant. Did they also count as foreigners, or was this title restricted to the Germans? Which languages were spoken in the various social layers and how did this influence communication at court? What was the ratio of Hungarians and

foreigners within the different levels of the court? Can the personal views and preferences of the queen be traced?

Unlike the question of religious and ethnic tensions, which has received ample scholarly attention, the problems concerning gender issues in connection with the court of Mary of Hungary have not been thoroughly researched. Gender identity certainly was referred to in contemporary descriptions of the queen, who was often characterized as a strong woman endowed with the "masculine" virtues of political and strategic intelligence as well as physical skill and endurance. However, it is necessary to go one step further and re-examine the sources for gender relationships and tensions within the court. What is the relationship between the queen and the predominantly male world of officers and menial servants? What do we know about the *Frauenzimmer*, the female household of the queen? What kind of information can be found on the structure and functioning of the economically separate queen's court? Is there any reason to suppose that some of the tensions surrounding the queen were due to the appearance of a female presence at the court? Here, as in the field of religion, a comparison between my period of research and earlier periods is called for. The queen's court under Mary is contrasted to the courts of the previous queens of medieval Hungary.

In researching the period one forgets all too easily that the young age of the royal couple was a significant feature of the Buda court. In 1521, when she arrived to Hungary, Mary was only sixteen years old; King Louis II was half a year younger. Five years later the king died and Mary became a widow at the age of twenty-one. Much of the grievances about the life of the royal couple (too much dancing, hunting and amusement, improper behavior, etc. that gave rise to a lack of respect among the courtiers) was understandable, if not excusable in light of their age. Similar complaints can be found with other young sovereigns. The question of the age of the people surrounding the queen is also addressed in the dissertation. To what extent can this be determined? Does this information provide any extra information about our understanding of the queen's court?

Sources traditionally used for the investigation of the royal and reginal court do not exist for the court of Mary of Hungary in the period between 1521 and 1531. Since we have neither household ordinances nor court accounts from the queen's court, information had to be collected from a number of divergent source types, chiefly from letters, charters and narrative sources from the period. This has been supplemented by material (ordinances, accounts) from the years preceding the time period under investigation, from which a richer source material exists. When appropriate, images and other sorts of non-written evidence were also consulted.

The picture emerging from the accumulation of data about Mary's courts shows a reginal institution that can be compared to those of other late medieval queen's courts of Europe in size, form, function, and even inherent problems. On the other hand, Mary can be placed in the succession of queen consorts of the Kingdom of Hungary in the later Middle Ages who exercised considerable power and influence on political life in the Kingdom. The extent of Mary's influence on politics, despite the short period under investigation is significant. In my analysis I have argued that two factors play a decisive role in the power of Mary of Hungary, both of which express themselves in the queen's household.

One of these is the vast size of the reginal domains, which made the late medieval queens one of the most wealthy, if not the wealthiest landowner in the kingdom. This great increase in the extent of reginal domains can be traced back to the first half of the fifteenth century when Emperor Sigismund (1368–1437) systematically increased the estates of his second wife, Barbara of Cilli. Though scholars have not yet uncovered the motives behind this extreme empowerment of the queen by Sigismund, we know that in the years to follow the queen was repeatedly a source of ready cash in the form of loans for the Emperor's military campaigns and acted as a stabilizing factor in the Kingdom. Because of the unique position of the queen as a female landowner bound with strong ties of loyalty to the king and dependent on him, thus with lesser risk of power ambitions at the expense of the king, her empowerment may have been part of Sigismund's larger strategy for decreasing the power of the magnates. Unsurprisingly, as much as a large body of reginal estates created a stabilizing power in the lifetime of the king, they became a destabilizing feature and a problem if the king died and the bond of loyalty was broken. The potential of power inherent in the reginal estates as well as the destabilizing aspect if the king predeceased the queen can be traced in the cases of several Hungarian queens in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. When Mary received the management of the reginal estates, many of them were mortgaged to others and brought her limited profit, nevertheless both her income from the estates and her potential to gain influence through patronage and appointments were very great in an European context. She was the last in the line of queens from Barbara of Cilli to profit from the immense reginal estates. She can also definitely be said to have recognized the potential and have utilized the possibilities provided by the estates, both financially and politically.

The second factor is the right to appoint members to court functions. Besides being an obvious means to exercise patronage and win supporters, authority in appointment also meant a personally selected, close body of loyal followers around the queen. Traditionally, the king had the authority to appoint officials of the

queen's court, a practice reflected both in the comparative European examples, and in the stages of Mary's court before 1521, when she was under the authority of her grandfather, Maximilian, and after 1526, when she came under the protection of her brothers, Ferdinand and Charles. The sources indicate Mary's high level of authority in decisions about the members of her household. In the period between 1521 and 1526, there were no signs of any kind of limitations being set on the number, or persons selected to be her appointed officials. This observation is underlined by the complaints of the nobility regarding the high number of foreigners in the queen's household and their repeated requests to the king to limit this – with no perceptible results. The intriguing question is whether the apparent lack of intention by Louis II to limit or influence the composition of the household of his wife should be considered yet another sign of the youthful sovereign's careless negligence in state matters – a frequent complaint about the king –, or can it perhaps be regarded as another form of empowerment of the queen. Given the absence of conclusive evidence it is difficult to argue this latter version, but it is worth keeping in mind that Louis II and Mary also displayed a conscious strategy of building a new power basis against the magnates with the help of the lower nobility. Furthermore, several members of the queen's household and officials seem to have played a significant role in the political events of the Diets of 1525–1526. It is conceivable that the queen had a free hand in appointments because those forces at the court which wished to strengthen the authority of the king realized that her political ambitions and intelligence backed by the weight of the reginal estates could act as a stabilizing factor for the kingdom.

There is a third significant characteristic of the court of Mary of Hungary that contributed a distinctive element to its functioning. This is the position of Mary's court within the complex matrix of the courts of the king and queen of Hungary-Bohemia and the archduke and archduchess of Austria, connected by the double marriage between the Jagiello and Habsburg dynasties. The results of the investigation show that a close relationship existed between the royal and archducal courts. This manifested itself primarily in the close ties between the households of Mary and Anne, with roots often going back to the shared princess court in Innsbruck. Several families had members in more than one of the four households and many examples of movements of officers from one of the households to another are shown. In some cases, the king's and queen's court at Buda seems to have acted as a place for politically undesirable elements from the archducal court. There was also a stream of information and intrigue being passed back and forth through official and unofficial channels, which only occasionally surfaces in the sources, but which must have been a central characteristic of

the relationship between the four households. A closer investigation of the household element of the much better documented court of Archduchess Anne would considerably widen the possibilities for comparison and also further our understanding of the functioning of the Mary's court. It seems likely, for instance, that the conspicuous absence of daughters of the Hungarian nobility in the *Frauenzimmer* of Queen Mary can be explained with the fact that these daughters were rather sent to Anne's court in hopes of a good marriage, while Mary's *Frauenzimmer* was expected to provide heiresses from outside Hungary for the sons of the Hungarian nobility. However, these must remain hypotheses until more research is done. In addition to the strong connections existing through the personal element, there is a more conceptual connection between the four courts. Several sources indicate that the specific circumstances of the double marriage made contemporaries envision the Hungarian-Bohemian and the Austrian courts as contrasts to each other, expressed especially in the comparison of the position of Anne with that of Mary. The early years of the courts of Hungary and Austria had many similarities and the royal couples had to struggle with similar challenges, such as the demands of the estates, the spread of Reformation ideas, and the distrust of foreign advisors in the household. I believe that such a comparison provides a possibility for future scholarship to gain further insights into the working of the separate courts, their relationships and the dynamics of politics, gender, and power.

VISUAL THINKING AND DIAGRAMMATIC IMAGES IN MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS
RESEARCH PROJECT (2009–2012)

Anna Somfai

Webpages:

http://medievalstudies.ceu.hu/profiles/faculty/anna_somfai
http://medievalstudies.ceu.hu/projects/visual-thinking-and-diagrammatic-images-in-medieval-manuscripts-0

The current Visual Thinking project is the result of a longer process of my interest shifting from objects of thought to the phenomenon of thinking and its neurological basis. With a focus on the question of how people think differently by means of images than through words or numbers, I explore visual thinking against the background of more general questions concerning patterns of thinking. By a close study of medieval manuscripts I approach their physical and intellectual creation from the angle of cognitive science, bringing relevant insight from recent neurobiological research related to cognition, vision, memory and the wiring of the human brain. Each manuscript is a handwritten copy of a text or texts. It was prepared at a certain time and place and for a certain purpose and audience, hence its value for the study of my basic queries. The main contexts of my research are cognitive philosophy, philosophy of science, medieval science and philosophy and manuscript studies. The combination provided by this web of contexts allows for the location of the medieval manuscript material within traditions that usually do not intersect.

I brought the project to CEU as teaching at the Department of Medieval Studies complements my research and makes immediate use of the close study of manuscripts within a teaching environment. CEU's Department of Philosophy and Department of Cognitive Science provide a good context for other aspects of my project and balance the different fields through participation in conferences and workshops and giving lectures and seminars. My three-year project, funded by the NKTH_ERC_HU, is now in its second year. Beyond research and teaching, during my first year I have organised a Departmental Specialisation and a Summer School and held a photo exhibition at CEU (January–February 2010), entitled *Zooming in*.

Research

My research has so far focused on diagrams, diagrammatic images and layouts of manuscripts from a selected group of philosophical and scientific texts spanning the Middle Ages. The broad chronological and geographic range allows for the study of trends. I have brought together isolated examples of visual cognition to form a more substantial body of evidence for a comparative study and mapped up the various findings against the different contexts of my research. As a primary framework, I have looked at ancient and medieval texts that deal with questions of sense perception and cognition, along with current studies of cognitive philosophy, philosophy of science and neurobiology for the broader context.

The conference talks I gave and the workshops in which I participated within the field of cognitive philosophy as well as the submitted publications concerning manuscripts were helpful for working out the next steps in my research.

Teaching

Linked to my research, I teach two courses, on medieval science and on medieval manuscript studies respectively, as well as consult with MA and PhD students about their research and dissertations. My PhD student, Ivana Dobcheva, successfully defended her PhD Prospectus at the end of the last academic year. Her wok includes the fields of early medieval science and of transmission and reception of classical texts.

Academic organising work

I have organised and now coordinate a new specialisation within the departmental curriculum, the *Specialisation in Medieval Manuscript Studies* that was launched in the 2010/2011 academic year (see details below). I have also organised and directed the first *Summer School in Medieval Codicology and Palaeography* (Latin and Greek) within the CEU Summer University held in 2011 (see details below). Manuscript Studies has become this year one of the new focus areas of the Department and the Specialisation and the Summer School strengthen the Department's emphasis on manuscript studies within its curriculum.

Specialisation on Medieval Manuscript Studies

The aim of the Medieval Manuscript Studies Specialisation, launched in the 2010/2011 academic year, is twofold. Firstly, it is to provide an introduction to codicology and a practical training in palaeography and textual criticism (Latin and Greek), covered by mandatory courses. Secondly, these are combined with

a wide range of courses that offer students an opportunity to develop a broad understanding of the context within which manuscripts were produced and used in the Middle Ages and can be studied today. These are elective courses that draw on the broader expertise of the department branching into various book cultures. The study of manuscripts requires specialized skills with which to decipher handwriting, examine details of craftsmanship, investigate provenance, give approximate date and place of origin, study the page layout and contextualise the findings. The specialisation caters for the acquiring of the skills essential for making use of the primary sources not only in modern printed editions but also in manuscripts, whether in their digitised form or in the original.
Webpage: http://medievalstudies.ceu.hu/mmss

Summer School in Medieval Codicology and Palaeography, July 18–23, 2011
CEU Summer University

I have organised a Summer School in Medieval Codicology and Palaeography (Latin and Greek) which takes place for the first time in 2011 within the CEU Summer University scheme, with the participation of an international faculty. The aim of the one-week course is to provide practical training at an intermediate level in Latin and Greek palaeography, combined with lectures on codicology and diplomatics, based on a new approach toward manuscript studies and the latest trends in research. The intensive palaeography seminars focus on transcribing various scripts across broad chronological and geographic areas and deal with issues such as recognition of script and dating of hand. The seminars run in three parallel options: Latin book hand, Latin diplomatic hand and Greek book hand. Students have the possibility to combine the two Latin options. The lectures range from a general introduction to codicology and diplomatics to more specialised ones on punctuation and book binding. The seminars and the lectures are complemented by visits to manuscript holding libraries and archives. The summer school includes a one-day workshop on manuscript and document layouts and the cognitive processes they reflect. The main target group of the course is MA and PhD students and young researchers.
Webpage: http://www.sun.ceu.hu/codicology

Zooming in: photo exhibition

The presentation of a different, but for me equally important aspect of my interest in visual thinking was facilitated by the opportunity of having a photo exhibition at CEU. *Zooming in* (January–February 2010, opened by Professor

Zsigmond Ritoók, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) represented the 'other side', the non-scholarly grasp of the world whereby visual thinking gained another dimension. I use my camera not to record what I see in the world, but to explore what I do not perceive or recognise with my naked eyes. I do not use a digital camera, nor fiddle with the images once taken. For me a photo has to be born out of a moment of visual surprise. By zooming in with the camera on an object, I see details, structures, and textures that do not offer themselves for my unaided eyes and mind. Another world opens up for me when I look inside a flower, visually break down the bulk of a glacier, zoom in on the surface of a frozen stream or point my camera toward my own eye.

Thinking lies at the centre of my life and research. Photography is at once a tool, an object, and an expression of thinking. In some ways, pealing off layers of distance, getting closer to the core and by doing so seeing something differently in photography is paralleled in my academic research. I have previously exhibited photos in Berlin and Budapest. The photos in this exhibition were chosen to show the way in which I see, perceive, think and feel through the camera.
Webpage: http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=253370589241&index=1

MEDIEVAL MONASTIC REGIONS IN CENTRAL EUROPE – THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE SETTING OF MONASTIC ORDERS AND RELIGIOUS HOUSES

József Laszlovszky – Hedwig Röckelein

The Aim of the Project:

Traditional studies in the field of medieval monasteries have focused mainly on individual monastic orders or on the regional topography of monastic foundations, yielding histories of various orders and regional *monasteriologia*-type monographs. These studies have produced significant results and have contributed to positivist data collection concerning medieval monastic institutions. Recent monastic studies, however, have started to focus on other aspects of medieval monastic cultures such as the social and economic background of the foundation process, the landscape setting of the monasteries, and gender-related aspects of monastic life based on interdisciplinary studies of monastic complexes (monastic architecture, monastic landscapes, archaeological investigations of monastic complexes, etc.).

At the same time, comparative, regional approaches, taking into account all the monastic foundations from all monastic orders, have contributed to an understanding of various historical-geographical regions in medieval Europe. In these studies, different types of monasteries were used as indicators for understanding complex historical processes and characteristic regional features. Amongst the issues most frequently discussed are royal patronage and monasteries, mendicant orders in the context of royal power and urban development, female monasticism, regional, social, and economic conditions and monastic orders as vehicles of intellectual, spiritual, and technical innovations. These new approaches have produced significant results in the form of large European comparative studies, such as the process of Christianization and the monastic mission in the contexts of Northern and East-Central Europe.

No such studies have been carried out, however, in the historical-geographical framework of Central Europe, including the southern and eastern parts of the Holy Roman Empire and the regions of Latin Christianity in East-Central Europe,

including the medieval Kingdom of Hungary. This project therefore aimed at comparing these areas and studying the above-mentioned research questions in five research fields. The results of these research areas constitute a new monastic map for Central Europe, especially for selected areas of medieval German and Hungarian monasticism.

Previous Studies:

The Georg-August University of Göttingen and CEU have long dealt with the complex investigation of monastic history. Individual research projects, masters' theses, and doctoral dissertations have been produced on this topic. Faculty members at these two centers have published extensively in the area of medieval monastic studies and have organized externally financed research groups. Previous research projects at these centers include a study of nunneries and canonesses houses (Göttingen) and the complex *monasteriologia* of medieval Hungary (CEU). The project results formed the methodological basis for this joint project. Based on previous research, five main research targets were selected for a comparative approach.

The Five Research Areas of the Project:

1. *Benedictine monasticism and the houses of female canonesses: The mission and Christianization of the countryside (ninth to twelfth century).* Early Benedictine monastic foundations and female canoness' houses in Central Europe played a crucial role in the process of Christianization. Benedictine monks contributed significantly to early missions in German, Austrian, and Hungarian areas, as did canoness' houses in northern German areas. This part of the project took into consideration the economic and social factors of major Benedictine foundations and compared them within a regional and chronological framework. A parallel development chart for some selected abbeys and convents (such as Fulda, Corvey, Herford, Essen, Werden, Gandersheim, Quedlinburg, Pannonhalma, Bakonybél, Tihany, Somogyvár, and others) was assembled, including their economic and architectural history. A similar set of questions was applied to analyze the main periods of development (foundation conditions, patronage, the estate system, the economic system, literacy and the book culture as well as the architectural and artistic programs). For these case studies, two major questions were addressed in the context of the history of Benedictine and canoness' houses: their role in missionary activity and their contribution to the transformation of the social and economic systems between the ninth and the twelfth centuries.

József Laszlovszky – Hedwig Röckelein

2. *Monastic reform movements of the twelfth century and the spatial distribution of new foundations*: Medieval monastic reforms can be connected to a number of monastic orders, the most important of which were the Benedictines, Cistercians, Premonstratensians, Augustinian canons, and Carthusians. Recent monastic studies on these orders have shown that the spatial distribution of the orders, the hierarchy of the order, and the connection between monastic and canons' houses (e.g., the Cistercian filiation system) can reveal significant regional differences and attitudes toward the creation of new monastic communities. The expansion of these orders from Western Europe to different parts of Central Europe indicates different expansion strategies based on local ecclesiastical, economic, social, and political factors. Comparative mapping of these monastic foundations in different parts of Central Europe showed how these orders adapted their monastic ideas to local conditions and to what extent the monastic landscapes (spiritual and physical) of these monastic houses reflected the tension between the idea and reality of their foundation goals. The comparative study in this case was not based on individual case-studies, but on the spatial analysis of all foundations belonging to these orders in the study area, and on the cross-overs between convents belonging to different orders (e.g., Augustinian canon houses and female Benedictine houses).

3. *Female monasticism.* Recent monastic studies have started to focus on the gender-related aspects of medieval monastic culture. Female monasteries, or nunneries, are now seen not only as the counterparts of male monastic ideals, but as special institutions for different types of female religiosity. Particularly innovative studies were carried out in the context of early medieval female nunneries and canoness' houses that depended on the aristocracy and on female religious houses established by royal and princely courts. Comparative studies can shed light on changes in monastic orders and concomitant changes in spiritual ideas. It has been noted recently that there were major differences in the number of female monasteries and their ratios compared to male monasteries in different parts of Europe. Two areas, medieval Hungary and Bavaria, display a very low number of nunneries whereas a high number of canoness' houses were established in Saxony. The aim of this part of the project was to analyze social (family structure, inheritance system, etc.) and economic factors that contributed to the development of this particular pattern. At the same time, how medieval courts influenced the emergence of large female monasteries attached or connected to rulers' courts was examined as well as what happened to the intellectual and spiritual orientation of female houses after the reform period of the twelfth century. Libraries and scriptoria were used as the most important indicators.

4.   *Mendicant orders in the context of urban development and royal patronage*: Research based on Jacques le Goff's seminal work on urban development and mendicant orders has been in the front line of monastic studies for the last three decades. More recent investigations, however, have shown that using the general pattern of a mendicant presence as an urban indicator should be modified or at least partially modified in some areas, particularly East-Central Europe. Comparative study of German and Austrian towns and medieval Hungarian towns with significant German populations is particularly important in understanding urban development in the Central European region. Comparisons were based on the general chronology of mendicant foundations and on particular studies of mendicant institutions where a courtly influence can be seen (Munich, Vienna, Buda, and Visegrád). These examples and the comparative studies highlight the problem of residence and mendicant foundations, and also the different approaches of the Franciscan and Dominican orders in Central Europe.

5.   In all these research areas, quantitative methods were used for the analysis based on already-existing computer databases and additional development of these data sets within the context of the research project. Programs for spatial analysis were applied to the Göttingen-based "FemMoData" database covering 2700 female monasteries in Europe, and regional characteristics were studied with the help of the "Monasteries and Chapters in Medieval Hungary" database and CD-ROM *monasteriologia* developed by a research team connected to CEU. The results of these project elements will be published on internet-based home-pages, with links to similar quantitative, large-scale monastic databases.

The five project elements were discussed in four workshops, where faculty members, post-docs and doctoral students of the two centers presented their research results, and discussed the results of the regional comparative studies. During these workshops, academic field trips were also organized to major monastic centers studied within the framework of the project (Gandersheim, Quedlinburg, Pannonhalma, and Visegrád).

The Project and its Relevance for the PhD Programs at the two Institutions

Doctoral education plays a crucial role in the academic activity of both institutions. PhD students played an active role in the research projects. The joint research proposal was based on their doctoral research. The mobility element of the project was worked out so that PhD students were able to spend intensive well-targeted research periods at the two research centers. Their research periods were long enough (1 month each) to enable them to work with faculty members and other doctoral students at the host institution. Their research focused on two activities.

One was the collection of new source materials (primary and secondary) for a comparative approach and the other was comparative work in the given research areas. The academic visits of the doctoral students were organized together with workshops. Thus, senior researchers from both institutions were able to discuss a research target and schedule with the entire group of PhD students. The academic visits of the doctoral students started with joint workshops where special sessions were devoted to their research topics. After they returned to their home institutions, their individual research results were also presented as papers in one of the later workshops. Thus, the research project can be seen as an integral part of the two PhD programs and the most important research outputs (workshop publications, internet-based publications) will also be based on the work of the PhD students. Mobility periods and expenses were designed so that doctoral students were able to spend fairly long research periods in the other center, while senior researchers' visits were only connected to the workshops.

Workshops Organized in the Framework of the Project:

I. Monastic Landscapes – Physical and Spiritual
CEU, Budapest, March 5–7, 2009

Organized by:
the Department of Medieval Studies of CEU
in co-operation with
the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Göttingen
Supported by:
DAAD-Hungarian Scholarship Board Project Support Scheme
CEU, Rector's Fund

Monastic Landscapes – Approaches, Methods, Problems
Bond, James (University of Bristol): *The Monastic Contribution to the English Landscape – The Concept of Monastic Landscape*
Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Monastic Regions and Monastic Landscapes in Medieval Europe*
Aufgebauer, Peter (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *Changes of Monastic Landscapes in the Northwest Area of the Hansa*

Emerging New Monastic Ideas – Emerging New Monastic Landscapes
Sághy, Marianne (CEU, Budapest): *The Social Setting and Urban Topography of Asceticism in Fourth-Century Rome*

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *Twelfth century Canonical Reform and Its Impact in Canonesses Houses, Female Augustins and Benedictines*

Snyder, Parker (MA'09, CEU): *Network Analysis – Road Map to the Cistercian Expansion, 1098–1153*

Female Monasticism and the Gendered Landscape of Medieval Monasteries

Kirschberger, Timo (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *FemMoData – Structure, Applications and Possibilities of a Database on Female Medieval Monasticism*

Hoven, Jasmin (Germania Sacra, Göttingen): *Dukes and Their Veiled Daughters in the Duchies Mecklenburg and Pomerania: In Search of a Suitable Cloister at the Periphery of the Reich*

Kreutz, Jessica (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *The Libraries of Wöltingerode. Religious Women and Their Books in the Later Middle Ages*

Theological, Spiritual and Intellectual Landscapes of Medieval Monasticism

Kleine, Uta (FernUniversität, Hagen): *Saints, Pilgrimage and Property: Imagining Landscapes in Twelfth-Century Monastic Literature (Germany: Rhineland)*

Krampe, Jochen (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *The Fifteenth-Century Library of the Canon Regulars at St. Georgenberg near Goslar (Lower Saxony) as a Mirror of Monastic Life and Learning*

Geréby, György (CEU, Budapest): *The Intellect and the Emotions: Prayers and Cognitive Psychologies from Evagrius to Ignatius of Loyola*

Religious and Ecclesiastical Landscape of Medieval Monasteries

Szőcs, Péter Levente (CEU, Budapest and Museum of Satu Mare): *Parishes in a Monastic Landscape: Ecclesiastic Topography in East-Central Hungary in the 12–14th Centuries*

Wheatley-Irving, Linda (CEU, Budapest): *Saints and Their Landscapes on the Euphrates*

Pogossian, Zara (American University in Rome): *Female Monasticism and Piety in Medieval Armenia*

Monasteries in the Urban Landscape

Szende, Katalin (CEU, Budapest): *Monastic Presence and Absence in the Early History of Hungarian Towns*

Soós, Zoltán (CEU, Budapest and Museum of County Mureş, Târgu Mureş): *Franciscans in the Transylvanian Urban Landscape: The Case of Cluj and Târgu Mureş Friaries*

Kozubska, Olha (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv): *Monasteries in the Urban Environment: Lviv (Lemberg)*

Mendicants in Different Religious Landscapes –
Latin Christians, Eastern Christians, Heretics and Pagans

Mersch, Katharina (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *The Devotion to the Infant Christ in the Dominican Convent Maria-Medingen: A Result of Religious Interchange between Austria and Suebia in the Later Middle Ages*

Klaniczay, Gábor (CEU, Budapest): *Mendicant Orders as Missionaries and Mediators on the Margins of Latin Christianity*

Lyublyanovics, Kyra (CEU, Budapest): *Cumans and Franciscans in Medieval Hungary: Monastic Landscape of an Unurbanized Area*

Reception for the participants of the CEU Medieval Studies 15-Year Reunion and for the participants of the Monastic Landscapes workshop
Welcome on behalf of the organizers: Marianne Sághy (CEU), opening remarks by Neven Budak (University of Zagreb), Patrick Geary (UCLA), and József Laszlovszky (CEU)

Selecting, Transforming and Building of Monastic Landscapes

Gaşpar, Cristian (CEU and Istituto di Studi Avanzati–Alma Mater Studiorum, University of Bologna): *No Place for Young Men: Reinventing the Desert in Ps.-Ephraem's "Sermones paraenetici ad monachos Aegypti"*

Kostova, Rossina (SS Cyril and Methodius University of Veliko Turnovo): *Monastic Landscapes in Medieval Bulgaria: the City, the Coast and the Sea*

Szabó, Péter (Czech Academy of Sciences, Brno): *Monastic Orders and Royal Forests*

Ferenczi, László (CEU, Budapest): *A Topographical Study of Cistercian Granges in Hungary: Approaches and Problems*

Social, Economic and Spatial Factors of Monastic Landscapes

Romhányi, Beatrix (Károli Gáspár Calvinist University, Budapest): *Social and Economic Aspects of Monastic Activity and Landscape: The Example of the Paulines in the Late Middle Ages*

La Salvia, Vasco (Gabriele D'Annunzio University, Chieti): *Early Medieval Italian Monastic Possessions in Mining Districts*

Hunyadi, Zsolt (University of Szeged): *Urban Commanderies – Rural Commanderies: Spatial Considerations of the Military-religious Orders*

Excursion to Saint Martin's Abbey in Pannonhalma

II. Benedictine Monasticism and Religious Houses in Central Europe
Monks and Nuns, Monasteries and Canonesses Houses
Bad Gandersheim / Kloster Brunshausen (Germany), 4–6 October, 2009

Organized by:
the Department of Medieval Studies of CEU
and
the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Göttingen
in co-operation with:
Research Group Frauenstift Gandersheim, Göttingen;
Portal zur Geschichte, Bad Gandersheim;

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen) – Laszlovszky, József (CEU Budapest): *Introduction*

Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Monastic Regions as Monastic Landscapes? Monasticism, Mission, and Rulers*

Sárosi, Edit (CEU Budapest – Cultural Heritage Office, Veszprém): *Early Monastic Complexes in the Danube-Tisza Interfluve Region in Hungary: Problems of Identification and Localization*

Aufgebauer, Peter (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *The Handbook of Lower-Saxon Monasteries and the Dynamic of Monastic Landscapes*

Matzke, Ulrike (University of Göttingen – Ducal Library Wolfenbüttel): *Convent Life and Princely Rule in Late Medieval Lower Saxony: Fifteenth-Century Monastic Policy in the Harz Region*

Bond, James (University of Bristol): *Premonstratensian Houses in England with a Comparative View to the Continent*

Zirm, Matthias (University of Halle-Wittenberg – Research Program Frauenstift Gandersheim): *New methodological Approaches to the Archeological Ceramics of the Brunshausen Monastery – a Re-evaluation*

Popp, Christian (Germania Sacra, Göttingen – Research Program Frauenstift Gandersheim): *Relics and Saints of the Gandersheim Convent*

Hartgen, Maria Julia (Georg-August University, Göttingen – Research Program Frauenstift Gandersheim): *Elisabeth Ernestine Antonie von Sachsen-Meiningen (1681–1766), 51st Abbess of the House of Canonesses in Gandersheim*

Beckmann, Inke (Georg-August University, Göttingen – Research Program Frauenstift Gandersheim): *The Digital Reconstruction of Material Remains of the Religious House in Gandersheim with the Inventory System OPAL (Online Portal of Digitized Cultural Assets of Lower Saxony)*

Excursions to Gandersheim, Medieval Canonesses' Church and Baroque Abbesses' House; Brunshausen, Museum in the Gothic Monastery Church; Clus, Rural domain and Convent Church

Richter, Michael (University of Constance): *The Early Medieval Irish Monastic Landscape: a World without Benedict*

Sághy, Marianne (CEU, Budapest): *Monks to Hermits: Saint Günther and the Eremitic Revival in 11th-century Hungary*

Duluş, Mircea (CEU, Budapest): *Norman Kingship and Monastic Orders in Sicily: Roger II (1130–1154), Benedictines and the Foundation of San Salvatore in Messina*

Beach, Alison (University of Trier): *The Reform of Petershausen in a Changing Religious Landscape*

Griffiths, Fiona (New York University): *Inseparable Companions. Women and the Apostles in the Twelfth Century*

Labusiak, Thomas (Portal zur Geschichte, Bad Gandersheim – Research Program Frauenstift Gandersheim): *Illustrations in Benedictine Rules*

Czoma, Eszter (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest): *The Sculpture Program of the Cloisters Ss. Pietro et Orso in Aosta*

Szakács, Béla Zsolt (CEU, Budapest): *Regional Aspects of Romanesque Monastic Architecture in Hungary*

Mersch, Katharina (Georg-August University, Göttingen – International Max-Planck Research School Göttingen): *Baptismal Fonts in Benedictine Nunneries and Canonesses' Houses in 12th-Century Germany: Liturgy, Objects and Social Meaning*

Kuzmová, Stanislava (CEU, Budapest): *The Holy Bishop, the Monks and the Canons. The Cult of St. Stanislaus of Cracow in a Monastic Landscape*

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen) and Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Conclusion*

III. Monastic Topography and Ecclesiastical Topography
University of Göttingen, 9–10 April, 2010

Organized by:
the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Göttingen
in co-operation with
the Department of Medieval Studies of CEU
Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen
Germania Sacra, Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen
Supported by:
DAAD-Hungarian Scholarship Board Project Support Scheme

Research Methods and Approaches

Hoven, Jasmin (Germania Sacra, Göttingen): *What is the 'Germania Sacra'?*

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen – Germania Sacra): *Monastic and Ecclesiastical Topography – the Germania Sacra Perspective*

Laszlovszky, Jószef (CEU, Budapest): *Results of the Hungarian Conference on Ecclesiastical Topography*

Space, Place, and Topography

Kruppa, Nathalie (Germania Sacra, Göttingen): *The Early and High Medieval Monastic Landscape in the Diocese of Hildesheim*

Szőcs, Péter Levente (CEU, Budapest – Museum of Satu Mare): *Monasteries within the Parish Network and Estate System. Case of North-Western Hungary during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*

Homza, Martin (University of Bratislava): *The Parish Network in Zips during the Thirteenth Century*

Kröger, Bärbel (Germania Sacra, Göttingen): *Digital Maps for the Germania Sacra*

Szende, Katalin (CEU, Budapest): *Monastic Topography and Urban Topography: the Series of the Historic Towns Atlases as a Research Tool*

Jaritz, Gerhard (CEU Budapest): *The Visual Representation of Monastic Space*

Bücheler, Anna (University of Toronto): *Textile Topography: Eastern Silk in Western Monastic Contexts*

Excursion: The Monastic and Ecclesiastical Topography of Medieval and Early Modern Göttingen. Guide: Peter Aufgebauer (Georg-August University, Göttingen)

Clerical Prosopography and Monastic Power

Kröger, Bärbel – Kruppa, Nathalie (Germania Sacra, Göttingen): *The 'Klerikerdatenbank' (digital database on medieval clerics) at the Germania Sacra*

Romhányi, Beatrix (Károli Gáspár Calvinist University, Budapest): *Monastic Estates in the Late Middle Ages: Similarities and Differences*

Ferenczi, László (CEU, Budapest): *Landscapes of Power – A Spatial Analysis of the Economic and Social Background of the Cistercian Expansion in Central Eastern Europe*

Franciscan Spaces

Müller, Anne (Research Center for the Comparative History of Religious Orders – FOVOG, Eichstätt): *Enclosure and Heavenly Jerusalem? Franciscan Concepts of Space*

Karačić, Darko (CEU, Budapest): *Franciscans in the Borderlands of Western Christianity: Topography of the Franciscan Friaries in Medieval Bosnia and South Dalmatia*

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen) and Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Conclusion*

IV. Centers of Power and Spiritual Life in the Middle Ages and in the Early Modern Period: Mendicant Orders in the Context of Urban Development and Royal Patronage

CEU, Budapest, and King Matthias Museum, Visegrád, October 17–19, 2010

Organized by:
the Department of Medieval Studies of CEU
in co-operation with
the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Göttingen
Supported by:
DAAD-Hungarian Scholarship Board Project Support Scheme
CEU, Rector's Fund

Academic field trip to Visegrád

Röckelein, Hedwig (Georg-August University, Göttingen) – Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Introduction*

Royal Center, Urban Development and Mendicants in Medieval Visegrád

Laszlovszky, József (CEU, Budapest): *Late Medieval Royal Patronage and the Franciscans: Visegrád and Beyond*

Mészáros, Orsolya (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest): *Royal Residence and Urban Settlement in Medieval Visegrád*

Polgár, Balázs (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest): *Before the Franciscans: Proto-urban and Urban Settlement in the Area of the Franciscan Friary at Visegrád*

The Royal Palace and the Franciscan Friary at Visegrád

The Temporary Exhibition on the Angevins and Visegrád

The Permanent Exhibition of the Royal Palace

The Archaeological Site of the Franciscan Friary

Royal Patronage and the Mendicant Orders

Klaniczay, Gábor (CEU, Budapest): *King Béla IV and the Mendicant Orders in Hungary*

Dušanić, Smilja (University of Belgrade): *The Serbian Royal Court of Helene d'Anjou and the Franciscan Order*

Karačić, Darko (CEU, Budapest): *The Bosnian Royal Dynasty, and the Franciscan Order in the Context of Centres and Urban Settlements*

Urban Settlements and Mendicant Orders in Central Europe

Felskau, Frederik (Free University, Berlin): Ordines mendicantes *and* civitates. *Patterns, Persons and Circumstances Connected with the Settlement of the Franciscans and Dominicans in Thirteenth-Century Bohemia and Moravia (especially Prague and Olomouc)*

Szende, Katalin (CEU, Budapest): *In the Right Place at the Right Time. Mendicants and Urban Development in Thirteenth-Century Hungary*

Late Medieval Mendicants and their Socio-Economic Context

Hoven , Jasmin (Georg-August University, Göttingen): *Networks of Poor Clares of High Nobility in the Late Middle Ages*

Bencze, Ünige (CEU, Budapest): *Urban Development and Franciscan Convent at Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş: Aspects of Material Culture*

Nagy, Emőke (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj): *Franciscan Devotion in an Urban Centre: the Cult of Saint Anne and the Franciscan Convent at Marosvásárhely/Târgu Mureş*

Centers of Power and Spirituality

Kirschberger, Timo (University of Göttingen): *Monastic Landscapes and Geopiety in the Latin Levant*

Book Launch

Presentation of two new CEU Medievalia volumes:

Hunyadi, Zsolt: *The Hospitallers in the Kingdom of Hungary* presented by Laszlovszky, József

Promoting the Saints. Cults and Their Contexts from Late Antiquity until the Early Modern Period. Essays in Honor of Gábor Klaniczay for his 60th Birthday presented by Gecser, Ottó

Mendicants and Economy – Mendicant Economy

de Cevins, Marie-Madeleine (University of Rennes): *Mendicant Orders and Economy in Late Medieval Central Europe. Research Proposal Based on Hungarian Examples*

Romhányi, Beatrix (Károli Gáspár Calvinist University, Budapest): *Social Network – Economic Support: the Social Contacts of the Mendicant Friars in Late Medieval Hungary*

Mendicants between Royal Centers and Urban Settlements

Guided tour to the ruins of the Franciscan Friary and the Dominican Nunnery on Margaret Island in Budapest (Laszlovszky, József)